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The Clearing Storm: A Re-Assessment of the Climate for Collaboration between Academic and Student Affairs

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THE CLEARING STORM:

A RE-ASSESSMENT OF THE CLIMATE FOR

COLLABORATION BETWEEN

ACADEMIC AND STUDENT AFFAIRS

A Thesis

By

Janine M. Abdallah

Presented to the Faculty of Bucknell University

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of

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Approved by:

_____

Adviser

_____

Department Chairperson

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Acknowledgements

"Apply yourself.

Get all the education you can, but then, by God, do something.

Don't just stand there, make it happen."

Lee Iacocca

Four and a half years ago I embarked on a journey that I admit I thought would not be nearly as difficult as it has been. It took me only two years to complete eleven courses, but it has taken me just as long to complete the writing you are about to read. It has been a long and tumultuous road, but I have made it, finally, and I have a lot of people to thank.

The first I would like to address is Dr. Victor Arcelus. If it were not for this man, this thesis would not exist. Not only was he the inspiration for this project, he also was of immense help in bringing my project into existence. His cooperation helped get my project off the ground, and without his help during the planning process, I do not think I would have been able to complete a project of this magnitude. Victor, you deserve so much of the credit for the final product. You set the bar so high with your dissertation, and I worked tirelessly to make sure that it was an equal and worthy follow-up. I hope this thesis lives up to your standards.

The second person I owe a thank you to is my significant other. He was the constant voice of reason, always telling me that things will be alright. Without him and

his support I feel confident that I would not be where I am today, handing this thesis in. Dustin, you mean the world to me, and I hope you are proud.

To my friends and colleagues at Bucknell, you all believed in me and did everything you could to make sure I succeeded. I may have taken my time, but I hope this thesis brings pride to the Education Department as well as to those men and women I interviewed. The six individuals helped me so much. Their candor and willingness to speak have made this thesis possible. Without them, there would be no paper. My intention was to give voice to these people's feelings and perceptions, and I hope I have accomplished that.

To my friends in North Carolina, I told you I had this project to complete, and with unwavering support, you urged me to finish. If I did not have each and every one of you supporting me, asking me every day how my paper was coming, I know very well that I may not have been as accountable to myself. The support I received from everyone meant more to me than I could ever articulate.

Last but not least, I owe a world of thanks to my thesis advisor, Professor Joe Murray. He was so supportive of me during my entire time at Bucknell and as it neared the end, he pulled out all the stops to make sure I succeeded. He never gave up hope that I would finish, and it may have taken a little longer than expected, but finally it is here and I hope it is enjoyed.

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Abstract

There is increasing recognition among those in higher education that it is no longer adequate to train students in a specific field or industry. Instead, the push is more towards producing well-rounded students. In order to do so, all of a university's resources must come together and the climate on campus must be one that supports collaboration.

This report is a re-examination of the climate for collaboration on the campus of a private liberal arts university in the Mid-Atlantic region of the United States. It is a follow up to a similar investigation conducted on the same campus by Victor Arcelus (2008) five years earlier. In the interim, the university had re-configured its organizational structure, combining separate academic and student affairs divisions into a single unit overseen by the Provost. Additionally, the university had experienced turnover in several key leadership positions, including those of the President and the chief academic and student affairs officers. The purpose of this investigation, therefore, was to gauge the immediate impact of these changes on conditions for collaboration, which when present, advance student learning and development.

Through interviews with six men and women, information was collected on the perceived climate for collaboration between academic and student affairs personnel. Analysis of the interview transcripts revealed that, depending on the position of the interviewee within the university, conditions on campus were seen as either improved or largely unchanged as a result of the transition in leadership and the structural merger of the two divisions.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

The landscape of higher education has changed dramatically over the past few decades. It is a recent trend in higher education for institutions to try to bridge the gap between their academic and student affairs divisions (Mackinnon, 2004). The logic for such connection: communication and partnership between these two groups can illustrate to students that every facet of their life, including both in- and out-of-classroom activities, contributes reciprocally to the college experience as a whole (Arcelus, 2008; NASPA & ACPA, 2004; AAHE, ACPA, & NASPA, 1998; ACPA, 1996; Schuh & Whitt, 1999). In order to prepare students for successful citizenship in a complex and diverse society, it is becoming more and more critical for institutions to prepare students intellectually, psycho-socially, and personally for the types of encounters that they can expect to face. This type of knowledge and practice requires students to go beyond the classroom walls in order to acquire the necessary training and experience (Arcelus, 2008; Schuh & Whitt, 1999; AACU, 2007).

An emerging body of theory suggests that, when presented with opportunities to expand and test knowledge, students become better able to organize their understandings of themselves, others, and the world around them (Perry, 1999; Baxter-Magolda, 1992; Kegan, 1994; King & Kitchener, 1994). To offer students these opportunities, campus leaders are encouraged to approach education by adopting a more integrative perspective on the process of cognitive and psychosocial development (Kezar & Lester, 2009).

This integrative perspective ties together the development of both mind and body, and is achieved by encouraging the partnership of academic and student affairs divisions. Integration of the divisions would allow institutions to better serve students by providing them with inter-connected opportunities, to acquire knowledge and then put it into practice (NASPA & ACPA, 2004). As Arcelus (2008) put it, "cross-divisional collaboration can capture the potential in the missed opportunities to support students' educational and psychosocial development, while also providing personal and professional benefits for faculty and staff" (p.22). With this unification, these two divisions and the institutions they serve can maximize learning opportunities not only by cultivating the "whole student," but also by ensuring that he or she is equipped with the knowledge and training necessary to manage and deal with a wide range of issues and situations (Arcelus, 2008; Schuh & Whitt, 1994; NASPA & ACPA, 2004; AAHE, ACPA, & NASPA, 1998).

Partnerships, however, have not historically been the norm in higher education (Dennis, 2007). The two divisions have typically approached education from their respective realms, with those in academic affairs focusing on the life of the mind, and those in student affairs focusing on the life of the body and spirit. Therefore, in order to attain educational goals that are integrative, it is essential that higher education institutions reconsider their work (Keeling, 2004). Colleges and universities have been called to design and structure their organizations in such a way that collaboration between academics and their colleagues in student life is encouraged (Kezar & Lester, 2009).

Purpose of the Study

In the fall of 2008, I learned of Victor Arcelus's (2008) dissertation, *In Search of a Break in the Clouds: An Ethnographic Study of Academic and Student Affairs Cultures*. In his study, Arcelus assessed "how faculty and student affairs personnel perceive[d] their own and each other's roles as educators on their campus and how these perceptions influence[d] the potential for collaboration between divisions and the potential to develop a holistic educational experience for students" (p. 5). His investigation consisted of an extensive case study of a private liberal arts university in the Mid-Atlantic region of the United States, which he identified by the pseudonym, *Crossroads University*.

What Arcelus (2008) found was that the system and structure at *Crossroads* were not working effectively towards the objectives of a 21st century college education. Instead of operating as a cohesive whole, which is what ultimately allows integrated education to take place, the academic and student affairs divisions operated in independent "silos" (p.149). Arcelus concluded at the time that the institution was in such a state that no true progress could take place. The potential for further growth, however, was present, because at the conclusion of his research, conditions on campus were undergoing great change.

Five year later, when I became familiar with this study, I was intrigued by the possibility that conditions on campus had changed. My research project, therefore, was designed to reassess the climate on *Crossroads's* campus, to determine if the passage of

five years, as well as new leadership and organizational structure, had changed the level of collaboration between personnel in academic and student affairs. My study focused on six individuals' perceptions of the climate for collaboration, and it reexamined how these men and women saw the university, given the changes that had transpired over the previous five years.

Research Methodology

In my study, six participants were interviewed. Together, they represented the academic and student affairs divisions and included faculty members, administrators, and professional staff. In order to ensure the relevance of my research, the interviewees that I questioned were all participants in Arcelus's (2008) study five years earlier. Therefore, in recruiting the participants, I sought Arcelus's help. He assisted me by emailing a subsample of his former interview subjects, informing them of my follow-up project, and asking them if they would be interested in participating. In the end, six men and women responded: one student affairs administrator, one professional staff member in student affairs, one professional staff member in academic affairs, one executive-level professional, and two faculty members. The professional staff members I interviewed occupied positions at the Associate/Assistant Dean level in both divisions; the administrator was the Director of a department within the student affairs division; the

professors were both social-science faculty members, and the executive-level professional was in a position that reported directly to the President.

In order to collect the necessary data, I conducted six, hour-long interviews, one with each participant. The interviews were recorded with the permission of the subject and then transcribed with the help of a transcriptionist. From there, I categorized the interviews based on over-arching themes that emerged as I reviewed them. I created matrices to organize the themes, and once completed, I sorted the various quotes into folders organized by sections of this thesis. This sorting process served as the basis for the organization of the final paper and the insertion of quotations wherever appropriate.

Research Questions

The questions I asked my interview subjects were modeled off of those used by Arcelus (2008) in one phase of his own study (*See Appendices*). The interviews were conducted with the following questions in mind:

1) How would student affairs professionals, faculty members, and academic affairs administrators characterize the present state of the institution?

   a. Do they view *Crossroads* as a community?

   b. How does the institution differ from how it was five years ago? How is it the same?

2) What are the consequences of changes that have occurred on campus over the last five years?

     a. Are things better or worse?

     b. Has the merger of the two divisions affected the climate on campus?

     c. What kinds of changes have the President and other executive leaders introduced?

3) What do individual employees believe the roles of academic and student affairs personnel to be and what are the consequences of these perceptions?

     a. What do they perceive to be the roles of those in their own divisions?

     b. What do they perceive to be the roles of those in other divisions?

     c. Do these perceptions encourage or inhibit the potential for collaboration?

Significance of the Study

According to Masland (1991), while organizational culture "is difficult to identify and study, it is worth the effort" (p.124). When Arcelus (2008) concluded his research, his participants expressed optimism "that the campus climate could improve with new

leadership" (p.109).   The study I undertook was an attempt to discover whether such improvement occurred.

In five years time, a new President, Provost, and organizational structure emerged. My research was an exploration into the perceptions and viewpoints of six individuals at *Crossroad University* after such changes took place. Using qualitative methodology, I explored the opinions of men and women in various positions on campus, from professors to administrators to professional staff members. All of the participants were members of the same community, all working with the same objective in mind (that being to educate students), but each person had different opinions to share about the change and the direction of the university. The men and women I spoke with also expanded on their comments and generalized the feelings of those in their immediate circles. However, it should be noted that my sample size was much smaller in number than the sample used in Arcelus's (2008) research. There are obvious limitations to research conducted with a sample size of six, but even so, the findings from this study can offer a basic understanding of the state of affairs at the time I conducted my study on *Crossroads's* campus.

While the study was an exploration of one particular university, the comments of those interviewed can serve as a conceptual framework for examining the behavior and feelings of others on campuses around the country. *Crossroads University* is much like other residential colleges. It, like other higher education institutions, faces many of the same financial, organizational, and cultural dilemmas. Arcelus (2008) noted, "other institutions may respond to these issues differently, but the conflicts and pressures that

institutional leaders, faculty, and staff confront are consistent with nationally recognizable struggles in higher education" (p.8). The goal of this study, therefore, was to provide readers with information that they can use to interpret the state of affairs on campuses everywhere.

Thesis Organization

This thesis is divided into five chapters. In the first, an overview of the nature and purpose of the study is explained. In the second, a literature review summarizes information from studies that have been conducted on similar topics. It includes literature that explains the trend in higher education toward holistic education and studies supporting collaboration between the two divisions of a university. This second chapter also delves into Arcelus's (2008) study, which was the inspiration for my own research. Arcelus's methodology, findings, and recommendations are explained in detail, setting the stage for the remaining chapters of this thesis.

Following the literature review is the methodology chapter. In this section of the thesis I briefly explain Arcelus's study and the steps he took to gather and examine his data. Then, I go over, in detail, the procedures I used in conducting my own research. I explain the specifics with regard to my interviews and my analysis of the resultant data.

The results of my research are presented in chapter four. In this section, I go into detail about the perceptions of those I interviewed, explaining the changes that had taken place in the five years since Arcelus's (2008) research. Using the interview questions (*see Appendices*) as a basis for exposition, this chapter provides a thematic summary of the findings.

The paper concludes with a discussion of the findings. In this final chapter, I not only review the findings, but also go into more detail on key points that are particularly interesting. Additionally, I discuss the limitations of my work and offer recommendations for future study.

With hope, this thesis will present an accurate picture of the state of affairs on *Crossroads's* campus. My research reflects the opinions of my participants in the exact moment in time that I conducted my interviews. Even so, my intent is to stimulate further discussion, not only among those on the *Crossroads* campus, but among other faculty, administrators, professionals, and executive leaders on residential college campuses everywhere.

Chapter Two

Literature Review

This literature review is divided into three sections. Part I discusses the role of higher education, with attention placed on the evolution of educational philosophy. This section also discusses how the campus community is the ideal environment for students to learn and practice necessary knowledge and skills, respectively. In Part II, a more detailed examination of the campus community takes place, with particular attention paid to academic and student affairs divisions and the partnerships that exist between them. This section addresses the benefits of collaboration and includes an examination of the existing literature that both discusses and advocates for partnerships on campus. In Part III, the obstacles surrounding collaboration are discussed; in particular, there is a review of one researcher's study from a small, selective liberal arts institution. As the research project accompanying this literature review is a follow-up to the particular study under examination in this section, thorough attention is paid to the findings from this institution.

Part I

"The illiterate of the 21st century will not be those who cannot read and write,

but those who cannot learn, unlearn, and relearn."

Alvin Toffler

Role of Higher Education

Higher education serves both the private and public good. Not only does a college education teach a student more complex cognitive skills, but it also can teach a student about him or herself in relation to others and the world.   Because of the value institutions provide, people have come to expect a lot from them.   In a philosophy statement sponsored by the National Association of Student Personnel Administrators (NASPA) and the American College Personnel Association (ACPA), *Learning Reconsidered,* the message made is that our society now expects colleges and universities to prepare students for successful citizenship (Keeling, 2004).   Collegiate institutions have a duty to prepare young people to deal constructively with global, environmental, and societal problems. Young men and women must learn how to be engaged citizens in a modern society and how to respond effectively to an ever-changing world.   People want to know that higher education is preparing students to lead productive lives post-college, which includes successful participation in the workforce (ACPA, 1996; Altbach, Berdahl, & Gumport, 2005; Astin, 1996; Baxter-Magolda, 1998; Baxter-Magolda,

Terenzini, & Hutchins, 1999; Drucker, 1994; Twigg, 1995; Arcelus, 2008; ACPA & NASPA, 2004).

Two Philosophies of Education

While the role of higher education is generally agreed upon, different individuals have different ideas about just how a college should prepare its students for the future. While it is a debate that educators still wrestle with today, the introduction of such a discussion dates back to the late 1930s. In 1936 and 1938, two educational philosophers, Hutchins and Dewey, respectively, each released a very different philosophy of education. The first of the two, Hutchins's (1936) approach stuck to a more traditional path. He proclaimed that a college education should be about the life of the mind and that knowledge acquisition and students' intellectual development were by far the most important considerations for a college education (Geiger, 2000; Thelin, 2003; Rentz, 2004). Everything else, according to Hutchins, distracts from the core academic mission. In his writing he put it this way: "...the emphasis on athletics and social life that infects all colleges and universities has done more than most things to confuse these institutions and to debase higher learning in America" (Hutchins, 1936, p. 10-11). Social life, according to Hutchins, was threatening the academic mission on campuses everywhere, and this tendency to diminish academic primacy is what concerned him most. He firmly

insisted that colleges and universities should resolutely pursue the cultivation of the intellect. Therefore, in order to restore and maintain intellectualism on campus, Hutchins espoused a core curriculum that would build a uniform set of cognitive competencies in all students (Arcelus, 2008). Under Hutchins's model, learning was accomplished through intensive reading and instruction largely in the context of the classroom. Intellectual training was a job that he believed required much thought, focus, and discipline. Life experiences, on the other hand, were best left to circumstance (Hutchins, 1936).

Just two years later, the second of the two philosophies emerged when Dewey responded to Hutchins's traditional viewpoint. In direct contrast to Hutchins, Dewey proposed an approach to education that was dramatically progressive. Dewey (1938) championed the "organic connection between education and personal experience" (p.12). Rather than focus attention solely on the intellect, he maintained that education should do more to balance the whole student: his or her intellect, his psychosocial development, morals and ethics (Dewey, 1938). According to this philosophy, the mission of colleges and universities should be holistic in nature, integrating students' mastery of disciplinary content and cognitive competencies with opportunities for social interaction and experimental learning. Accordingly, students need opportunities to link knowledge with experience and to also link learning with social interaction (Dewey, 1938; Arcelus, 2008). Subscribers to Dewey's philosophy favor an approach to higher education in which the opportunities for learning and personal development that exist outside the classroom can be linked to the content-based learning that occurs within the formal

curriculum, such that students' social and academic lives complement one another. Thus, Dewey's approach encourages the learner be continuously engaged in linking theory and practice. He or she becomes a contributor to his/her own learning, and with this responsibility the focus draws more away from the teacher and content-centeredness of Hutchins's approach (Arcelus, 2008; Dewey, 1938).

Education for the 21st Century

The battle between traditionalists and progressives is longstanding, and according to Arcelus (2008), "the…philosophies of education ultimately imply different goals, purposes, and curricula for institutions of higher learning" (p. 373). Even today, decades after the approaches first came out, many in higher education continue to operate from strictly one perspective and not the other. In most cases, it is the faculty that preaches the value of Hutchins's traditional vision, and it is the administrative or student affairs staff that operates from Dewey's progressive, holistic vision. Therefore, in many ways, the debate of educational philosophy is still very much alive (Arcelus, 2008).

Since the end of the 20th century, though, both educators and employers alike have begun to reach similar conclusions about the kinds of education that students need from college (Keeling, 2004). Upon entering the 21st century, Americans of all ages have

witnessed many dramatic changes. According to the LEAP National Leadership Council, which in 2007 released the report entitled, *College Learning for the New Global Century:*

> in recent years, the ground has shifted for Americans in virtually every important sphere of life – economic, global, cross-cultural, environmental, and civic. The world is being dramatically reshaped by scientific and technological innovations, global interdependence, cross-cultural encounters, and changes in the balance of economic and political power. These waves of dislocating changes will only intensify. The context with which today's students will make choices and compose lives is one of disruption rather than certainty, and of interdependence rather than insularity. (AAC&U, 2007, p.1-2)

What these changes have inspired is a call to give priority to a new set of educational outcomes. Rather than advocating a one-size-fits-all general curriculum, the LEAP Council urges that learning be fostered and developed across the entire educational experience and also in the context of the students' majors (AAC&U, 2007). The Council's final report specifically outlines what it believes should be the objectives of a twenty-first century college education. The framework it offers expands on the American notion of liberal education, leading to the conclusion that there are four essential learning outcomes: *1) Knowledge of Human Cultures and the Physical and Natural World, 2) Intellectual and Practical Skills, 3) Personal and Social Responsibility, and lastly, 4) Integrative Learning* (AAC&U, 2007). Employers, likewise, share the sentiment that a college education should do more to cultivate the entire person. After all, it is the employer that relates and deals with a student post-college. Therefore, what many

employers have come to see is that it is no longer enough to have an employee with specific technical job skills. In order to better relate to the complex and diverse world of the 21st century, employers recognize the need to have men and women on their workforce that possess broader skills (communication, teamwork, problem-solving skills, and work ethic). These "360 degree people" (Hart, 2006, p.7) not only promise greater success for the employer, but in the world of fast-changing work environments, are better equipped with the tools to also be successful and market themselves (Hart, 2006). Therefore, in comparison to the educational philosophy advanced by Hutchins, many in the field of education today consider the educational vision espoused by Dewey to be a better fit for students and their needs in the 21st century.

The Campus Community

The four main outcomes outlined by the LEAP report are broad on purpose, how an institution implements the goals is dependent on each specific campus community. A diverse campus community can do nothing but help provide students with the type of educational opportunities that can help train them for their lives post-college (Arcelus, 2008; Caple, 1996; Keeling, 2004). According to Gardner (1989), there is great value in a community. It provides its members a sense of shared identity, a feeling of belonging, and the security of belonging. Communities are amazing systems because they can easily

transmit values and beliefs that hold organizations together. College campus communities are no exception (Gardner, 1989; Kuh & Whitt, 1988; Masland, 1991).

The sense of community found on college and university campuses is considered by Caple (1996) to be one of the greatest forms of a community association. Every aspect of the institution is woven together in some way, and as such, the college campus provides the ideal backdrop for the student to learn and practice new information and skills, and can encourage a student's sense of belonging (Rhoads & Tierney, 1992). According to Arcelus (2008), the campus community is like a tribe. Generations on campus constantly inter-mix, and during these interactions, information and knowledge are transmitted in every direction. In this way, therefore, the entire population of the campus can function as a learning community (Keeling, 2004).

In *The Student Learning Imperative*, ACPA (1996) recognizes that institutional environments contribute greatly to what students gain from college. Learning and personal development are enhanced when conditions on campus motivate and inspire students to dedicate more time and energy to educationally-purposeful activities, both in- and out-of-classroom. This idea of putting theory into practice in a community setting that encourages such is what Huber et al. (2005) consider integrative. According to AAC&U (2002), students become "integrative thinkers [when they] can see connections in seemingly disparate information... [when they can] draw on a wide range of knowledge to make decisions... [and when they can] adapt the skills learned in one situation to problems encountered in another: in a classroom, the workplace, their communities, or their personal lives" (p. 12). An integrated educational experience best prepares students

to learn because it is from experience that connections are made and theory is put into practice. This integration is also valuable because it allows students to practice engaging in their communities as adults; they become sensitive to complex interdependencies and are able to apply skills that allow them to synthesize information from multiple sources (Huber, Hutchings, & Gale, 2005).

In order to maximize learning opportunities on campus, Keeling (2004) advises that all resources on campus must come together to bear on the student's learning process. However, before all members of a given campus community are able to come together and work collectively towards a common agenda, the institution's organizational patterns must support holistic student learning in today's environment. The design of the university must foster a culture of integration between knowledge and experience, between theory and practice. In order to put learning into action, it is important that those on campus responsible for learning and action work together (Keeling, 2004).

Part II

"The highest education is that which does not merely give us information but makes our life in harmony with all existence."

Rabindranath Tagore

Academic and Student Affairs and the Roots of Distinction

The campus community is made up of two main divisions: academic affairs and student affairs. The faculty and academic affairs staff are primarily responsible for creating and transmitting knowledge. Their main goal is to preserve and safeguard the life of the mind. Personnel in student affairs, on the other hand, have stepped forward to cultivate the life of the body and spirit. They work on promoting students' psychosocial development while at the same time encouraging students to be involved members of the campus community (Brown, 1990; Dennis, 2007; Carpenter, 2004; Schuh & Whitt, 1999). The two divisions have different objectives, and while it used to be that college was all about the curriculum and knowledge acquisition, the first part of this literature review has shown that such a narrow focus is no longer ideal. The life of both body and spirit must be cultivated in college environments at the same time. A curriculum, a faculty, and students no longer make a college (Dennis, 2007; Rentz, 2004).

Both divisions co-exist on campus, but getting the two to work together has, historically, been a very difficult task. The difficulty getting both divisions to work

together began back when student affairs was born. Student Affairs was created in response to the growing complexity of American higher education. As institutions expanded and evolved during the 20th century, tasks became divided (Arcelus, 2008; Dennis, 2007; Altbach, Berdahl & Gumport, 2005; Thelin, 2003; Rentz, 2004). As college education shifted more towards field specialization, as student body numbers increased, and as students became more diverse, faculty responsibilities shifted from 'in loco parentis' to a more specific commitment to teaching and advancing knowledge. The result of this shift was that faculty became detached from the broader campus community, which then led to the development of administrative offices to perform tasks formerly assigned to the faculty. New personnel were needed to address the student life concerns that were becoming more and more complex at the same time. The emergence of student affairs, while necessary considering the many changes to higher education, became a catalyst for isolation between academics and student life on campus (Arcelus, 2008). Faculty could remain committed to their fields and to teaching, and student affairs personnel could tend to everything else. These specific organizational assignments created the isolation between academic and student affairs. This isolation, as a result, treated academic learning as separate from the development of self and personality (Guarasci, 2001).

So it became that the academic affairs side tended more towards the cultivation of the intellect, and the student affairs side tended to the body and spirit. Predecessors in education thought about these components individually, and the problematic result was a college experience that distinguished and separated learning from student life (Arcelus,

2008; Keeling, 2004). All too often, faculty members' responsibilities took priority over those of student affairs' professionals and the result became a class system on campus. The problem with this class system is that student affairs work is often considered less important than classroom teaching, and because of such dismissal, the opportunities for collaboration and integration are lost (Arcelus, 2008; Kezar & Lester, 2009).

Organizational Culture

In order to get institutions to a point where new learning objectives and expectations can be met, all members of the campus community must be prepared to reconsider their work. This idea of collaboration has been in the minds of many over the past few decades. There has been "increasing recognition among organizational leaders…and higher-education change agents…about the importance of collaboration among functional areas (i.e. student and academic affairs)…" (Kezar & Lester, 2009, p.3). In fact, multiple authors have asserted that institutions should focus on student learning and cross-divisional integration so that academic affairs is no longer solely responsible for the intellect and student affairs is no longer solely responsible for the body and spirit. Distinguishing the components (mind, body, and spirit) is pointless and potentially harmful (Keeling, 2004). According to Love and Love (1995), intellectual

development does not happen exclusively in class, and social and emotional development does not happen exclusively out of class.

Partnerships between academic and student affairs and the sharing of resources in collaborative efforts can show students how everything learned in college, from the course material in class to the interpersonal skills from the sports team, works together with everything else to make students more well-rounded citizens and employees. If education is to best prepare students for life and citizenship in the 21st century, then integration of all domains of the campus should occur. With this approach, students' in- and out-of-class experiences are not only mutually supportive of one another, but equally important to the common task of educating the whole student (Kuh, 1996b; Arcelus, 2008; Keeling, 2004; Dennis, 2007).

Kezar and Lester (2009) call for an environment where all divisions operate under a common vision and merge or share resources in order to attain that vision. Those environments, according to the authors, create innovation and learning. Unfortunately, this merger of ideas and efforts between the two divisions is difficult to attain, mostly so because collaboration has not been the customary practice (Arcelus, 2008). After all, there would not be a call for a new approach to education if such a system already existed. The influence of institutional customs on the environment for collaboration across academic and student affairs divisions was summarized by Arcelus (2008) as follows.

Depending on the philosophy followed, it affects how the student affairs division, [particularly], approaches its role. At an institution that adheres to a traditional

philosophy, the student affairs division would likely be very small and serve a purely service function in support of the academic affairs division. At an institution with a progressive approach, student affairs would likely operate in tandem with academic affairs in promoting educational experiences that engage students as active participants in their education, while cultivating opportunities for continuity and integration within and between the in- and out-of-class aspects of students' lives." (p.374)

If a campus is to move into the 21st century, the environment must encourage such progression. Arcelus's comment demonstrates that the movement towards integration depends on the college campus and how it perceives such harmony. If an institution is to grow with the times and provide its students with integrated educational experiences, then the organizational culture on campus must encourage partnerships between the academic and student affairs divisions. Therefore, an understanding of the institutional conditions and organizational culture that affect the potential road ahead must exist (Arcelus, 2008).

Collaborative Culture

In 2009, authors Kezar and Lester released *Organizing Higher Education for Collaboration*. In it, they tackled three main objectives: (1) to describe the necessity,

benefits, and barriers to collaboration, (2) to provide an image of what successful collaboration looks like, and (3) to help professionals redesign their respective structures. According to the authors, there are countless benefits to collaboration. When there is greater opportunity for communication between different groups on campuses, the likelihood for innovation and problem-solving increases as well (Kezar & Lester, 2009). As mentioned earlier, it used to be that each of the two main divisions would go about its own affairs and specialize in that field, but with collaboration, people within and across departmental lines can work with one another and brainstorm more efficiently. Under a vision of integration, the traditional specialization of function, wherein the faculty focuses exclusively on intellectual development and student affairs staff on social and emotional development, is problematic insofar as it fails to maximize the learning that occurs at the intersection of the two realms (Arcelus, 2008). "Siloed organizations," according to Kezar and Lester (2009), "typically involve more time to resolve a problem" (p.12). Collaborative structures, on the other hand, allow information to be shared between offices; all facets of the university are interconnected. Under such conditions, organizations ultimately offer better service to the students and, at the same time, the staff is challenged and motivated. With the goal of higher education being to produce creative, contributing citizens in a global community, collaboration on campus gives students the opportunity to connect skills and knowledge from multiple experiences as well as apply theory to practice in various settings (AAC&U, 2007; Huber et al., 2005; Hutchins & Gale, 2005; Terenzini et al., 1995). Collaboration is the logical choice for

institutions of higher education, for it minimizes the divergence of educational delivery

systems (Kezar & Lester, 2009; Terenzini et al., 1995).

Part III

"The one great thing about a continuing collaboration is that they know you. And if you're really lucky, they really believe in you and think that your talent has some unending bounds to it."

Mark Ruffalo

Putting Collaboration into Practice

Partnerships between academic and student affairs personnel can enhance overall student learning by showing students how knowledge acquisition and practice take place all over campus, across many different situations and in a wide-range of scenarios (Kezar & Lester, 2009; Arcelus, 2008; ACPA, 1996; Keeling, 2004; AAC&U, 2002; Altbach, Berdahl & Gumport, 2005). Establishing a climate for collaboration, though, is not as simple as giving personnel opportunities to talk and work together. There must be a mutual goal that both divisions work to attain; there must be a recognized understanding of the good the other division offers; and there must be the sharing of important resources (i.e. knowledge, experience, influence, time, money, etc.). More often than not, though, these tasks are not easily implemented or put into practice. The examination that follows in this section of the literature review demonstrates the difficulty that institutions face as they try to find their own, unique approach to collaboration (Kezar & Lester, 2009; Arcelus, 2008). The study introduced in the following chapter is a follow up to a previous study, which will be examined in the next section of this literature review. Both

studies were conducted within the same institutional setting, so thorough attention is placed on the previous findings from this institution.

Arcelus's Project

In the 2003-2004 academic year, Arcelus (2008) conducted a case study at *Crossroads University* (pseudonym). He set out to "investigate how faculty and student affairs personnel perceive their own and each other's roles as educators on the campus and how these perceptions influence the potential for collaboration between the divisions that will optimally benefit students" (Arcelus, 2008, p.iii). Student-learning outcomes were not assessed, but rather, Arcelus explored the tension between academic and student affairs on the *Crossroads* campus, introducing the analogy of "the perfect storm" (p. iv).

The Analogy

The "Perfect Storm" analogy that Arcelus (2008) referred to was the unstable environment that characterized *Crossroads*. Under this analogy, the larger storm is made up of three "storm systems" (institutional leadership, academic affairs, and student

affairs), which when collided against one another "created a competitive and self-protective dynamic between the academic and student affairs division[s]…" (p. iv). Each of these elements, in isolation, would affect the campus community, but it was the convergence of the three weather systems that magnified issues. In the year that Arcelus observed *Crossroads*, many major institutional events took place: the President retired after four years in office (a second consecutive perceived short-term presidency); the Provost resigned; and a heightened sense of conflict arose between the academic and student affairs divisions. Opinions varied greatly, and Arcelus found that no two people could come to an agreement about the principles for which *Crossroads* stood. Institutional identity and mission could not be articulated, and many interviewees expressed a belief that fragmentation existed on many levels: between administrators and students, administrators and faculty, and faculty and trustees; among faculty; and of particular interest to this study, between the divisions of academic affairs and student affairs. The "perfect storm" analogy describes *Crossroads's* situation by emphasizing the intensity of the disruption on campus; all storm systems synchronized perfectly to create a situation that was detrimental to the collegiate educational setting. On a campus that maintained institutional fragmentation with its distinct, separate storm systems, cross-divisional collaboration, at the time of Arcelus's (2008) study, had little opportunity to flourish.

Storm System I - Institutional Leadership

Kezar and Lester (2009) noted that the foundation and building blocks for collaboration must come from a leader (or leaders) that can motivate people to reorganize. According to the authors, though, a leader is "not well-equipped unless he or she can describe the type of service provided when people collaborate, the benefits of cognitive complexity, and how collaboration can help organizations innovate" (p.1). In Arcelus's (2008) study, a large segment of the campus community attributed the problems of the institution to a failure of leadership on the part of the university President. Not only was the President seen as responsible for the difficulties that the institution faced, but the strained relationship between the academic and student affairs divisions was specifically traced to shortcomings in the workings of the executive leadership team. Many participants in the study pointed out that the President was unable to bond campus community members together. From their perspective, "he failed to provide a vision and was not skilled in helping others identify their overlapping goals" (Arcelus, 2008, p.134). A general theme from the interviewees was that instead of being an involved leader, the President was more of an aloof "figurehead" (p.132). He, along with other executive leaders, was likened to one who is "asleep at the wheel" (p.139).

Participants believed that institutional leaders shaped the campus climate in ways that negatively affected every facet of the campus community (Arcelus, 2008). There was no mutually agreed-upon mission or philosophy. There was no sense of unification

between faculty, trustees, and campus leaders.   Rather than faculty and staff feeling confident with their leadership, many that Arcelus spoke to expressed dissatisfaction with the climate on campus. People longed for a sense of shared institutional mission, and they wanted the direction to come from the top, down. However, without clear roles and direction, people found themselves unwilling to commit to broader institutional initiatives and responsibilities. Opportunities to form trusting, solid relationships were missed as a result of this apathy. Rather than bridge academics and student life, the weak leadership and an unsupportive structure reinforced the distinction and did nothing to close the gap (Arcelus, 2008).

Storm System II - Academic Affairs

The nature of a modern academic profession entitles a person to a certain degree of autonomy. Faculty members are considered experts in their respective fields, and at *Crossroads* they describe themselves as being both teachers and scholars (Arcelus, 2008). Faculty members' first responsibility is to teach students. Arcelus's faculty respondents told him that they thoroughly enjoy the learning process and they feel rewarded when they see others grow in their understanding of the world around them.   Their second responsibility, an equal second, is to advance scholarship in their fields.   The third responsibility of faculty on campus is service to the organization. They are encouraged to

be involved in the campus community and student activities (Dennis, 2007; Arcelus, 2008). Service, however, as Arcelus found, falls a distant third when compared to teaching and scholarship. The load of classes and research is so overwhelming that faculty have difficulty balancing their two highest priorities. The life of the professor has all the ups and downs of the students' semesters. Then add to that the stress of scholarship and faculty feel overwhelmed. Many of them said that they do not think that leaders on campus understand their struggle. Handling so many responsibilities simultaneously, faculty members wished that the leadership at *Crossroads* would guide them in creating a campus community where they could more effectively strike a balance among teaching, scholarly advancement, on-campus engagement, and life outside their jobs (Arcelus, 2008). Among the responsibilities of faculty, service and engagement with students always took a distant third. Faculty reported feeling no expectations to connect with students outside the classroom, and, given the faculty role strain and conflict described earlier, many did not feel that there was sufficient time in their lives to participate in informal gatherings with students (Arcelus, 2008).

While there were some faculty members that acknowledged the need to be more involved beyond the classroom and curricula, and there were even some who took the extra steps to do so, the majority, unfortunately, "did not wish to capitalize on the out-of-classroom experience" (Arcelus, 2008, p.170). Faculty felt that it was "not their job to do that work" (p. 167). To these individuals, protecting the intellectual climate on campus was more important than being involved in students' extracurricular activities. Faculty yearned for more intellectual students and a more vibrant academic climate on campus.

Focusing attention on the extracurricular was seen as taking away from the academic core, and following that direction upset many faculty (Arcelus, 2008).

Competing with student affairs was something faculty did not like having to do. When questioned about what they thought of the extra-curricular opportunities, they likened them to those one would find on a cruise ship (Arcelus, 2008). The cruise ship analogy was a clear indication that faculty members in Arcelus's study did not take non-academic activities seriously. Academics call themselves purveyors of knowledge and they ardently believe that academic primacy must be clear. Faculty called themselves "the sole educators" (p.217) on campus, maintaining that the only intellectual opportunities on campus were academically-infused endeavors. Many faculty told Arcelus that involvement in students' life outside of class was unnecessary because those activities offered by student affairs were considered secondary to academics. This justification explained their lack of campus involvement. Faculty in the study acknowledged that student affairs did support academics, but they also cautioned that the division should not consider itself equal to the academic division (Arcelus, 2008).

Storm System III - Student Affairs

In the absence of faculty engagement with students outside of class, the work of student affairs personnel within the extra-curricular realm becomes critically important.

Student affairs staff fill the void that is left with lack of faculty involvement. In the absence of faculty-coordinated intellectually stimulating opportunities outside the classroom, students turn to other opportunities on campus, and as it turns out, the most visible out-of-classroom activities are coordinated by student affairs staff (Arcelus, 2008).

On *Crossroads's* campus, student affairs personnel considered their work educational in nature (Arcelus, 2008). The opportunities they provide are believed to be integrative. The work that the student affairs staff does provides students with opportunities to apply theoretical knowledge learned in the classroom to practical problems encountered in real-life (Arcelus, 2008; AACU, 2007). Viewed in this context, student affairs "is integral to the learning process because of the opportunities it provides students to learn through action, contemplation, reflection and emotional engagement as well as information acquisition" (Keeling, 2004, p.12).

Comments by student affairs personnel on the *Crossroads* campus reflected their conviction that their work was educational. According to one respondent, "student affairs is [all] about education. [Student affairs staff] are one of many different types of educators on campus…" (Arcelus, 2008, p. 193). A job in student affairs is very intentional. Student affairs professionals explained how they draw upon student-learning theories to develop strategies that guide their work day-to-day. They use these theories to better understand the students with whom they work, and in this way, the activities and programs they design are extremely deliberate and thought-provoking (Arcelus, 2008).

Student affairs staff, unlike faculty, get to see students in a different light. As a result, they have the opportunity to form close relationships with students. According to those staff members Arcelus (2008) interviewed, their unique relationship with students allows them to complement the academic mission by challenging students to think critically about different topics in different ways. They enrich and facilitate student learning through direct involvement and interaction. Therefore, many of the student affairs staff Arcelus spoke with told him that they call themselves educators as much as administrators (Arcelus, 2008; ACE, 1949).

It is through these close relationships that student affairs staff believed that they supported the academic mission at *Crossroads*. According to one student affairs professional, "everything I do is educational; every conversation I have is educational; [I] teach students how to relate to one another" (Arcelus, 2008, p. 194). These individuals believed that the school is in a position where it provides a residential experience that operates in conjunction with the academic program. Student affairs staff feel they assist the university by making students feel welcome, comfortable, and settled within the community; in turn, students can turn their attention to their school work and classes (Arcelus, 2008).

College, as mentioned earlier, is no longer solely about acquiring specific knowledge; the world of work has changed and so have students themselves. As a result, higher education institutions have become more complex structures that cater to the entire student experience (Arcelus, 2008; ACPA, 1996; AAC&U, 2007; Keeling, 2004). Experiences are exactly what students are looking for nowadays from college. As

Arcelus (2008) pointed out, "students look for institutions that are invested in providing a rich in- and out-of-classroom experience" (p. 207). Student affairs programs provide students with these opportunities. If these services were not in place, one negative side effect could be that student retention be affected, a point that several of the faculty in Arcelus's study even acknowledged. However, sharing with student affairs the same sentiment regarding student experiences did not necessarily mean faculty members believed in the work of student affairs. Generally speaking, many faculty discredited the value of student affairs, and as a result, student affairs staff expressed feelings of frustration (Arcelus, 2008).

The Tension between Academics and Student Life

Tension existed between the academic and student affairs divisions, and it manifested itself through conversations that the staff had with others within their respective divisions. Student affairs staff members were often highly critical of the faculty and academics were often just as unsupportive in return. The two groups' characterizations of each other seemed to be deeply embedded in the institutional culture, but in some instances, appeared to be based largely on misconceptions (Arcelus, 2008).

Critique of academic affairs. As mentioned earlier, many faculty members in Arcelus's (2008) study did not take advantage of the opportunities to get involved in students' out-of-class activities and development. This lack if involvement was the biggest criticism of academic affairs personnel. Student affairs staff expressed the desire for faculty to be more engaged with students outside the classroom. This engagement, it was believed, would show students that faculty valued students' whole experiences. Faculty are the group on campus that students respect the most, and with such influence, faculty members can maximize students' learning opportunities by engaging with them on other levels besides just in the classroom (Harward as cited in Kuh et al., 2004). Developing a meaningful relationship with a professor is a significant part of the collegiate experience for a student. Intellectual growth is associated with faculty members, so if students could see their professors engage beyond the classroom and be a part of their extracurricular activities, then students could be convinced that faculty care about the whole collegiate experience. Faculty do have unparalleled abilities to enhance learning processes on campus, and in an indirect way, their support of the extracurricular would bring the college experience together as one inter-connected whole (Arcelus, 2008; Kuh et al., 1991).

The benefit of faculty involvement is great, and it did not appear that faculty disagreed with the claims made against them, but in the end, it seemed easier for faculty to complain about what they thought the student affairs division was doing wrong or what was wrong with *Crossroads* (Arcelus, 2008). According to respondents in the study, faculty were often quick to complain about what was wrong and to offer their views of

what things should be like, but what faculty members, generally speaking, failed to provide were solutions to the problem. It was easier for faculty to blame others. (Arcelus, 2008).

Critique of student affairs.   During the academic year that Arcelus did his research at *Crossroads*, there was little public support for student affairs from faculty. While there were some faculty members that expressed support for student affairs' contribution to the university, many of those professors expressed their support in secret. While it was possible for faculty to articulate, privately, the value that student affairs offered, in the open, it was safer and more "politically correct" to say that academics should be the center of everything (Arcelus, 2008).   Among faculty, there was peer pressure to not publically support student life.   Professors did not think it was worth endangering their reputations with faculty colleagues by expressing support for student affairs.   They did not want to be seen as less committed to the academic project (Arcelus, 2008).

This idea of academic primacy fueled Arcelus's (2008) study.   Faculty were ardent with their desire to keep *Crossroads* intellectual, and their biggest concern with student affairs was that its involvement on campus distracted students from intellectual development.   Faculty believed that student life on campus was making students less intellectual than they would be otherwise.   Many faculty expressed concern that students were spread too thin and were not sufficiently focused on academics (Arcelus, 2008).

No matter whom Arcelus asked, faculty member or student affairs professional, both groups agreed that the academic mission was the most important objective on the *Crossroads* campus (Arcelus, 2008). Tension surfaced when faculty heard that student affairs staff believed their work contributed directly to the academic mission. Faculty tended to place student affairs squarely in a support or service function, and as such, the two divisions were not seen as equal. It was stated earlier that faculty found student affairs more distracting than supportive, so to hear that student affairs staff considered themselves equal to faculty particularly upset some faculty members. Faculty told Arcelus that they were the sole educators on campus, so the news that student affairs staff considered themselves to be educators alarmed faculty. They felt threatened by the prospect of sharing the role of educator with their colleagues in student affairs, a fear Arcelus believed to be unwarranted. The discord between faculty and student affairs was likened to a kind of classism, where faculty thought what they did was the most important thing on the campus. Therefore, faculty often approached the work of student affairs personnel with a perception of inequality and skepticism (Arcelus, 2008).

Overcoming faculty assumptions about the subordinate nature of their work was difficult for student affairs staff, and it was not as though they did not recognize the disdain expressed toward them as it was not often concealed. Based on the messages they received from faculty, student affairs staff used the following words to describe themselves: the "step-child," "second-class citizen," "sub-curricular," and "happy glitter and glue office" (Arcelus, 2008, p. 210). While there were some participants in Arcelus's study that believed that student affairs staff should just accept their second-class role and

stop worrying about being accepted as equals to the faculty, student affairs staff did not want to remain undervalued. They felt confident in the value that their roles and contributions offered students. Their roles were seen as potentially having a huge impact on student development, yet unfortunately, those in student affairs felt, on the whole, as though their contributions to educating students were not acknowledged or taken seriously. In attempting to explain the distance between the two divisions, one participant in Arcelus's (2008) study put it this way: "professors feel unnecessarily vulnerable...it's insecurity on [faculty members'] part – they feel threatened, and they shouldn't feel threatened. There is nothing threatening about [sharing the role of educator with student affairs]" (Arcelus, 2008, p. 234). Student affairs staff felt that faculty members were pushing them away. The larger the distance between the two divisions of the university, the less communication that existed between them (Arcelus, 2008).

Missed Opportunities

When the three storm systems collided, the "perfect storm" resulted. Weak leadership; a stressed, yet proud faculty; and the "red-headed step-children" in student affairs compounded with one another and produced an educational setting that was vastly compromised. Each storm system by itself resulted in messiness, but the combination of all three made *Crossroads* struggle to create cohesiveness (Arcelus, 2008).

Arcelus's (2008) research raised questions as to whether communication and interaction could happen at *Crossroads*. At the root of the difficulty in bringing about a climate for collaboration was misunderstanding. On *Crossroads's* campus, the strain between faculty and student affairs was noted. Arcelus observed that the relationship between the two divisions was challenging to navigate. Both divisions were moving in the same general direction and both had similar final objectives, but without intentional overlap, one did not know what the other was doing. According to one faculty member, "we, [faculty and student affairs staff], often don't take the steps needed to communicate more clearly, to build bridges – we're more likely to throw stones" (Arcelus, 2008, p.300). It appeared to Arcelus that the separation and competition was easier to sustain than collaboration because many faculty struggled with exactly where the overlap between academics and student life lay.

When asked, though, about the value of communication across the divisions, both faculty and student affairs staff said they considered collaboration important on campus. Saying and doing, though, were two different things. These respondents also went on to say that since the upper level administration operated as if campus communication were an afterthought, the feeling of disregard trickled down the ladder. There was a natural tendency to compartmentalize communication patterns, and without the proper push in the direction of collaboration, academic and student affairs personnel did not take the steps needed to build the bridge. In fact, "limited opportunities existed for joint committee work between academic and student affairs" (Arcelus, 2008, p.309). Without opportunities that motivated people towards building relationships, Arcelus identified a

culture in which people approached collaboration with uncertainty and skepticism. The absence of mutual understanding "led to a contentious relationship [between faculty and student affairs staff] because people depend[ed] on their inaccurate perceptions to assess situations and argue perspectives" (Arcelus, 2008, p.308).

Conclusions

When Arcelus did his research at *Crossroads,* what he found was a premier institution struggling to find its common ground. The three storm systems -- institutional leadership, academics, and student life -- all collided, and the result was a storm so strong that it left *Crossroads* as an institution fine on paper, but in pieces with regard to campus culture. Arcelus coined a nautical analogy to relate *Crossroads's* state. Essentially, each division and even the departments and offices within, were their own vessels. Each one traveled in its own direction and was influenced by currents that pushed, pulled, and re-directed it away from the planned course (Arcelus, 2008).

The reason for the condition of the university comes back to the President. Many of Arcelus's respondents declared that he was responsible for the problems. Not only was he weak, but his executive team was as well. Together, the leaders at the top of the organization negatively affected institutional climate and the two other storm systems. The university lacked a clear mission, and without such, the campus community became

disjointed. Departments at *Crossroads* spiraled into their own silos, which not only affected faculty and administrators, but also the student experience in both subtle and overt ways (Arcelus, 2008).

Opportunities to interact were few and far between. Even though committees were a good place to develop powerful cross-divisional relationships, limited opportunities existed for joint committee work. One administrator told Arcelus (2008) that "the absence of mutual understanding had led to a contentious relationship because people depend[ed] on their inaccurate perceptions to assess situations and argue perspectives" (p.308). Neither side appreciated or understood the other, nor did either make efforts to be involved in or support the other's initiatives. Few chances existed for student affairs staff to speak to faculty, and faculty had few opportunities to learn more about the student affairs perspective. Since collaboration was not the norm, Arcelus (2008) found that people generally approached collaboration with uncertainty and skepticism.

What's Next

Arcelus concluded his research in 2004, and just as he was finishing up, *Crossroads* was undergoing drastic changes. The President was leaving after only a few years of service and many on the President's executive team were shuffling as well.

Crossroads was on the brink of great change, and with the arrival of a new President, a new organizational structure, and a common strategic plan, it seemed that better days were ahead for the institution. The remainder of this thesis will detail an exploration of *Crossroads* five years after Arcelus completed his work. The assessment reflects the consequences of the aforementioned changes.

Chapter Three

Methodology

This study followed up on research completed in 2008 by Victor Arcelus. Therefore, in this methodology chapter, I will first explain the approach that Arcelus employed when conducting his research. Subsequently, I will explain the process by which I conducted my own. I will outline my strategies and research support that I received and will also explain how I went about interpreting my data.

Arcelus's Methodology

Ethnography, according to Patton (2002), is a methodological tradition that focuses on asking, "What is the culture of this group of people?" (p.81). It involves learning from people in a community in order to grasp their point of view and understanding of the world around them (Van Maanen, 1988; Wolcott, 1997; Spradley, 1979). With this definition in mind, Arcelus (2008) utilized techniques consistent with an ethnographic approach, to assess the organizational climate on the *Crossroads University* campus during the 2003–2004 academic year. He wanted to know how people affiliated with the institution perceived the campus community and how academic and student affairs personnel interpreted their own realities. In Arcelus's (2008) own words, "as an

ethnography examining the culture and subcultures of one institution, [his] study [was] based on perception and interpretation" (p. 67).

What Arcelus (2008) found was that different people can have different experiences of the same campus. He noted that studying culture is "studying interpretation because what each person observes and how he or she interprets it varies" (p.67). The result was that his conclusions, while valuable, were subjectively based, and he acknowledged as much. Objective reality can never really be captured. He pointed out that his findings were but a representation of different people's perceptions that together told the story of *Crossroads University* (Dentin & Lincoln, 2005; Arcelus, 2008).

Five Years Later

Similar to Arcelus, I, too, had personal ties to the university. I had the pleasure of not only being a graduate student there, but also acting in roles within both student and academic affairs. I came across Arcelus's research in my final year of graduate coursework and was immediately intrigued by the topic and his findings. Since the timing perfectly coincided with the five-year anniversary of Arcelus's research, I was curious to find out whether the climate on campus had changed.

Crossroads was chosen for a follow up review because when Arcelus left the institution in 2004, the university was amidst great change. The President and the

Provost were both leaving, and as a result, the university was in a state of flux. Staff changes, though, were not the only points of transition. The university was also in the process of completing a vision document that emphasized increased collaboration between the academic and student affairs divisions (Arcelus, 2008). Changes in personnel had not yet resulted in broad organizational reform at that time, but the blueprint for structural changes had been put forward. *Crossroads* released the following statement:

> Despite the long recognized opportunity, academic affairs and student affairs divisions typically do not work together in substantial ways on most campuses. Rarely has an effort been made to crosscheck and reconcile student affairs goals with the academic goals of the university. As an initiative of Planning for 2010, *Crossroads's* academic affairs and student affairs divisions will explore the educational goals established by each, will identify areas of potential conflict that need to be reconciled, and will then work to bring our collective efforts into alignment in ways that recognize the primacy of the academic mission and foster a supportive intellectual climate in the *Crossroads* community. (*Crossroads*, 2003, p.11)

By the spring of 2009, when I conducted my research, sufficient time had passed for the university to act upon the statement. A new leadership team had assumed responsibility for guiding the university and a new structure emerged. The ideas quoted from the document above were summarized in the following mission statement, which was created as part of the Plan for *Crossroads,*

Crossroads is a unique national university where liberal arts and professional programs complement each other. *Crossroads* educates men and women for a lifetime of critical thinking and strong leadership characterized by continued intellectual exploration, creativity, and imagination. A *Crossroads* education enables students to interact daily with faculty who exemplify a passion for learning and a dedication to teaching and scholarship. *Crossroads* fosters a residential, co-curricular environment in which students develop intellectual maturity, personal conviction and strength of character, informed by a deep understanding of different cultures and diverse perspectives. *Crossroads* seeks to educate our students to serve the common good and to promote justice in ways sensitive to the moral and ethical dimensions of life. *(Crossroads*, 2006)

Based on the initial information presented to me, *Crossroads* appeared to be heading in the direction towards collaboration. Where I stepped forward was to follow Arcelus's lead and conduct a case study similar to his to determine if, in fact, real progress had been made or if change had been limited to just words on paper.

Research Methods

Although my research methodology mirrored that employed by Arcelus (2008) five years earlier, the groundwork established through his exploration enabled me to

focus more narrowly on the impact of the changes that occurred over the brief period of time between our studies. The narrower scope of this investigation, coupled with the time constraints under which it was conducted, resulted in less ambitious research design. Arcelus (2008) was present on *Crossroads's* campus for an entire academic year, collecting data through multiple methods. He conducted over 150 formal interviews; he observed the behavior of those on campus through meetings and open discussions, and finally, he examined university documents, reports, and publications.

Instead of a purely ethnographic approach, my research followed a phenomenological model. I collected data through interviews only. This singular approach to data collection differentiates my study from Arcelus's (2008). The conversations I had with men and women from the two divisions reflected their opinions about the state of affairs on *Crossroads's* campus between Arcelus's time and my own. According to the Oxford English Dictionary online, "phenomenology is the branch of philosophy that deals with what you see, hear and feel…" The term has relevance to multiple fields of study, but in relation to psychology and the social sciences, phenomenological studies, concisely put, examine the subjective experiences of their participants. According to Creswell (2007), the examination that takes place as part of a phenomenological study is the result of an experience. More precisely, "this form of study seeks to understand the meaning of experiences of individuals about [a] phenomenon." This focus on understanding the shared experiences of individuals is reflected in the procedure advocated by Creswell (2007), which he explained as follows:

individuals are selected who have experienced the phenomenon, and they are asked to provide data, often through interviews. The researcher takes this data and, through several steps of reducing the data, ultimately develops a description of the experiences about the phenomenon that all individuals have in common – the essence of experience. (p.94)

The participants in my study all experienced the same two phenomena: (1) the merger of the academic and student affairs divisions, and (2) a concurrent transition in executive leadership. The questions I asked these men and women were designed to elicit their perceptions and feelings as a result of this experience. Therefore, my approach to data collection was scaled down from Arcelus's approach, reflecting my narrower focus on the changes in the organization that had occurred in the time between his study and mine. The following subsections of this chapter provide a summary of the procedures employed in the collection and analysis of the data, as well as a discussion of limitations inherent to the procedures.

Project recruitment. In order to ensure the validity and significance of my study, the interviewees that I questioned were all participants in Arcelus's (2008) study five years earlier. In order to find these subjects, I requested Arcelus's assistance. Without divulging his participants' names beforehand, Arcelus sent an email to his interviewees, telling them of my project and asking them if they would be interested in participating (*See Appendix A*). Once he received responses in the affirmative, I was

then notified of the person's name and contact information. At that time, I went about contacting the respondents myself via email to set up meeting times and places (*See Appendix B*). My correspondence included information on the purpose of my study and the potential significance of the findings to the university and to the academic community in general. Also included in the email was a picture of myself so that the respondents would know who I was on campus. My target was to have five interviews, with individuals representing both academic and student affairs. By the end of the recruitment period, I exceeded my number by one and ended up with six participants.

Interviews. For my case study, I conducted six interviews with men and women from both academic and student affairs. Two of the six interviews were with faculty members. Those professors both happened to be social scientists; one was in education, and the other studied psychology. The six individuals were differentiated as follows:

Student Affairs Professional
Faculty Member- Female
Faculty Member- Male
Academic Affairs Professional
Executive Leader
Student Affairs Administrator

No gender designations are included in this report, except for the two faculty members. The reason for the omission is to deter speculation as to the possible identities of the subjects based on their positions within the university.

All interviews were conducted upon conclusion of the 2009 spring semester. Five of the six were completed in May; one was completed in June.   Individuals were questioned for approximately one hour, and they had the option of allowing me to record their interviews or not. Their choices were noted on the informed consent forms, which all respondents filled out completely before beginning their interviews.

With regard to the format of the interviews, I used a set of questions from Arcelus's (2008) study to create a semi-structured protocol (*See Appendix C*). I included questions that not only solicited information about participants' roles on campus, but that also explored their views of the university, how things changed over the previous five years, and their feelings and perceptions of *Crossroads* at the time of the interview. I approached the interview by using the questions I prepared as an opening for further discussion. If a response to a question brought up an additional topic, then I led discussion in that direction.

Participant and institutional identity. Throughout the data collection process and the writing of this thesis, the identities of both the university and the participants have been concealed. The pseudonym, *Crossroad University*, has been used to identify the institution. This name is that which Arcelus (2008) used when writing his own

dissertation. The participants, on the other hand, are identified by their roles on campus and, in the case of faculty only, gender categories. Again, no gender designations were included for the other participants, so as to not draw attention or speculation to the possible identities of the subjects based on their positions within the university. The specific descriptions are as follows:

Faculty members (F)

- Gender (F=female; M=male)

Administrator (A)

- Division (AA=Academic Affairs; SA=Student Affairs)

Professionals (P)

- Division (AA=Academic Affairs; SA=Student Affairs)

Executive (E)

Student Affairs Professional	(SA-P)
Faculty Member- Female	(F-F)
Faculty Member- Male	(F-M)
Academic Affairs Professional	(AA-P)
Executive Leader	(E)
Student Affairs Administrator	(SA-A)

Participants determined if these descriptions could be used when writing the thesis results. Preferences were noted on individuals' consent forms. Three of my participants authorized me to include their positions and titles in the final paper, but the other half

asked me to refrain from doing so. I sought to honor each individual's preference, but as Miles (1983) points out, while "pseudonyms…can…protect these individuals from the researcher's larger audience" (p.143), ultimately, "there is no possibility of real anonymity inside the site; everyone in the case [knows] exactly who [is] who" (p.128). Therefore, in order to protect the identities of my subjects, at least to the extent possible, I avoided titles altogether unless I was discussing the comments from the two faculty members. Before the interviews, when I spoke with the participants, I made sure to discuss the fact that every attempt would be made to protect their identities, but I also acknowledged that members of the community might draw their own conclusions as to who may have said what. I believe that in the thesis, identity is concealed as much as possible.

Researcher's relationship to the institution. I spent four years at *Crossroads University*, and in that time I served in multiple positions. I came to the campus in 2006 as an Assistant Rowing Coach and in 2007 moved on to become an Assistant Strength & Conditioning Coach for the entire athletic department. In the winter of 2007 I began my master's degree program. While I was completing my studies, I also got involved with activities beyond work and school. In the summer of 2007, I helped admissions counselors with recruitment and enrollment; in the 2007 – 2008 academic year, I assisted faculty advisors with the 2008 Northern Ireland study-abroad program; and during the 2008-2009 academic year, I worked part-time as a writing consultant in the writing

center. I was fortunate to work with many different people in both divisions of the university. I also believe I was able to gather a sense of the institution from different perspectives. It was not until I came across Arcelus's research that I began to think about my experiences and the evolution of the university in the time I was there. My curiosity was piqued, and from it, this research project came to fruition.

Potential bias and subjectivity. As an employee of the university under investigation and as the sole researcher for this project, I understand that there were potential biases present that must be noted. Nathan (2005) warns that, when considering doing research in an environment where intimate knowledge is held, there are potential problems or issues that may present themselves. I revealed earlier that I had a close connection to *Crossroads*. I do not, however, believe my association presented a problem with my research. Glesne (1999) points out that there are many benefits to doing what he calls "backyard research" (p.26). Access, rapport, and ease of data capture are among the benefits of doing research in an environment with which one is familiar and has a personal connection (Glesne, 1999). I went into the interviews with the mindset that I was the one that needed to learn something. I was not present on *Crossroads's* campus during Arcelus's (2008) research, so I personally had no circumstances to compare. My interviews allowed me the opportunity to learn from these men and women about how they regarded the changes that occurred in the time between Arcelus's study and my own. Additionally, I only knew one of the subjects prior to the interview, and before beginning our discussion, I asked this person to treat me no

differently than any other interviewer. I had no prior relationship with any of the five other subjects. Many, in fact, I first met on the days of their interviews.

Rather than hinder the data collection process, I believe my position on campus helped me better understand the topics discussed in the interviews. As a graduate student, coach, and teaching assistant, I was able to get a glimpse into different departments and divisions. At the same time, however, my time on the campus was limited and my perspective of the campus community was also limited in that I did not see the effects of the merger between academic and student affairs from my entry-level positions. Therefore, during the interviews and during data analysis, I was gathering information from my interview subjects, about which I had no prior knowledge.

In terms of the potential bias associated with the participants' responses, I acknowledge that the reader must recognize such exists. Creswell (2007) states, "the phenomenological project focuses on the meaning of people's experience" (p. 95). The responses and information presented in the following chapter are the opinions and views of each respective individual. It should be noted that different people, even within the same department, can have drastically different viewpoints on the same situation. Referring to an earlier study by Labov, Arcelus (2008) observed that "there is an inherent difficulty in analyzing what a person is saying when one is collecting data by systematically observing and listening to participants in formal interviews where interviewees may be saying what they think you expect them to say" (p.81). In the following section of this chapter, I will explain how I interpreted and evaluated information that I was given by the participants.

Data analysis. During the interview process, digital recordings were made with a Magnavox digital recorder. The audio files were then transferred to a computer, from which they were emailed to multiple hired transcriptionists, who transferred the audio recordings into print. The transcriptionists were carefully selected among a pool of applicants, and prior to beginning any work, each was made to sign a non-disclosure agreement that was to be faxed immediately back to me. Upon completion of the transcripts, all were double checked for accuracy.

With the interviews on paper, I then went about organizing the information. To do so, I created matrices, one for each interview. Along the top I noted the larger themes apparent throughout the interview. Within each column, and under each theme, I placed quotes and page numbers relating to the given topic. In creating an outline for this paper and interpreting the data, I sorted individual quotes into categories based on themes. Each "theme" had its own folder, where copies of all related quotes were placed. Within each section of the paper, I used specific quotes that best illustrated the major ideas that were explored. The end result is the summary of findings that appears in the following chapter of this thesis.

Research validity.   One-on-one interviews are the only source of data in this phenomenological research study, and being that each interview represents a collection of one person's thoughts and ideas in response to an experience, assertions contained therein

are somewhat subjective. Therefore, to ensure the accuracy of information presented in this report, I employed various techniques to keep my own biases in check.

According to Denzin (1970), triangulation is the combination of two or more data sources, investigators, methodological approaches, theoretical perspectives, or analytical methods. There are multiple forms of triangulation in social science research, but in my study I employed one in particular: theoretical triangulation. The intent behind theoretical triangulation is "to conduct the study with multiple lenses and questions in mind, to lend support to or refute findings" (Thurmond, 2001, p.254). At the beginning of this research project, I set out to determine if five years of time, coupled with a new leadership team and organizational structure, had affected the climate on *Crossroads's* campus. Arcelus (2008) concluded his research by raising opportunities for further research based on the findings he encountered. My study built upon his conclusions by focusing on questions that were formulated with the changes on campus in mind. My study re-examined his findings, through a new lens, with intent to not only determine the similarities between the two periods in this institution's recent history, but to also introduce a new framework for understanding the culture on *Crossroads's* campus.

With regard to the data, I took certain steps to ensure the accuracy of the transcripts and consequently, the statements included in this thesis. First, upon receipt of the transcripts, I offered my interview subjects the opportunity to review the transcriptions. Next, I, too, verified the transcripts against the audio recordings. I matched the writing to what I heard on the tape, and often turned to this tactic to verify wording of specific quotes and comments.

Lastly, after the results were incorporated into this thesis, the participants were able to check what had been written. I asked them to make sure the information was presented correctly and that no comments were presented out of context. I asked for their comments, and invited them to recommend any changes that they deemed appropriate. Once feedback was collected, I reviewed the paper and made any necessary modifications. These approaches validated my research results, and the end result is a paper that I believe accurately reflects the feelings of those men and women I interviewed.

Limitations. According to Amedeo Giorgi (2009), phenomenological inquiry is a matter of meaning-making, thus making it open to interpretation. This form of investigation is based around the feelings and perceptions of an individual, and as such, a phenomenological study uses participants' own words to describe a situation at a given moment. As a phenomenological study, this project was focused on the feelings and perceptions of people on the *Crossroads* campus. As such, there are limitations to the research that must be acknowledged. Any time there is an exploration into people's feelings and perceptions, the potential for subjectivity is present. The comments and beliefs presented in this thesis are those of the particular participants, in their particular positions. There were instances where the participants generalized their viewpoints, but even in these cases, caution should be exercised so as to not use their comments to broadly explain the phenomena under investigation. The conclusions drawn here cannot

be generalized beyond the immediate context, but rather, exist to offer a conceptual framework in which to study other institutions.

The second limitation to my research has to do with the subject pool. My research project was considerably scaled-down from Arcelus's (2008) earlier work. The latter included over 150 recorded interviews with 96 faculty members, administrators, and students. Moreover, Arcelus took an entire academic year to complete his observations. My project, on the other hand, was smaller in scale in that I only used interviews with six individuals, and none of them were students. Additionally, those that I interviewed were the ones that happened to respond to Arcelus's request for participation. So even beyond the limitation posed by the number of interviews, it should be noted that the respondents included only those that were willing to talk.

A third limitation to my research is that I employed strictly qualitative research methods. Through my analysis of semi-structured interview responses, I formulated my characterization of *Crossroads's* campus. This project did not include the use of any quantitative research techniques, such as statistical analysis of numerical survey data. Rather than ask questions that elicited fixed responses, I employed a research structure that elicited narrative descriptions of people's feelings and perceptions.

A mixed method design, in which both qualitative and quantitative techniques are used, would have added to the validity and practical utility of my findings, however, due to constraints present when doing my research, only the qualitative research design was adopted. Therefore, the results that are outlined in the following chapter cannot be

generalized, but rather exist to provide an understanding of one residential college's experiences with regard to the climate for collaboration.

Chapter Four

Results

Following similar format and structure, the study presented here is a follow up to the case study completed by Victor Arcelus. It explores the culture at *Crossroads University*, as it stood during the 2008-2009 academic year. My project is intended to evaluate the collaborative climate on *Crossroads's* campus with regard to the working relationships between personnel in student affairs and faculty. Five years ago, when Arcelus (2008) conducted his research investigating the same topic, the university was under different leadership and had a different organizational structure. Miscommunication plagued both the academic and student affairs divisions, and unfortunately, the institutional leadership at that time did not do much to alleviate the problem. Essentially, the collaborative climate on the *Crossroads* campus was in a state of disarray.

Since that time, though, *Crossroads* has seen new leadership take over and a new organizational structure emerge. The focus of my research was on the impact of these changes on the organizational climate of the institution. In this chapter, I present my findings.

It should be noted that this chapter does not address the benefits of collaboration; those benefits were explained previously in the literature review chapter. Rather, the results reported here reflect the extent to which the aforementioned organizational changes either enhanced or detracted from the climate on campus in relation to two key

questions: (1) Have communication and understanding improved? and (2) Has collaboration between academic and student affairs personnel emerged? The information presented here summarizes six individuals' perceptions of *Crossroads's* culture during the 2008-2009 academic year. These six individuals represented both academic and student affairs personnel, as well as executive leaders over each division. As such, their opinions are intended to represent the changes from multiple perspectives.

Crossroads University

Crossroads University, founded in the 1800s, is one of the nation's premier liberal arts institutions. It offers programs in undergraduate and professional education, with more than 50 majors and minors, and in the 2008-2009 academic year, *Crossroads* was home to over 3,000 undergraduates and graduate students. According to a recent *US News and World Report* article, *Crossroads* was among the most popular liberal arts institutions in the country (US News Staff, Jan. 25, 2011). The university offers its students premier undergraduate experiences that allow them to be better prepared to successfully handle the world of work. According to a recent online article, *Crossroads* ranks among those institutions with the nation's best graduation rates (moneywatch.com, 2011). The students that attend *Crossroads* are motivated graduates, and once they leave school, *Crossroads's* graduates come to be successful members of their communities.

Organizational Structure

Organizationally, during the 2008-2009 academic year, *Crossroads University* was structured as follows: the President served as the chief executive officer of the university and the Provost reported to him. All departments on campus were placed under the oversight of the Provost. The Dean of Arts and Sciences, Dean of Students, Dean of Engineering, Dean of Graduate Studies, Dean of Summer School, Director of Sponsored Research, Director of Business Operations, and Assistant Vice President of Planning and Institutional Research all reported to the Provost (*Crossroads University*). Between the Deans of Arts and Sciences and Engineering, 30 academic departments were represented. The Dean of Students represented departments such as Residential Life, Student Activities and Judicial Affairs on the executive leadership team (*Crossroads University*). When Arcelus (2008) did his research, the Provost supervised all departments and programs within academic affairs, and there was a Vice President for Student Affairs that headed up that division, with the Dean of Students underneath him. The structure before encouraged the divide between the two divisions. However, I found that with the change in leadership and the emergence of the new plan for the university, both divisions (academic and student affairs) were present within the executive leadership team.

The Merger

When the new President took over *Crossroads* in 2004, he arrived on a campus that was in the process of experiencing many dramatic changes. What he walked into was an environment that had some ideas on paper and good intentions for further work, yet unfortunately, nothing had been initiated or placed into action. Therefore, the new President came on board and took some time to set the stage for the next phase of *Crossroads's* future.

Much of this change took place in the form of shifts in personnel. According to one respondent, "there's been a lot of change, in particular of people because we've sadly lost some people, but even prior to that, leadership…just leadership shifted, models shifted" (SA-P). A lot of the shifts and movement were the result of a merger between the academic and student affairs divisions. As mentioned earlier, it used to be that the academic affairs division was headed up by the Provost and the student affairs division was headed up by the Vice President for Student Affairs. The old structure, according to someone in academic affairs, was likened to two trains running on parallel tracks and never converging down the line (E). With the merger, though, the intent was to "structurally and organizationally support *Crossroads's* commitment to providing a seamless educational experience" (*Crossroads University* [Merger Task Force Report], 2006, p.1). In 2006, the new President's leadership team merged the divisions of the university and eventually brought in a new Provost. As a result, there has developed a

sense that the "Provost is now in charge of everything" (AA-P). He has been likened to a "stage coach" (F-F) driver, holding the reigns that direct the course of the university. As such, the Dean of Students now talks directly with him, as opposed to the previous structure, in which the Dean of Students reported to the Vice President for Student Affairs, who in turn reported to the President. According to one respondent, "the moving of the reporting line of the Dean of Students from the VPSA, Vice President of Student Affairs, to the Provost, was the merger. That was the merger" (AA-P). Other individuals reinforced this comment. According to a faculty member, "I was thinking, 'what has this merger done?' and I think generally what it's done is just given the Dean of Students a lot more meetings."

Talk of the merger, as reflected in the comments above, was contentious. People had strong feelings regarding the merger and its implementation. As one student affairs administrator put it, "[the Dean of Students] sits at the table more often and voices certain things but…I mean, there's all kinds of opportunities for [the merger] to happen, but it hasn't happened" (SA-A). When asked to elaborate on the merger and feelings associated with it, many mentioned that there was a lot of publicity, but when it was finally implemented, nothing eventful actually happened. One respondent put it this way, "I think many of us - I'll just say, well, [thought] that something big was going to happen from [the merger] because it was hyped up so much. The date was hyped up … [and then] nothing big happened on that date" (SA-P). What did happen was an announcement. In the fall of 2005, the Provost declared the merger. What was said, according to one academic affairs professional, was "they [the divisions] are now

merged. I [the Provost] am creating a task force to facilitate this...and they are going to make recommendations to me" (AA-P). According to a faculty member, there was no communication presented to the campus about the merger. She told me that she does not "think anybody thinks there's been a merger;" and that no one is "clear about what the merger was supposed to accomplish" (F-F). Another interviewee said the same thing; "what's lacking are the correct messages, from the upper administration, to say that we are now a merged unit" (AA-P). Overall, the majority of people I spoke with expressed dissatisfaction with the idea of the merger itself and how it was implemented.

The merger may have changed the organization's reporting lines and overall structure, but when it comes to day-to-day behavior, there is a sense that *Crossroads* is "largely the same…it hasn't changed really at all" (AA-P). There were "no new bridges…, no new conduits of information, no new collaborative efforts" (AA-P). For faculty, especially, merger or no merger, their day-to-day responsibilities remained. According to one faculty member, "I feel that if [the merger] were out there, I probably would have heard about it. But, of course, the bottom line is, it doesn't really change what I do, so I don't know why I would need to know" (F-F) Another faculty member confirmed this point by stating that, the merger may have happened administratively, but all he cares about are the activities and lessons he can teach students (F-M).

I heard repeatedly that, merged structure aside, *Crossroads* was still largely the same faculty- and academic-driven place. It is the academics that give *Crossroads* its reputable name. There still is an "amazingly dedicated faculty" and a "strong sense of good will to continue to do good work' (AA-P). Five years after Arcelus's (2008) study,

Crossroads still cares for its students, and the merger does not appear to have changed the work that both faculty and student affairs staff do every day. The truth of the matter seems to be that the changes as a result of the merger only took place administratively. The university's academic core is still considered the most important aspect of institutional life, and no one I spoke to discredited the value of academics on the *Crossroads* campus.

The Merger Task Force

In order to make the administrative fusion of academic and student affairs blend seamlessly, the Provost at the time initiated a merger task force. Its objective: to strategize and implement the merger of the two divisions into a single organizational unit as outlined in *The Plan for Crossroads*. The group was, ironically, divided into two subcommittees. One subcommittee worked on structure; addressing the questions of what reporting structure would be needed and what people would be needed in what places. The other subcommittee was to identify programming initiatives that would enhance the merger or help it come to fruition. Both subcommittees developed plans and ideas that were intended to help the Provost initiate progress (AA-P).

The problem, though, was that the Provost that initiated the task force did not survive long enough on campus to be able to see the ideas put into action. One

respondent told me that he thought that the "former Provost was committed…was [he thought] very committed to the integration, the meaningful integration of student and academic affairs, but really did not have enough time to realize that" (E). The former Provost that this person referred to was one that was on campus for the first year after the new President took office. When she left, there was motivation to continue with the task force's work, but unfortunately for those involved, the drastic changes going on at the executive level affected the plans for the campus that these committee members generated. According to one academic affairs professional, the various committees did produce final reports, but what ended up happening was that the reports just "sat there. They sat. They were never really given any priority airtime or anything like that" (AA-P). Some of the ideas were ultimately implemented, but that was only because the particular forms of programming were easy to do. Others never materialized. Constraints on budget and time placed a huge burden on the university's ability to make some of these initiatives work. Even so, the main issue, according to more than one person that I interviewed, was that "given that [the task force report] was for an old provost, it's dumped. It's dead" (AA-P). The ideas presented in the final report were for a different campus, essentially.

In order to maximize the benefit of the merger, a newly configured task force was seen by many as necessary. One interviewee called for a practically brand new task force (AA-P); another called for campus leaders to "resume work in thinking on that" (E). These respondents forecasted that many of the original committee members would

probably be annoyed if called to re-evaluate the old report, but that in the end, "you don't say no to the Provost" (AA-P).

Even though the outcomes of the task force report were not published to the campus at large, one positive outcome that all respondents mentioned was the time spent working in small groups. On the larger scale of the campus community, it seemed that the decisions made were better than before, but more work was needed in smaller groups (SA-P). What the work of the task force proved, not only for those directly involved, but for others familiar with it, was that it would take a lot more than administrative structures for academic and student affairs staff to work constructively together (AA-P). Therefore, the opportunity to talk in smaller groups mixed with personnel from academic and student affairs helped in many ways (SA-P). One person said to me:

> I think a lot of what I know I've learned by just being involved… [my work on] the merger task force [enabled me to learn] a lot about the actual academic stuff behind student development…I did learn from them and that was because I was…part of the work we did, and I was open to learning that because it was very interesting. (AA-P)

Another person said the same thing of working in smaller units;

> I would go back to the smaller groups…, the search committees, [and] the other committees. I think that is best – one-on-one is the best way to get the word out and the best way, I think, to earn respect for your division and for people to see that student affairs is a profession and its made up of professionals who are educated. (SA-P)

If approached in the right way, merged activities can be successful. A student affairs administrator told me that he believed that the *Crossroads* Brigade (a program in which students, faculty, and staff take service trips together to Nicaragua) is the best example of collaboration done right. He went on to say that "both faculty and staff got together and started this program and it has been the pristine learning program for every student that has been on it. It's faculty and staff working as equals, with students as equals, and it flies. It was wonderful" (SA-A). The task force also was seen as an example of successful collaborative work, but members were disappointed when the product of their work was not publicized to the community at large. It disappointed the aforementioned student affairs administrator that people on campus were not using the model of the Brigade to go forward.

The Strategic Plan

Around the time that Arcelus conducted his research, *Crossroads* was undertaking a major task: devising a strategic plan that would take the university into the 21st century. The major problem with the whole process, though, was that the strategic planning began and remained isolated within each division; no collaboration occurred. Arcelus (2008) found that the lack of "a unified strategic planning process actually fed into the sense that people [were] retrenched back to their camps" (p. 149). Rather than create opportunities

to discuss "the greater good," the process fueled beliefs that departments operated as isolated "silos" (p.149).

The work to articulate a plan for *Crossroads* had already begun when Arcelus conducted his research; unfortunately, when the President left, and then the Provost, planning and all the work for it was abandoned (Arcelus, 2008). It took a new President, a new Provost, and a new desire to bring ideas to fruition for real change to take place. In 2004, work was resumed to articulate a unified strategic plan for the university. The President, according to one faculty member, was "primarily responsible for this creation of this *Crossroads* plan… and he's trying to tie everything that we do. He's pretty explicit about this" (M).

It took two years and many drafts, but on April 29, 2006, the Board of Trustees unanimously approved the Plan for *Crossroads*. It became the vision statement outlining the institution's aspirations for the future. It more specifically tackled the institution's strategies for achieving its goals, and the final product included strategies that would take *Crossroads* into the future. Rather than focus on short-term results, the new President and his committee produced aims that would direct the institution for an extended period of time. The result of the committee's work led to this vision statement:

> *Crossroads* will offer an academic program that is challenging and distinctive, with the capacity to prepare its graduates for successful personal, professional, and civic lives in the 21st century. *Crossroads's* residential life and co-curricular activities will fully support its academic program. This integrated environment for student learning and growth, enhanced by diversity in all its forms, will build

connections to a global society. In doing so, *Crossroads* will emerge from a place

of strength to a position of pre-eminence within American higher education.

(*Crossroads University* [The Plan for *Crossroads*], 2006, p.8)

The university intended to live out this vision statement by following five strategies: (1)

Strengthen the Academic Core, (2) Deepen the Residential Learning Experience, (3)

Enhance Diversity, (4) Build Bridges, and (5) Secure Our Financial Future. The first of

the objectives, Strengthen the Academic Core, is one I found to be of utmost importance

to my interview subjects. All interviewees considered the academic mission to be the

most important focus of the work that *Crossroads* does for its students. According to a

faculty member, "that's what everybody talks about. That's what everybody I hang out

with says: my ideas strengthen the academic core…" (F-F).

The second strategy, Deepen the Residential Learning Experience, specifically

outlines how the work of student affairs professionals on campus should directly

support the academic mission of the institution. For the first time on paper,

Crossroads's leadership tried to convey the importance of getting the two

divisions, each responsible for different objectives, to work together. The

rationale for this particular strategy, as stated in the document, was that the

"revolution in our understanding of student learning has affected dramatically our

thinking about the out-of-class lives of students." (*Crossroads University* [The

Plan for *Crossroads*], 2006, p.11)

The plan encourages the union of academics and student life so that *Crossroads* can offer

students a premier education. However, according to one academic affairs professional,

the goals and outcomes that the plan outlines, while good to get on paper, are "about as vanilla as any set of educational goals you're going to get." This individual went on to state that "you could interchange them with almost any university in the country. They aren't particularly distinctive [or] exciting" (AA-P). An administrator in student affairs shared the same sentiment. This latter person called the plan and the merger "a joke" (SA-A). He commented about how the Plan for *Crossroads* was talked about for years and then when it came out, "it wasn't exactly earth-shaking…there's too many concrete goals, but to me they aren't stimulating enough" (SA-A). From his perspective, before the plan and the official merger, he was more involved in shared experiences, but "once the plan was in effect, [he was] disinvited" (SA-A). On paper and in theory, the plan, the merger, and the work of the task force all sounded great and made it seem like things were really progressing, but according to one interviewee, the reality is that the culture on campus does not value the bond between the two divisions (AA-P). Even with the plan, this individual argued that "everybody is still on their own, because the plan is still five silos. The plan is not integrated… [the culture has not] budged a whole lot." This person went on to say that the change in reporting line "has helped with some of the frustration, but it's still there" (AA-P). According to another interviewee, even though the President has tried to link everything on campus, "sometimes he falls short on that" (F-M).

Leadership

When Arcelus (2008) conducted his research, different personnel were in certain key positions on campus: Provost, Dean of Students, and President. In the words of one participant, one way "the climate has changed, say compared to when [Arcelus] was doing this – well, we have very different and much more competent people…" (M-F). Former executive leaders were considered weak and incompetent. One student affairs administrator summed up the situation as follows.

> There was all sorts of at the top …a poor President and…a decent guy who didn't know jack about student life and he was the student life person. We went nowhere with [them], and [they] impeded the relationship [between] the Dean of Students and the President. (SA-A)

Despite this limitation, the nature of a campus community is that people change, and with that change comes new ideas and initiatives (SA-A). This hope is what fueled the new President when he arrived on the *Crossroads* campus. When he came in, the President had to find his way, defining his own approach to executive leadership. According to a member of the executive team, it is important for institutional leadership to set the right tone, and according to this same person, there was less competition in the organization than there had been five years earlier. There was "more of a collaborative spirit, and some of that credit should go to the President for creating that. Some of it may be the result of his leadership. It may be in response to his leadership" (E). This person

acknowledged that others may not feel exactly the same way, but added "I think that's my sense" (E).

This person was accurate. Others I spoke to critiqued the leadership style of the President, faculty particularly. One called his style "aggressive," "autocratic," and "bossy' (F-M). The way he put it, the President "makes a lot of his decisions with higher-ups and not consulting the faculty; there's a lot of disturbance" (F-M). Even aside from his seemingly autocratic leadership style, both professors believed that the President "looks at the university too much from a business model" (F-M). The President and other executive leaders were believed to approach *Crossroads* as if it were a Fortune 500 company. Rather than focus on academics and the educational mission, one of the professors believed that those from the top down were approaching their jobs as if *Crossroads* were a business (F-F). She shared her observations of "budgetary decisions being made that are using principles from business that [she thinks] undoes the true intent of what people are generally trying to accomplish [at *Crossroads*]" (F-F). The result has been that faculty members have not always liked the style with which the leadership team and the President, in particular, have run the place. Faculty, I found, tend to want different things for *Crossroads* than do administrators. For example, rather than spend money on "expanding the upper echelon of the administration" or on a brand new Barnes and Noble bookstore, faculty feel the money spent on those endeavors could be better used elsewhere to enhance *Crossroads* as an educational institution (F-M; F-F).

While frustration was clearly present over the President's decisions as well as his leadership style, the overall relationship between academic and student affairs was much

improved. Regardless of their feelings toward him, few participants in this study would deny that the new President had a direct effect on the structural and staffing changes on campus. The most important change that took place was the change in the Provost. When the President first came on board, he hired a Provost that was vastly different from the one that was present at the time I conducted my interviews (E; F-M; SA-A). It was speculated that the reason she was there was because of the President's insecurity with the position and consequently, her ability to be controlled (F-M). She meant well, and wanted to take the proper steps towards the integration of academic and student affairs, but there were too many road blocks (E). According to an executive leader,

> the previous Provost did not…foster a team-based approach to management, so…what came out of that person's departure was a need to cooperate, to support, share one another, share with one another, and I think through that process we built a healthier and more productive team. That's only been further supported and strengthened by the arrival of the new Provost. (E)

A faculty member also stated that the interpersonal dynamics on campus got better once the old Provost left. He said,

> I think the administration and I think the climate between, you know, the academic side and the student side and the faculty and the administration, I think it's improved a lot. One of the reasons it's improved is because our former Provost left. (F-M)

After her departure, there was more interaction between the Deans of the Colleges, the Dean of Student Affairs, and the Provost. Weekly meetings gave the executive

leadership team time to cooperate and make decisions together. When the new Provost arrived, his presence only added momentum. According to the student affairs administrator I talked with, the new Provost is "top notch…this guy just knows" how to make things right (SA-A).

While the change in Provost was a major reason for the positive outcomes associated with the merger and with the new presidency, people I spoke to also mentioned that the new Dean of Students had a role in helping to make the union of academics and student life more effective. The relationship between academic and student affairs "continues to work well…largely because of [the Dean of Students] as a person" (AA-P). She quickly emerged as a champion for the union of the two divisions and people on campus noticed her commitment to the academic mission. According to one executive professional,

> [the Dean of Students] demonstrated, quite effectively, high evaluation of academics, the kind of centrality of the academic experience here, that there's really no *Crossroads* if we don't have a strong academic core, but I also think this person is also consistently trying to demonstrate to faculty that a lot of support for the academic core can come from the resources [here]. (E)

A faculty member told me the same thing. The Dean of Students gained the respect of faculty, "instantly," because she had vocally expressed her "very serious feelings about [the intellectual climate on campus]" (F-M). He went on to say that "if [the Dean of Students] could have more sort of one-on-ones or small groups of faculty and she

expressed those kinds of earnest pro-academic, pro-intellectual ideas, that would strengthen the bridge…between academic and student side" (F-M).

Student Affairs

The opportunity for small-group activity was a common theme that everyone I spoke with extolled. It was in these situations that those in student affairs felt they could be best understood, and it was also in these opportunities that those in academic affairs felt they could learn about what student affairs professionals do. When Arcelus (2008) conducted his research, he found that men and women in student affairs considered themselves to be educators; through life experiences, conversations with students, and the intention behind their work, student affairs personnel educate students beyond the realm of the classroom and in this way they believed they supported the academic mission.

When I interviewed student affairs personnel, I found that they continued to approach their work in exactly the same way. One professional within the division said this: "I would define my role as an administrator, somebody who supports the academic mission, somebody who is an advocate for students on a daily basis, somebody whose ultimate goal is to inspire students to become better citizens and better human beings." According to this same person, her role in student affairs is complementary to academics. It was put this way, "we are here to support the academic mission, but more so to

complement it so that a student who has just come out of class or a final comes in here and then discusses it." According to this administrator, the two divisions are "working very closely hand-in-hand" (SA-P). The point of convergence is where students make connections between class and their life on campus, and when this person hears or sees it happening, it gives validation to the cause of student affairs professionals.

Student affairs may complement the academic mission, but the work personnel in this division do is quite unique in its own way. One individual, for example, told me about how he gets to see students in a very different light than say his academic friends: "I sit in a very special place; no one else sees the same thing" (SA-A). In his words, "I have this thing with my academic friends; you deal only with what they know; I see the results of what they do." This comment hit on a key point in support of student affairs programs. The entire student experience happens on campus, so if students are "only in class three or five hours a day, what are they doing with the rest of their time?" (SA-P). Student affairs personnel, unlike faculty and academic affairs staff, are better able to "go straight to the heart of things" (SA-A) and be involved in ways that faculty may find uncomfortable. The student affairs administrator pointed out to me that he engages with students beyond the classroom all the time, and in his conversations with them, he is able to talk about the details of their lives that may be considered inappropriate for faculty. His special relationship with students is full of "teachable moments," and when such opportunities do not present themselves overtly, he believes he "can even force teachable moments" on students due to the unique situation in which he finds himself.

The student affairs staff members I spoke with told me they were confident in their role and contribution to the educational mission. I found, however, that these individuals were not entirely sure others were confident in them. While I mentioned earlier that support for student affairs had improved on the whole, one professional in the division gave me this explanation:

> Again, I would say I guess overall, I certainly feel supported,… [but] university-wide, I'm not sure if there's as clear of an understanding, but I certainly feel that the longer that you've been at *Crossroads* and the more that you have carried yourself in a professional way and have almost proven yourself through programs and other types of things, that that respect is earned and that people view you more as an educator. (SA-P)

Arcelus (2008) found the exact same thing; student affairs personnel told him they had to prove themselves and constantly justify their contribution to the university. Student affairs staff could say what faculty members were up to and what their jobs entailed; more often than not, though, is was the faculty that could not describe a day in the life of a student affairs staff member (SA-A). The situation on campus had improved over the five years since Arcelus (2008) conducted his study, and academic personnel were more likely to look at student affairs with respect, but I found that respect did not necessarily mean that faculty and academic affairs administrators viewed student affairs staff as equal contributors to the educational mission of the institution. One academic affairs professional told me, "we definitely get lots of help from the Dean of Students, if we need it" (AA-P). A faculty member told me almost exactly the same thing. The student

affairs division gives "good pastoral support when [faculty] feel wounded… [they] go to them" (F-M). These comments showed me how five years time may have changed some perceptions on campus, but in the end, there was residual classism between academics and student affairs. I got the feeling that those in academic affairs tended to turn to student life personnel only when there was a need to do so (e.g. when they needed help with a student issue or funding for a faculty group). When the student affairs administrator told me that he sometimes felt as though he was at the whim of academics and administrators, I began to see just what kind of support was offered.

Support for Student Affairs

Support for student affairs on campus was evident when I interviewed people, but what I noticed was that this support was fairly subjective (SA-P). One student affairs professional told me that on a daily basis there was support for her role as an educator. This person also pointed out that there are some on campus "that do not understand student affairs and do not understand what we do." She added, "I don't think it's intentional, but they really just don't have knowledge about what happens outside of the classroom" (SA-P). According to an executive level professional, faculty members tend to want to believe that it is their responsibility to teach course material only (E). According to the same individual, student affairs takes advantage of the prime

opportunities to mingle with students, which leads to a more fulfilling educational experience for students. He went on to say that faculty, however, do not always take advantage of those same opportunities. These faculty members are not exposed enough to the nature of student affairs work, and consequently dismiss the co-curricular. As one faculty member told me:

> There are a few faculty members who are deeply invested in running the institution alongside the administration, and then there is a much larger group of people who are just, kind of, just [smarter] about how they spend their time. So, less involved. (F)

According to the faculty as well as the academic affairs staff members I spoke with, there were two groups of faculty, much as this person indicated. What I gathered from each of them was that, on the whole, value was placed on the co-curricular. Whether or not they were involved was the distinction. A professor in education told me that she believed that there was great value in educating the whole student. However, service and involvement in the organization were not her priority; "my number one role is as a teacher…service [is] not an equal third behind teaching and scholarship" (F-F). Nevertheless, she told me that being involved on campus helped her image with others, and she admitted to me that she liked "most of [her] service; not all, but most of it." This professor did take the time to be involved and service was important to her, but she also stated that the "student affairs and the student life side of the house takes care of a good bit of that. Thank God." The other faculty member I spoke to also suggested that interest in an extracurricular organization definitely helps in terms of getting faculty involved. A reason he got

involved with co-curricular activities was because he was interested in them. He put it this way, "you get really involved with an organization just because you dig it and that is your thing" (F-M). He acknowledged that being involved was extremely important, to the students especially. So in order to be a better teacher, he took the extra steps to show his students that he cared.

Faculty Involvement

I spoke with two faculty members and both talked to me about service to the organization, the third and unequal responsibility that all faculty share. One faculty member I spoke with told me that while he may be an involved teacher, who takes the time to get to know his students, not all professors take the time to do so (F-M). There is a divide, between those that are and those that are not interested in being involved (F-F). Service to the organization and involvement in students' extra-curricular activities was not important to some faculty and the psychology professor attributed this divide to the "natural form of diversity" (F-M). If an activity is not in the job description, many faculty only get involved in it if they themselves are interested in it. One academic affairs professional elaborated on this point as follows:

> I think [faculty] should be involved in things, and I think what makes the best
> involvement are things that are interesting to them. So just putting somebody in

charge of something just because it sounds like the right thing to do is not the same thing as having a faculty member who is truly engaged. That's where the best opportunities happen. (M)

Commenting further, the education professor I spoke to told me that she does not think that a "quality education requires a faculty member to kind of be a hermit and only be interested in her students…" (F). Knowing what students do outside of class can help a faculty member connect with them in ways not possible by just being a teacher. According to one professor, there's "like this cellular change when you connect to something in [a student's] life" (F-M). This same professor shared his belief that students really appreciate being able to see their professors outside of class. Likewise, he indicated that the more faculty see students as complete people, the better able they are to notice students' dedication and commitment outside of the classroom. According to the other faculty member, a good teacher turns into a great teacher by focusing more attention on the students (F-F). This same person told me that she takes her knowledge of and involvement with student culture and uses it to help her create assignments for her classes. She told me that she is "intrigued by some of the [culture], and [wants] to know about it because [she thinks] it helps [her] ask them better questions" (F-F). The other faculty member observed that for "kids -– and [he thinks] this is true for anybody, college students and faculty -- that before they care about what you [faculty] know, they need to know that you care" (F-M).

Faculty members are preparing students by giving them information that will allow them to become successful members of society. More and more, faculty members

are recognizing that "active learning" (F-M) is becoming the preferred form of education. The student affairs administrator I spoke with, for example, told me how the seminar he teaches approaches education by getting students involved and teaching them in a non-traditional way. In his "mind/body course…everything was about [the students], and [he] told them this is going to be the most important course you take because it's going to have ramifications you can use forever" (SA-A). This "teacher" had the students write papers, do community service, give oral reports on topics that interested them, and study material relevant to the course. This person was extremely passionate about the topics discussed in the class and the result was a course that he believed was one of the more popular first-year courses. If all faculty cared as much as this person does, the likely result would be an education that embraces non-traditional learning experiences (SA-A).

Intellectual Climate

Non-traditional educational experiences, such as service learning and field-based undergraduate research, are becoming increasingly common in American higher education. To embrace these new pedagogies implies an acknowledgment that learning and instruction can occur outside the classroom setting (Arcelus, 2008; SA-A; AA-P; E). As has been demonstrated in the previous sections of this chapter, there are faculty members that believe in going beyond the classroom, yet there are many more that

choose not to do so. I found during my research that there is a tendency for faculty to blame student affairs staff for negatively affecting the students' use of their time and focus on their studies. According to an academic affairs professional, faculty often held student affairs responsible for students' lack of commitment to the academic cause (F). Faculty members also tended to believe that students were too involved and too busy with extracurricular activities (F-M).

The problem is that students are not always interested in the same things that faculty are. Students do not always want to engage in intellectual or academic endeavors outside of class (AA-P). Student affairs programs provide them with other pastimes (F-F). The problem of a perceived lack of intellectualism on campus arose as a result of extracurricular activities that were not considered intellectual enough. When Arcelus (2008) interviewed people, he found that there was a debate over whether or not the institution was sufficiently intellectual. Five years later, I found the same debate was still very much alive. In my interviews, people questioned whether *Crossroads* was distinguished mainly as an institution with a grand bookstore and wonderful athletic facilities, or as an intellectual haven where students were given a premier education from a dedicated faculty. In reality, *Crossroads* appeared to be both. Arcelus (2008) mentioned that students are no longer looking for schools that just have good academic standing but are looking instead for the total undergraduate experience. The faculty I spoke with told me that they and their colleagues got upset when energy and resources went to projects like a new bookstore and bringing major speakers to campus. Attention placed away from the educational mission was deemed controversial. One faculty

member believed that *Crossroads* was becoming branded so as to make the institution more nationally recognized (F). She went on to question whether being a superior teacher was still perceived as highly important to the entire institution. The turn that *Crossroads* had taken, according to her, was a turn that had made the education that it provided "kind of fake, surfacy, artificial, the veneer of wanting to deliver an education, but doing it in a way that doesn't really commit to that" (F-F).

The faculty I interviewed told me that what they offer is "utterly central to the university' (F-M). Interestingly, I found that all people I interviewed, representing both academic and student affairs, agreed. In fact, all of them mentioned that they thought that students should be challenged more. A student affairs professional commented, "are we tapping into every way that we can challenge [students] to critically think? Probably not. No. And so, that certainly does need to be a goal for future years…" (SA-P). The other person I interviewed from student affairs agreed completely. He told me that students were not challenged enough and that there was not enough intellectual stimulation. According to an executive leader, collaboration can enhance intellectualism on campus because it can show students that learning extends beyond the classroom or lab. Therefore, this same person did not think *Crossroads* was "optimizing student engagement" (E) so as to challenge students to make these connections. More student-learning experiences need to be offered that engage students while they are attending the university.

In the Plan for *Crossroads*, and in subsequent learning agendas, the desired outcomes have been multi-disciplinary. What needs to happen is for the stated goals to

be united in the minds and actions of the people on campus (SA-A).   One faculty

member recommended two ways that he believed the climate on campus could be made

more intellectual: (1) through the admissions process and (2) through new student

orientation. Orientation, as it stood at the time of my interviews, was considered by him

and by other faculty members to be "one big, expensive, overwrought carnival." Its

activities were likened to those one would find on a cruise ship (F-F). To remedy this

shortcoming, the psychology professor urged that faculty be more involved with the

orientation process so more intellectual activities could be incorporated into the week

leading up to the start of classes. He and others he spoke for believed that it was

important to set a more serious tone, not only for the academic year, but for the start of

these students' *Crossroads* careers (M). Even before reaching this point, however, this

faculty member believed that efforts should be made to attract more intellectual students

to the university. He offered a detailed portrait of the type of student that he envisioned.

> *Crossroads* would be a better place if we could attract five to ten percent more
>
> students per year who are nerds, not kids who want to be Susie-sorority and who
>
> want to be student government treasurer the second they walk on campus; but the
>
> kids who want to take four or five classes and read and think and be dull, boring
>
> kids, committed to the academic life. (F-M)

His comment may reflect wishful thinking on the part of many faculty members, but as

the preceding chapters of this thesis have hopefully pointed out, a 21st century college

education is not merely a curriculum, a faculty and a student body. Many more factors

beyond academics now play a vital role in the total undergraduate experience.

Academic Affairs

Faculty are an extremely dedicated group of people (E). I found that those in academic affairs are amazingly committed to the transmission of knowledge. According to the two faculty members I spoke with, faculty are first and foremost the center of the university. They construct the knowledge that then gets transmitted to their students, and the result of such is that the first responsibility of any faculty member is to be a teacher in every capacity. To quote the psychology professor, "I consider it a privilege…a real honor to help shepherd [students] through…a clearer, more positive vision for their future" (F-M). A professional in academic affairs also talked about students and her role on campus. She said, "I essentially [help] students graduate. That to me is part of the core mission…" While this same person told me that she does not interact with students any more than before, she does interact with faculty in ways that help them to help students (AA-P).

A faculty member has a lot of responsibilities, and as mentioned earlier, the first one is to be a teacher. Other duties include contributing to the scholarship in one's field and service to the university. Five years prior to my own study, Arcelus (2008) found that faculty members had a difficult time finding balance within their work load. I also

heard the same concerns. The comments of one faculty member are illustrative of this perspective.

> The faculty feel so overworked and under-compensated and under-appreciated, that one question [they ask themselves] is always, 'well, what am I going to get out of this?' In other words, if I suddenly become Joe Sideline Coach, is that going to be valued when my peers review me? It's not really clear that it is. So that's a detriment. (F-M)

Faculty are rewarded professionally for how well they teach and how well they advance the scholarship in their respective fields. Those responsibilities are the ones that affect reviews, tenure decisions, and various other outcomes (F-M; F-F). Therefore, the third responsibility, service, becomes a less important part of a faculty member's day-to-day schedule. Those faculty members that tried to fit service in may have helped their images on campus as involved, caring teachers, but at the same time, if the service opportunities were not academic in nature, it was hard getting faculty to care enough to be involved on a regular basis (AA-P).

Faculty are a unique class of people, and as one faculty member said, "this population, as a group, tends to be less socially aware and is just kind of oddballs" (F). In fact, all interviewees from academic affairs that I spoke to said that as a group, faculty are all different. As is the case at *Crossroads*, most of them have attained an educational feat that only one percent of the population has; they all have been trained differently, depending on their fields and backgrounds; and they all come together, within a three mile radius, and continue to operate from their various personalities and teaching styles

(F-F; F-M). Student affairs professionals, on the other hand, are trained more uniformly. All in all, divergent backgrounds of the people on campus can make a university a volatile place. There are so many different kinds of people and personalities, and as is the case whenever a large mix of people get together, feelings can get hurt (F-M).

Culture on Campus

When Arcelus (2008) interviewed student affairs staff, he found that those individuals' feelings were hurt because they felt their contributions to the academic mission were discredited. While I mentioned earlier that those perceptions had changed slightly as a result of the merger and the consequent opportunities to talk, there were still some residual misunderstandings. One respondent characterized faculty as follows:

> [They] are…snobbish. I think that they, especially at a place like *Crossroads*, which has a very strong faculty governance, they know they're at the top of the campus food chain, and anybody who's not in that rank is not considered on par with the faculty. It's something... you either have to accept it, or you have to learn to live with it in a way that's comfortable because this is a very strong faculty-governance place. That is the culture here. The faculty have the most supreme authority, in any group, and there are folks who value student affairs, and then there are folks who will literally say they lack value… (AA-P)

Faculty I spoke with knew that their roles were central to the university. They also were individuals that could appreciate the value of student affairs. The comment above demonstrates one academic affairs professional's perception of the culture on campus. Interestingly, student affairs staff that I spoke with did not discredit the above statement's message. As mentioned earlier, student affairs staff truly believed that the academic mission was key. They also believed their responsibilities supported that mission. However, as I reviewed one student affairs administrator's comments from his interview, I noticed statements that underscored faculty members' authority on campus. This administrator taught a mind/body foundation seminar that was offered to first-year students. He had been at *Crossroads* for many years and had been teaching this class for 15 of them. While his role on campus was considered administrative within the student affairs division, he told me since he had taught that class for so long, that it would have been nice if he could have at least been considered for tenure. He said faculty come in and within 10 years of teaching they are up in front of the review board; but since he is a student affairs administrator, he felt as though the leadership considered him not a true "teacher" (SA-A).

Years of frustration left this person somewhat jaded. It also left him eager to ask questions of those who led the university, and he explained to me how, when the time was right, he was not afraid to do so. One of many stories he shared with me reflected just how frustrated he was. It related to an administrative forum that he attended where the President was telling staff about recent developments within the university.

[He was talking] about the great things the faculty was doing with governance and all this, the great strides, the 3/2 [course] load and all these great things that have happened. [Well, I] stood up and said 'you know what, there are over two hundred people here that have no voice and are not represented whatsoever, they have no vote or anything and that doesn't sit well. (F-M)

While his comments were not always responded to with action, all that this administrator wanted was for the executive leadership to listen to him. He recounted how, over the last few years, he had many ideas that he vocalized. The tendency on the part of the upper level administration, however, was to not put these ideas into action.

I found this last comment interesting, because this student affairs administrator was vocal about how comfortable he felt expressing his opinions. What I heard from other interviewees was that it was faculty that tended to feel more comfortable voicing dissatisfaction. Faculty, especially those that have tenure, were described by one faculty members as follows.

[They are] a rare group because a certain sub-portion…have to worry less about job security; but the vast majority of this institution…don't enjoy that luxury, and so,…they kind of say, 'yes, sir' and put things into place. People don't ask questions. (F-F)

Fear of losing one's job makes speaking out uncommon for people in student affairs, especially. Those without job security tend to concede to authority, even if it means going against their own personal beliefs. According to the aforementioned student affairs administrator, the culture on campus with regard to voicing opinion is "very duck and

cover, and the few times that [he] speaks out, everyone comes up to [him] afterwards and says, 'we wanted to say that'" (SA-A).

Without speaking directly about the luxuries faculty enjoy, I picked up on the small comments that certain interviewees made that clearly reflected what the academic affairs professional pointed out, "faculty [do] have the most supreme authority [of] any group" (AA-P).

Sense of Community

What this chapter has shown is that there were definitely conditions on *Crossroads's* campus at the time of my investigation that could have been better, but there were also positive changes that had occurred over the previous five years. According to more than one respondent, the sense of community was stronger than before. The economic downturn, the personnel changes, and the announcement of the Plan for *Crossroads* had all contributed to a better sense of community on campus. The Dean of Students was more involved in the leadership of the institution, and as a result, student life had visibility that it did not have before.

Beyond the general comments about the university, I found that for some participants the campus climate was "hard to talk about" (F-F). One faculty member, for example, observed that there were a lot of people on campus that were "generally

supportive of individuals," but she went on to say that the community was a "place where people are exploited." I mentioned earlier that some faculty believed *Crossroads* was being run too much like a corporation. The name of the university was being "branded" as a household name, not so much as a premier educational institution, but rather as a school with many attractive amenities (F-F; F-M). This branding of the institution was the reason, according to this faculty member, that the university did not take care of its employees. Much like a big industrial company, which has a huge work force, *Crossroads* was perceived by one faculty member as not having "to really take care of [its] least paid employees because there [were] just a lot of people" (F-F). She maintained that when a university is operated "like a corporation, you don't spend money on the least valuable employees" (F-F). This person believed that if *Crossroads* were not run as a business, then a true focus on education could emerge. She believed that this push should come from the top down; "it starts with the President or Provost who are first and foremost about academics and not running this place into the ground…You don't run educational institutions like you would a Fortune 500 company" (F-F).

Money was a contentious issue on campus, and according to the student affairs administrator I spoke with, it did not have to be that way (M). People on campus noticed the amount of money that went into projects like the bookstore or the athletic fields and these are the exact types of costs that tended to make faculty and some administrators upset (F-F; F-M; SA-A). According to one academic affairs professional, when the two divisions are fighting for crucial resources, "which is…where [the university had] landed…people are not going to [work cohesively. Faculty] are going to protect the

bottom line" (AA-P), the bottom line being enhancement of the academic program. That is where faculty will put their support.

It should be noted that the perceptions surrounding the campus community were subjective. I found that different people in different positions pointed out different ways in which the community was good or not so good. For example, one executive professional I spoke with told me that the sense of community was "much better, much stronger." This person went on to tell me that he only believed those in his close circle of associates and colleagues would probably agree with comments he made. Those further away, "not as connected," might say, 'I don't really know what's going on. I don't really think there's much going on.' Or they might say, 'I don't think there's the potential for things to change fundamentally' " (E). Likewise, a faculty member pointed out that her comments to me only reflected the opinions of faculty in her circle. She said, "I have no concept of what the administration think about this place; really none at all" (F).

Conclusion

The divide between administrators, whether in academic or student affairs, and members of the faculty was evident in this study. Administrators attended different meetings than the faculty, and as a result they saw and heard things that faculty may not have. According to an academic affairs professional, it is "key for more senior managers

to be communicating with colleagues in positions that are, you know, subordinate to theirs." Similarly, the other professional in this division mentioned how it was her responsibility to relay information between the executive leadership and the faculty; "all faculty point to us [and] we then communicate as necessary out this way…[It's] not the culture [for faculty to talk directly with the Dean of Students.] The culture is they talk to us" (AA-P).

The better the communication and the more that people feel in the know, then the more they will feel empowered and part of the organization. The problem at *Crossroads* was that communication was still lacking at the time of this study. According to a student affairs professional, it had improved and growth had occurred, but it was by no means perfect. There was room for even more growth (SA-P). For example, one faculty member observed that "there are many, many instances in the life of a university where…faculty can end up feeling the way children can end up feeling a lot in a family, 'nobody listens to me' " (F-M). They get involved with committees, make recommendations, and then they see their work "die on the vine or have no effect at all" (F-M). This cat-and-mouse chase is very demoralizing for faculty. It "undermines people's faith in the system and in the community…" (F-M). This faculty member went on to say, "I'm sure there is still plenty of that. Has the situation improved…compared to five years ago? It's probably better, but it's still there" (M).

When the merger took place, and consequently the merger task force was initiated, the report that resulted suffered the same fate as the earlier work to which the aforementioned faculty member had alluded. A lot of good ideas came out of that task

force, and the opportunities to meet in small groups gave people from both divisions a chance to learn and talk. The committee provided "great educational opportunities [for those involved], and the feedback from all committee members was…[that] there was such a deeper understanding [as a result]" (SA-P).

The problem, however, was that the report that emerged as a result of that task force reflected the suggestions and ideas for a university that was very different from the one that existed at the time I conducted my interviews. When I interviewed people, the university had long since presented its strategic plan for the future and a new Provost had stepped forward as leader of a unified university. The university had, for the first time, concrete goals that outlined the academic focus, while at the same time acknowledging the influence of the co-curricular.

The document read well and was seen as inclusive of both divisions, but ultimately, those I interviewed did not consider it "earth-shaking" (SA-A). In fact, one person called it "vanilla' (AA-P). According to an executive leader, the plan was an "exercise of doing what we had to do for most people, especially for most faculty… [It] was a way to focus and sharpen the millions of directions we're all going in" (E). Making goals for the university and putting them into a unified plan was a way to please people and give them a sense of direction.

When the goals were made public, people on campus understood them and recognized how they fit the greater mission. People also understood what had to be done in order to meet the goals. What were missing, however, were leadership-initiated assessments that made sure the campus was going in the right direction. In discussing

this omission, one of the academic affairs professionals in my study called upon the executive leaders of the institution to initiate necessary changes.

[They] need to take ownership of that. That is the one thing that is really lacking, is the lack of ownership of the idea of assessing that we're all going [the] same direction, and if we're not that we'd make changes that would fix it, of having a process, and that's largely just not been discussed. It has to be done, but it's just not something they have taken a leadership role on. And it's hurting us, badly. (AA-P)

A faculty member supported this claim by saying that the effort that would make the campus more integrated was not a "terribly coordinated effort" (F). Student affairs professionals became responsible for some of the university and learning goals, but this professor told me, "okay, but it's still like, you've got your goals and I've got my goals. So they still might as well be on separate lists" (F-F).

Interestingly, I found that separate lists technically already existed. A student affairs professional told me that her division had its own "separate learning outcomes." She explained the relationship among the various goals as follows.

[There are] university educational goals, our academic educational goals, and then there's student affairs' educational goals. And so for us now, the next step is really pulling in the learning outcomes and looking at how we are meeting these particular educational goals. I'm very excited about that opportunity and growth that's going to come from that. (SA-P)

The building blocks were there, and it seemed like the right kinds of people were on campus. What was needed was momentum to continue to move forward. With more time and energy, the men and women I spoke with appeared confident that more good could come with more time and vested interest in making the collaboration work. Arcelus (2008) noted that "the key to success is that people work toward this conversation [of collaboration] simultaneously from the top of the organization and from the grassroots level…" (p. 352). Working together is important for leaders, staff, and faculty on *Crossroads's* campus. Interestingly, however as I concluded my research, the university was faced with a dramatic announcement, one that affects everything discussed in this chapter. The top of the organization was about to shift around, and with these shifts, the future of *Crossroads* was, yet again, in a state of limbo.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSION

In the five years time between Arcelus's (2008) study and mine, a lot had changed at *Crossroads University*: new President, new Provost, no more VP for Student Affairs, a task force, a merged unit, and a plan. A member of the executive leadership team told me that during this time, *Crossroads* had "really kind of built some momentum." The campus was "much more of a community, much stronger community" (E). A student affairs professional said the same thing. According to this person, the university was "getting on the right track" (SA-P). Before, morale was low and people had little trust and faith in the leadership and direction of the university; yet in five years time, according to one faculty member, there was a "much stronger President who, despite some of his shortcomings, [was] a huge improvement over the last couple of presidents that [the university had] had" (F-M). People, in general, felt more confident, and as a result, felt more part of an organization (SA-P).

Those who spoke highly of the merger believed that, overall, it had been beneficial. It had placed academic and student affairs on the same plane within the structure of the organization, and according to a faculty member, "being connected is always better than the alternative, and…there is a certain integrity that comes with that" (M). The connection between academic and student affairs became more natural and in turn the campus was perceived to be "a better place" (F-M). A professional within student affairs shared with me her perception that there had been "more of an effort to

reach out to student affairs on the senior staff level and to understand what [student affairs staff] do" (SA-P). She stated, "I think that it's completely different, in my opinion, than it was" (SA-P).

Executive leadership used to have more of an unseen presence. It was extremely difficult to get upper level administrators to come out and show support for student affairs programs. According to the aforementioned student affairs professional, however, the merger had led to senior staff being more visible on campus at student events, for example. An executive-level leader indicated that he and other personnel in the division were committed to the success of student affairs. He said, "I'd like to think, we have [academics that] are more committed to the success of student affairs in delivering the best possible educational experience" (E). The increased presence and support renewed a sense of trust and faith in the leadership of the institution on the part of student affairs staff and also reaffirmed the fundamental principles for which *Crossroads* stands (SA-P).

Both academic affairs professionals I interviewed are trusted leaders in their division. Their roles are to be the intermediaries between the faculty and upper level administration, and as such they put a voice to the concerns and opinions faculty may have. One professional explained it to me this way: she is the link between faculty and the Dean of Students. In her words, "the culture is [faculty] talk to us" (AA-P). There is a "fairly high level of control of information" at *Crossroads*, so for this person, the chain of communication is that faculty talk to her, and then she talks to the student affairs staff.

This line of communication also held for the executive-level professional with whom I spoke. He, too, is the voice for faculty in his department; he listens to them and

represents the department accordingly (E). Daily responsibilities include working with faculty that are on campus already and making attempts to bring in new faculty that believe in innovative approaches to co-curricular learning. He values the learning that occurs outside the classroom, and through his leadership seeks to inspire this value in the faculty he leads.

As mentioned in the Results chapter of this thesis, one consequence of the merger was for student affairs to be placed at the same structural level as academics. The problem, however, is that while leaders in each division can now work alongside one another more easily, it is the faculty that had a difficult time coming to a consensus about the equality of the divisions, even with the announcement of the merger. Faculty, I learned, are a hard group to please, and everyone I spoke with mentioned such, even the faculty members themselves.

Older, tenured faculty tended to be less enthusiastic about the merger than younger faculty (SA-P; E). These men and women were the ones who believed that academics and classroom time were key to a college education. Newer faculty, on the other hand, tended to be "very interested in the whole student and what happens outside of the classroom" (SA-P). This characteristic, therefore, makes them better at understanding student affairs, which is why one participant at the executive level told me he makes an effort "to hire faculty…that will engage…students [with] collaboration (E). At *Crossroads*, I was told, there are a lot of "new faculty…staff who really want to learn about what student affairs is about…" (SA-P), so it is promising that there are attempts to reach out across the divisions.

I was informed that at *Crossroads* the range of faculty opinion was huge. There were some, like the ones I interviewed, who acknowledged the value of student life; then there were many others who flat out denounced it. The debate was the same that existed five years earlier. Arcelus (2008) concluded that "the separation and competition [between the divisions] was easier to sustain than collaboration because many faculty struggled with seeing where the overlap lay between the divisions" (Arcelus, 2008, p. 300). I gathered the same. While the two faculty members I spoke with were the kind of faculty that placed value on students' extracurricular activities and learning beyond the classroom, both of them informed me that many other faculty members in their circles did not feel the same. There was apparently "a much larger group of people who [were] kind of just [smarter] about how they [spent] their time. So less involved" (F-F). An academic affairs professional summed up the situation as follows

> There are some faculties [sic] who don't want to hear anything else [other than the importance of the academic curriculum.] If you were to say anything else is important, [faculty] will kick you out on the issue. They will say, 'there's no other reason for a student to be here beyond the academic mission. We need to house them, feed them, and then they should study'. (AA-P)

This individual went on to say that there will "always be a group of faculty who always just see their jobs in a very tight, narrow way; they're just here to teach and to do their research and you know, that student life stuff doesn't really affect [them] much" (F-M).

Student affairs staff want to understand the world of the faculty, but working alongside faculty members has been a struggle (SA-P). No one I interviewed disputed

that academics and faculty are "utterly central" (F-M) to the university and the academic mission. What the merger, as well as the Plan for *Crossroads,* was intended to accomplish was to add the co-curricular to students' educational experiences. Every person I talked to mentioned that creating the best educational environment for students was his or her number one priority.

The problem for one faculty member, though, had to do with the role of student affairs in the academic mission of the university. She stated her concerns as follows.

It's not clear to me how student affairs argues that they are part of the academic core. I couldn't articulate that for you…I could kind of agree with it theoretically, but I can't tell you what the arguments are that [the student affairs division] has…for how it feeds the academic core. (F-F)

The other faculty member I spoke to talked about the mission in this way:

Who really cares what the mission statement says if on a daily basis the people that are the lifeblood of the university are doing it? It doesn't matter what the catalog says…on a daily basis people are doing it [and] it's because the faculty are incredibly hard-working. (M)

The unified structure and the strategic plan have linked academics and the co-curricular; they have changed the reporting lines and have articulated more concrete goals for *Crossroads University*, respectively. While this headway has given *Crossroads* direction and momentum, there were setbacks along the way, and in some ways, things did not change at all in the five years since Arcelus's (2008) study. Every person I spoke with said there was room for improvement. To quote one respondent, "I don't think all hope

has been fulfilled...I would say that's probably one of the drawbacks is the communication still lacks, [even though] it has gotten better" (SA-P).

Discussion

While there was some evidence of organizational change over the five-year period that served as the focus of this investigation, within the life of an academic institution, five years is not a long time. As one participant noted, the "differences between five years ago and seventeen years ago is huge; the difference between today and five years ago is not that different" (SA-A). At a small institution, such as *Crossroads*, the "collaboration is not there as much as [one] would think for an institution this size" (SA-P). Collaboration does take time, and one "needs to be in an institution for a long time to see that growth" (SA-P). The problem, according to multiple respondents, was that student affairs personnel, at *Crossroads* and elsewhere, tend not to stay at any institution for more than a few years. Today, student affairs administrators are widely known as "five-year administrators – it's the length of time that an upper-level administrator would stay at an institution" (AA-P). In contrast, faculty members tend to commit themselves to long-term careers at the institutions where they are initially tenured. A faculty member I interviewed put it this way: "presidents come and go; provosts come and go; students

come and go; but the faculty…You know some of us are going to spend our lives here, get buried here" (F-M).

Talk of longevity on campus made me think about the distinction between faculty and student affairs personnel. These groups are inherently different – they think differently (SA-A). Faculty come from disciplines that view the world differently; their backgrounds are divergent and as a result, they tend to consider the world around them from their particular lenses. These personal beliefs also tend to guide a professor's teaching style in the classroom (F-F). Therefore, it is easy to understand how professors will be split when it comes to their views on education. Some will view it narrowly and others more holistically.

In terms of personality, "faculty are kind of odd folks" (F-F). By the nature of their work, faculty members tend to be attracted to the solitude associated with the life of an academic. Professors are in control of their time as well as the direction of their scholarship. One faculty member elaborated on the distinctive personality traits that are prevalent among academics.

> [Faculty are] smart people and we all think we're smarter than we really are. We all have huge egos and incredibly thin skins. Academia tends to attract a lot of people who are just pathological in their hubris and thin-skinnedness. So you put all of us together in the same building and the same campus and you know bad stuff will happen… (F-M)

This same faculty member went on to say, "you know, anytime you bring people together, shit happens" (F-M). A college campus is a controversial place (F-M). Faculty

come from all different places and study different fields. The faculty on the *Crossroads* campus are among the one percent of the population that have achieved their level of educational attainment, as discussed by another faculty member in my study. They have this "rare educational experience and there are some things that tend to correlate pretty strongly with earning a PhD" (F-F). Each faculty member is unique and each has his or her own personal beliefs about such matters as education and engagement in student life. What they hold in common is that they are all "very smart and very interesting relative to their own discipline[s]" (F-F).

One distinction between faculty members and student affairs professionals is in their disciplinary training. Faculty have their respective fields, which vary from the social sciences to mathematics and engineering. Student affairs staff, on the other hand, have their discipline, which encompasses the study of student development and engagement. One of the faculty members in this study summed up the distinction as follows.

> [Student affairs personnel are] more consistently educated… [It's reasonable to] assume that the same hall events would be at least questioned in a similar way by anybody who was educated in student affairs. So there would be a focus on the individual, a focus on the hall, a focus on the staff. I mean, you could break this down in your head pretty quickly. But it wouldn't be like, the historians look at it this way and the sociologists would look at it this way. [Student affairs is not] quite that divided. (F-F)

Those who have a master's or Ph.D. in the student affairs field essentially study a program based around theories of student growth and development. They are trained to look at the entire student (SA-P). The significance of this training was reflected in the observations of one student affairs administrator, who commented, "I see things differently than an academic does because I am a generalist from the word go…I have to look at the whole person…" (SA-A).

This difference in training "tends to be a sometimes crushing bridge that is hard to manage" (F-F). According to one faculty member, if involvement is not specifically addressed in the job description, many faculty will not always care, and unfortunately, it will always be that way (F-M). This faculty member told me, "I see it as just a natural form of diversity and I also see it as just an inherent personality trait" (M).

The faculty members I spoke with were ones that were more involved than most other faculty. They were interested in the co-curricular. The Education professor told me she uses student life situations to help her come up with topics for discussion in her classes. The other faculty participant, a member of the Psychology Department, told me that he engages with students beyond the classroom so he can convey to them that he cares. He said that it was easy for him to be involved on campus. One reason was that he found there were many events on campus that interested him. Though not articulated to me, this person's interest in student life might also have been related to the fact that he was a social scientist.

In fact, both professors that I interviewed were social scientists. By the nature of their fields, Education and Psychology, they manifested an interest in behavior, feelings,

and the growth of individuals. I suspect that if I had interviewed other faculty members, in fields such as Mathematics or Engineering, I would have gotten different responses. This acknowledgement brings up a crucial point: this study was but an exploration into the perceptions and viewpoints of a few people on campus. These faculty members, for example, represented a small fraction of those on campus, and while they did speak generally about other faculty, especially those close to their circles, their comments reflected their own feelings at a certain point in time. As one faculty member explained, "there's a range of opinions. I have no concept of what administration thinks about this place, really none at all. So what I say I think almost exclusively speaks to faculty" (F-F).

Campus dialogue. Arcelus (2008) noted that at *Crossroads* and other modern universities the "shift in campus culture cannot be accomplished solely by student affairs, or academic affairs, or through a declaration by the university's upper administration" (p.274). He found "broad-based campus-wide dialogue [is necessary] to reexamine all variables that influence students' experience on campus in and out of the classroom; for this to be successful, everyone's voices must be heard" (p. 284). Over five years, I gathered that opportunities for campus-wide dialogue (i.e. the strategic plan, the task force, and the new organizational structure) did present themselves. I mention Arcelus's comment, though, because while progress was made, there were still many people on campus that did not feel heard. Every person I interviewed mentioned some way that his or her work was not recognized. The work on the merger task force was disregarded

(SA-P; AA-P); the new ideas for student health were ignored (SA-A); and faculty committees were organized and then nothing would come out of them (F-M). These efforts to bring about institutional change were dismissed by the upper administration, and that was a problem in the eyes of many who spoke to me. *Crossroads* needs the upper administration to take ownership of making sure the campus is going in the right direction (AA-P; SA-A).

Upper administration was not without its critics. Not surprisingly, the professionals from each division were apt to point out to me the progress that the new executive leadership had made. Those further down the ladder, though, were more critical. I noticed that faculty members as well as the student affairs administrator took to scrutinizing the leadership, specifically the President. One faculty member told me that he and others in his circle found the new President's leadership style somewhat aggressive and autocratic; a style he believed ran people out (F-M). On the other side of the debate, the President wished faculty would give him more credit than they did. During one faculty interview I was told a story explaining this misunderstanding (F-M). One night, the President invited some faculty members to his house for dinner. During the evening, it came out that the President felt hurt by faculty members' ambivalent treatment and critique. The President told these faculty members that he had done a lot of things on campus to help the faculty and give them what they wanted (e.g. the five-course teaching load). The President felt, however, that "no one gave him credit" (F-M). The faculty member agreed. As mentioned earlier, faculty felt that their voices were not always heard, that they would make recommendations and nothing would come to

fruition. So the explanation that this faculty member gave was that he thought "it might be sort of residual anger or resentment over how long it took. And another perspective is that sometimes faculty can feel very entitled, and when anyone feels entitled, it falls short on gratitude" (F-M).

Faculty were not the only ones on campus that critiqued the President's style of leadership. The student affairs administrator I spoke with also had feelings regarding the new President's style. He indicated that he was skeptical of the President and what *Crossroads* had become under his leadership. Like the faculty, this administrator questioned what *Crossroads* aspired to be, whether an educational institution or simply a place that benefits from a good name for other things (SA-A).   This individual was in a unique position; structurally, he was an administrator within student affairs, but emotionally, he was invested as a teacher in his students' learning. I found it interesting that his viewpoints on the campus community and its leadership were similar to those of the faculty. Perhaps the link was that he, too, was a teacher. While there was no way to say for certain, he, along with the faculty, had very different things to say about the executive leadership of the institution than did the other professionals in his division that I interviewed.

I spoke to three other members of the professional staff, with one a representative from the executive leadership team. Their comments regarding the executive leadership of the institution were different from those cited above. Overall, I found that their comments were generally positive. One person told me, "I certainly don't think it's

perfect, but in the time that I've been here, yes, I've seen the growth… [The student affairs division is] definitely much more well respected than in previous years" (SA-P).

One executive-level professional had similar commentary. According to him, "there's more cooperation and less competition among the most senior managers and leaders of the campus… Under the previous President…divisional heads were vying for resources – vying for power. I think now we have achieved a more collaborative spirit" (E).

The academic affairs professionals that I interviewed each represented a different department on campus. As mentioned earlier, these individuals were the points of contact for faculty and the upper level administrators to whom they reported. These individuals were and continue to be in positions that have allowed them to have a lasting effect on the state of the university. Both professionals had a positive relationship with student affairs staff already, but their continued involvement helped shift the campus naturally towards collaboration. It is the "trickle-down effect" that so many people I spoke with mentioned, and according to the student affairs professional, "we need a lot more of [that]."

Just as there was a difference between the ways faculty and student affairs personnel viewed education, there was also a difference between the ways divisional leaders and faculty and staff viewed the campus community. The variance in peoples' perceptions, I conclude, was due to the fact that these men and women occupied very different positions on campus. Each person mixed with a different crowd and therefore, interacted with different constituencies on a day-to-day basis. People's perceptions of the

campus community would predictably vary based on such differences in their experiences.

Oil and water analogy. The six individuals that I interviewed represented various positions within both academic and student affairs. While the implementation of the Plan had provided the campus with "a road map for where [it was] going to go" (E), there were still three sets of goals: (1) university educational goals, (2) academic educational goals, and (3) student affairs' educational goals (SA-P). The changes over the previous five years had resulted in new reporting lines and a new organizational structure, but the jobs that people did day-in and day-out, had remained untouched (F-F; SA-P; AA-P). Faculty taught students in much the same way they had previously, and student affairs personnel interacted with students similarly as well.

When it came down to the real effect that the merger of the divisions had, what I heard everyone say is that, essentially, it had "given the Dean of Students a lot more meetings to go to" (F-F); she "may be able to sit at the table and she may be able to voice certain things" for the student affairs division, but in the end, the merger stops there. There are still missed opportunities and there are still residual feelings of classism, even among the faculty that value students' co-curricular lives (SA-A; F-F; F-M; AA-P).

The psychology professor I spoke to told me that "there will always be a group of faculty who always just see their jobs in a very tight, narrow way…and there will always be some faculty that are [more involved]" (F-M). Faculty are a diverse group amongst

themselves, and to mix them with personnel in student affairs creates a combination that blends about as well as oil and water.

This analogy came to mind as I was discussing the topic of this thesis with a mentor of mine. I explained to this person how I was noticing, based on the information from my interviews, that faculty tended to be a close-knit group. They may all teach different classes and study different disciplines, but they are linked by the common goal of transmitting knowledge to students. Further, the relationships that they form as colleagues are long-term, and when they find institutions where they want to stay, they do so for the remainder of their professional careers.

The student affairs field, on the other hand, is made up of many different people, who vary in their professional objectives and work activities. While they, too, believe their principal function is to educate students, the ways in which they do so are not as uniform as those of faculty members. Student affairs as a profession is established and important, yet the personnel that fill positions in the field do not end up staying in one place for life. The career of a student affairs professional is fluid. It is not uncommon for individuals in the field to move around, to adopt new areas of specialization, and to grow and develop professionally in the process.

Faculty, as a close-knit group that remains bonded by common characteristics, is likened to oil. There may be many types of faculty, just as there are many kinds of oil, but their common goals and functions create a shared identity. Student affairs staff, as diverse as they are, move from one institution to another, and continue to grow as they see fit. Their positions are more fluid, and just as water is an essential component to life

as we know it, student affairs is essential to the life and education of the 21st century student. As pointed out in the literature review in the second chapter of this thesis, no longer is a college education just about the life of the mind. The student affairs division is essential for the type of college education students of the 21st century expect.

When cultures of the faculty and student affairs staff are brought together, the effect is often the same as when one mixes oil and water. At first, the oil may split up and there will be pockets of oil amongst the larger body of water, but as more time passes, the oil always comes together. Similarly, there will be pockets of faculty that may break off and demonstrate enthusiastic support for student affairs programs in higher education, but in the end, most will continue to bond with those who are most similar to them. Ultimately, student affairs professionals will tend to be left out of those activities that are most central to the academic mission of the institution.

Recommendations

Arcelus (2008) determined that "the most significant challenge facing the new President...is improving morale" (p.142). When the new President arrived on the *Crossroads* campus, the university was amidst great change. Mechanisms were in place for good things to happen; all that was needed was for the right leader to come in and set the ball in motion (Arcelus, 2008). The new President did just that. Under his

administration, the Plan for *Crossroads* came into being and he structurally organized the division of academic and student affairs so that their respective leaders were on the same level. There was a "trend toward…effective collaboration [and] good decision-making. The President [made the progress] continuous" (E).

However, after six years of service to the institution, in June of 2009, the President announced that the 2009 – 2010 academic year was going to be his last. When I conducted my final interview, this announcement had just been made. Once again, the campus community was placed in a state of flux. People were, according to one academic affairs professional, "dismayed." Up until that point, progress on campus was, on the whole, moving forward. With the announcement, it became "questionable [as to what was] going to happen" (E). Reflecting on the situation, this individual stated: "the President and the President's senior staff can influence the dynamics that are in place…reinforce it or really disrupt it, so I just really don't know" (E). When I concluded my research at *Crossroads,* the university was, once again, about to undergo dramatic changes.

On July 1, 2010, a new President assumed leadership of *Crossroads* University. He is *Crossroads's* third President in ten years. His administration began with solid building blocks in place, so I think it would be interesting to investigate how his leadership has affected the campus community. According to the student affairs professional I spoke with, things on campus are always going to change based on leadership. Dynamics will change; relationships will morph; and objectives will shift. A

level of perfection may never be attained, but if the foundation blocks can be laid, then at least an institution can be better prepared to handle change (SA-P).

Opportunities for small-group interactions. Going forward, I think there are a couple of steps that the new President could take that would help *Crossroads* continue with the momentum it had built under the last President. My first recommendation involves re-evaluating the work from the merger task force. During my interviews, it came out that the work done years ago was for a very different university (AA-P); personnel were different and the merger was still in its infancy. Since *Crossroads* is, yet again, under new leadership, and since the people in key positions have had some time to get comfortable with their roles, a new task force should be initiated. To my knowledge, this re-visit has yet to occur.

In the original task force, nine individuals took part: one faculty member, one academic dean, two student affairs professionals, a student affairs administrator, the university chaplain, and three students (*Crossroads University* [Merger Task Force Report], 2006). If possible, the new task force should be structured to include as many of the original people as possible, so as to ensure consistency. I also think it is essential to add more faculty members to the committee. Earlier, I mentioned that faculty sometimes felt as though they were not included in important decisions on campus. The culture of the institution is one in which the concerns and opinions of faculty are often voiced by

the academic deans. In a major undertaking such as this one, I think including more faculty members is important.

During my interviews, it became evident that there were still faculty "that [did] not understand student affairs and [did] not understand what [the student affairs staff did]; …they just [had] no knowledge about what [happened] outside the classroom" (SA-P). Five years earlier, Arcelus (2008) found the disconnect between academic and student affairs stemmed from the fact that student affairs staff did not advertise their contributions enough. It needed "to be clear to people how student affairs helped to create environments that contribute to the intellectual atmosphere and students' ability to learn across campus settings" (Arcelus, 2008, p.255). Without such knowledge, academic affairs personnel have a hard time seeing the value in student affairs. The review process that I am proposing could create an opportunity to get new faculty involved, the ones that are not as understanding of the student affairs division, and demonstrate to them the value inherent in life beyond the classroom.

Frost et al. (2010) observed that a "goal of learning communities is to provide students with curriculum that is connected and relevant…" (p.41). To offer such a curriculum, faculty and staff must be involved with one another. This opportunity for a new task force would give people from each division opportunities to meet in small groups. In other sections of this thesis, I spoke of the advantages of these small-group encounters. Programs and groups on a smaller level were considered by the participants in my research to provide the most ideal opportunities for collaboration because they allow members of both divisions to better understand one another through more intimate

conversations; the result usually is "a lot of 'ah-ha moments" (SA-P). Small groups and committees provide a place where meaningful understanding and connections can occur. Also, the work can make both groups feel as though they have ownership over the results and to know that both divisions had their voices heard.

Awareness. The merger task force from 2006 provided an opportunity for people in different divisions to talk and understand one another. To recall another task force, or to at least re-evaluate the work from its report, would again help make those on campus more aware of one another. The issue, however, is that work on a task force is temporary, and obviously, not everyone on campus is involved.

What needs to develop is an overall sense of awareness. I mentioned in the 'oil and water' section of this chapter that there are distinct differences between academics and student affairs personnel. Faculty members are connected by their common objective of teaching and advancing knowledge. Student affairs staff, on the other hand, include men and women specializing in different functional areas (e.g. residential life, campus activities, and orientation). While I am not convinced that the two will be able to mix into a cohesive whole, I do think that if there are attempts to make faculty aware of the value and the contributions of student affairs, then at least the distinction between the two can be managed more effectively. The more that academic affairs personnel know about what is going on with students, the better the education *Crossroads* can provide (E). According to a member of the executive leadership team, members of each division need

opportunities to be in contact with their colleagues in the other division. Ideally, this would lead to more direct communication across the divisions and between students and faculty (E).

Communication, according to a student affairs professional, was "one of the areas that [she thought could] better be improved." She told me that institutional leaders did a good job of sharing information with those on campus, usually through emails, but she believed that on a smaller scale "some of the silos still exist[ed]." Another faculty member explained that sometimes "faculty can feel very entitled…" (F-M), and according to an academic affairs professional, this entitlement can keep some faculty distant from their student affairs colleagues (AA-P).

One faculty member explained to me that he believed more could be done on the side of student affairs to reach out to faculty. He felt student affairs staff should personally "take more steps to invite faculty to specific events or functions, i.e. 'come to see so and so, a student(s) of yours, in a soccer game this weekend,' not just 'oh, come to a game when you can.' " Then faculty would appreciate the initiative and would be more likely to accept (F-M).

Student affairs professionals need to make a point of initiating contact with faculty when the time and circumstances are appropriate. Earlier in this chapter I mentioned that the culture of the university is one in which faculty talk to their departmental representatives; while that line of communication is still workable and should be maintained, putting my idea into action would require that faculty members and student affairs professionals have more opportunities to interact. Faculty should

continue to work with their department leaders on issues relating to their respective programs and disciplines. This approach ensures that departmental leaders stay in-the-know and aware of the "whole picture" (AA-P). What could happen, though, are additional chances to go "outside the box."

Circumstances such as those discussed here present opportunities for small attempts to get faculty connected with students' lives outside of class. Building upon faculty members' relationships with specific students and appealing to their own intellectual and cultural interests to encourage their involvement in activities on campus are little ways to make connections with them. Even if the opportunities are few and far between, they are critical to getting faculty to think positively about the student affairs division.

Recommendations for further research. Moving forward, I think there is great potential for further research on this topic, especially at *Crossroads University*. Just after I concluded my research, a major announcement was made: the President declared that the 2009-2010 academic year would be his last as President. Therefore, the conclusions I have drawn represent but a snapshot of time. With a new President assuming the role on July 1, 2010, the leadership dynamics on *Crossroads's* campus have presumably changed. It would seem, therefore, that an investigation could take place yet again at *Crossroads*, to determine if the current President's leadership has affected the climate for

collaboration. It would be worth examining, in a few years time, just how conditions on campus have changed.

The topic of collaboration between academic and student affairs is one that could be examined further. I mentioned in previous chapters that *Crossroads* is similar to other residential institutions and that the findings could be used to frame studies of conditions elsewhere. I believe that other universities and colleges should consider exploring the situations on their respective campuses. Similarities can be drawn between campuses, but there is great value in a focused investigation particular to one's own institution.

In this chapter, I introduced the analogy of academic and student affairs being like oil and water, respectively. I drew this conclusion based on the information from my interviews. I imagine that the characteristics that differentiate those in academic affairs from those in student affairs are similar, no matter what institution one investigates, but I acknowledge some variation among campuses that could affect the climate for collaboration. Ultimately, each institution is unique in its leadership, structures, and objectives. All things considered, these institutional characteristics, as well as the personalities of the faculty and staff, can and do affect collaboration on a campus. My research, again, is a reflection of one institution. While some of my findings may mirror conditions on other campuses, others probably do not.

The future of *Crossroads*. The future of *Crossroads* is going to depend on how it develops and puts its goals into action. More assessment needs to be done in order to reach the university's goals, and according to one faculty member, this future activity will provide a great chance for the two divisions to collaborate. She said, "I think that that might be a place, when we put together some university-wide documents, because student affairs will be evaluating some of those learning goals. That might be a chance for me to see where some of this stuff is happening and how data has been collected about those goals" (F-F).

Much like the world we live in, the *Crossroads* campus will constantly change and adapt (E). Time, planning, money, and stable leadership are all needed to make good things happen for the university (E). Hopefully, the new President's leadership, more momentum can be gained. Arcelus's (2008) participants hinted that there was "great potential in *Crossroads* [especially] if the right leader with ideas and energy came to *Crossroads* to harness all that it has to offer" (p. 271).   A university that is unable to harness opportunities for collaboration is one that does not take full advantage of the liberal arts education in a residential college setting (E). The last President's energy did a lot of good for the university in many ways. He initiated progress and set the stage for even more progress.

The one remaining problem, if it can even be called that, is that change at *Crossroads* moves at a very slow pace (F-M). The President of *Crossroads* at the time of my research had been there for six years, and in that time strides were made, but there still is much room for improvement. For such progress to be made, even more time will

be needed. A merger of divisions may happen automatically on paper and structurally, but the merger of mindsets of men and women on campus is going to take much more time and nurturing.   A faculty member said, 'individually, [the campus community is] still okay, I think, for the most part. People tend to be good to one another. As an institution, we are not always good to groups of people who are here" (F-F). According to another faculty member, "slowly…the culture is changing" (F-M).

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APPENDICES

Appendix A
(Copy of email Dr. Victor Arcelus sent to participants)

Hello _____,

I am contacting you because of your involvement in my dissertation research that was conducted during the 2003-2004 academic year. A current master's student at *Crossroads*, Janine Abdallah, is pursuing her graduate degree in education, and she is interested in conducting a study that follows up on the work that I did for my dissertation. She would like to examine the present climate for collaboration between academic and student affairs personnel on campus. She has asked me to identify five-ten participants from my study and ask whether they would be willing to meet with her for an interview. Given your insights into the *Crossroads* culture and climate I thought that you would be a good person for her to spend some time with. I have not shared your name with her yet. I wanted to give you the opportunity to communicate with me whether you are interested in participating in her study. If you are willing to be a part of it, I will pass along your name to Janine and she will be in touch with you. She will also share more detailed information about her research study at that time.

Please email me by _____ to let me know whether or not you are willing to participate in Janine Abdallah's study. By reassessing the current state of *Crossroads's* climate, Janine hopes to determine if five years of new leadership and a different organizational structure have been able to positively change the level of collaboration between personnel in academic and student affairs.

If you have any further questions, please let me know. Thank you for considering this request for participation.

Victor

Appendix B
(Copy of the email I sent to participants)

Dear _____ ,

  My name is Janine Abdallah, and thank you for allowing Victor Arcelus to give me your name. As I am sure you remember, five years ago you participated in a study in which Dr. Arcelus examined the relationships between academic and student affairs personnel on campus. The reason I contact you today is because for my master's thesis in the Education department, I am planning to conduct a follow-up study to the one conducted by Dr. Arcelus. I want to assess *Crossroads's* climate for collaboration today. My hope is to gauge how relationships have changed due to the new leadership and organizational structure that emerged immediately after the conclusion of Dr. Arcelus's research. In order to replicate Dr. Arcelus's study as closely as possible, I am trying to collect data identically. For that reason, your contribution would be extremely valuable to my study. Your part will allow for consistency between the projects, and it will, I believe, enhance the utility of my project.

I would love to set up a time for us to meet. My schedule is flexible, so I will make every attempt to accommodate yours. Please let me know what works for you and we will go from there.

Thank you again for considering this project, and I look forward to our meeting.

Sincerely,

Janine M. Abdallah
Master's Student in Education - *College Student Personnel*

jma018@crossroads.edu
571-277-8935

Appendix C
(Interview Questions)

For Academic Affairs/Faculty Interviews:

1) What it is like to be involved, as a faculty member or as academic administrative staff member, at *Crossroads*?

2) How would you define your role?
    a. How is role reflected in:
        i. Mission/goals/values
        ii. Institutional dialogue?
    b. Is your role on campus supported by:
        i. Campus environment?
        ii. Supervisor(s)?
        iii. The division?
        iv. Colleagues?

3) What do you perceive to be the role of academics and faculty, both in general and at *Crossroads*?

4) Tell me about your interactions/relationships with other faculty members.
    a. Is there a unique way that faculty approach their work?
    b. Have your ideas about teaching changed since you've been here?

5) Tell me about your interactions/relationships with students?
    a. To what extent does your understanding of student culture influence what you do in the classroom?
    b. What do you believe is your role with students outside of class?

6) How do you characterize the institution?
    a. Is it a community?

7) How would you characterize *Crossroads's* education?
    a. Is the climate intellectual on campus?
    b. What are your thoughts on "educating the whole person?"

8) What do you believe others on campus think about the topics we've discussed?

9) Who on campus would agree or disagree with the thoughts you've shared?

10) How have things changed in the last five years?
   a. How have things gotten better?
   b. Have certain things not changed at all?
   c. What role, if any, has the merger of academic and student affairs played in the changes that you've observed?

Appendix C Continued...
(Interview Questions)

<u>For Student Affairs Staff Interviews:</u>

1) What it is like to work in student affairs at *Crossroads*?

2) How would you define your role?
   a. How is role reflected in:
      i. Mission/goals/values
      ii. Institutional dialogue?
   b. Is your role on campus supported by:
      i. Campus environment?
      ii. Supervisor(s)?
      iii. The division?
      iv. Colleagues?

3) Tell me why you chose a career in student affairs? Why *Crossroads*?

4) What do you perceive to be the role of student affairs, both in general and at *Crossroads*?

5) Tell me about your interactions with other student affairs personnel.
   a. Is there a unique way that you and your colleagues approach your work?

6) Tell me about your interactions with students?
   a. How do you contribute towards educating students?
   b. What do you want students to accomplish or come away with after interacting with you?

7) How do you characterize the institution?
   a. Is it a community?

8) How would you characterize *Crossroads's* education?
   a. Is the climate intellectual on campus?
   b. What are your thoughts on "educating the whole person?"

9) What do you believe others on campus think about the topics we discussed?

10) Who on campus would agree and disagree with your thoughts?

11) How have things changed in the last five years?
   a. How have things gotten better?
   b. Have certain things not changed at all?
   c. What role, if any, has the merger of academic and student affairs played in the changes that you've observed?

Appendix D
(Consent Form)

INFORMED CONSENT FORM
SOCIAL SCIENCE RESEARCH
Crossroads University

Title of Project: The Clearing Storm: A Re-assessment of the Climate for
                      Collaboration between Academic and Student Affairs

Principle Investigator: Janine Abdallah   Advisor: Joseph Murray
                        Crossroads University   Education Dept., Olin 469
                        33 North 8th Street   *Crossroads* University
                        Lewisburg, PA 17837   Lewisburg, PA 17837
                        571-277-8935   570-577-1324
                        jma018@crossroads.edu   jlmurray@crossroads.edu

1) **Purpose of the Study**: This study is a follow-up to one completed by Dr. Victor
   Arcelus in 2003-2004. It will investigate the impact that *Crossroads*'s new
   leadership and organizational structure have had on the institutional climate for
   collaboration between academic and student affairs personnel.

2) **Procedures to be followed**: You will be asked to take part in one, possibly two,
   interview(s) about your experiences as a member of the campus community. The
   interview should not go longer than one hour. The interview(s) will be audio-
   taped with your permission. From the audiotapes, transcripts will be made.

   ____   **I agree** to have the interview(s) audio-taped and transcribed

   ____   **I do not agree** to have the interview(s) audio-taped and transcribed

3) **Discomforts and Risks**: Beyond those that may be experienced in everyday life,
   there are no anticipated risks in participating in this research project. While you
   will be asked to discuss potentially sensitive information about your place of
   employment, your comments will be held in strictest confidence at every stage in
   the data collection process. During the interview, please do not relate your
   comments about individuals by name. Please restrict yourself to discussion about
   campus climate and institutional effectiveness issues, as they are at the core of
   this study.

4) **Benefits**:
   a. Your involvement will offer a glimpse into how the new organizational structure and leadership have been able to bridge the gap between personnel in both academic and student affairs.
   b. This research might provide you with a better understanding of how this institution encourages student-learning through its new structure.

5) **Duration**: Interviews will take about forty-five minutes to an hour to complete.

6) **Total Number of Subjects**: At a minimum, five subjects will be interviewed for this project. If necessary, more subjects may be considered.

7) **Statement of Confidentiality**:

   a. The principal investigator, Janine Abdallah, will know your identity. If you permit a digital audio recording to be made of your interview(s), transcript(s) will be made for the purpose of coding your responses. In order to help complete this step, a professional transcriptionist will be hired. While the transcriptionist will have access to specific response information, he/she will be required to sign a statement of confidentiality beforehand.

   b. Because of the small number of participants in this study, data from those participants will not be broken-down and categorized into smaller cell-sizes. For example, certain demographic information (such as race/ethnicity, gender) will be omitted, and in doing so, conclusions about your identity will not be able to be drawn.

   c. At every stage in the research process, measures will be taken so that all identifying information will be deleted and/or changed. Only Janine Abdallah will ultimately have access to any digital and/or hard-copy files. Those files will be saved by Janine, both on her personal computer and an external hard drive. Everything will be secured in her home in a locked filing cabinet. Once the study has concluded, all digital recordings will be erased.

   d. After your contribution has been incorporated into the final work, you will have the opportunity to review your respective portion of the text in order to verify its accuracy. No identifiable information will be included in the final draft; rather, a pseudonym of your choice will be used in place of your real name. With your permission, the researcher will use your title/position in the paper. Please note below whether you authorize the researcher to do so. If you choose to not let her use your title/position, then your role will be noted either as faculty or administrator (AA or SA).

    _____ **I authorize** the researcher to use my title/position in her writing

    _____ **I do not authorize** the researcher to use my title/position in her writing

    e. If, upon reflecting on and/or reviewing your responses, you have a change of mind and you determine that your participation in this study makes you uncomfortable, you do not have to have your data used in the final project. If you choose to withdraw any or all portion(s) of your contribution, please contact Janine either via email or at 571-277-8935 and your request will be honored.

8) **Right to Ask Questions**: You can ask Janine Abdallah questions about the research at any time before, during, or after the interview. You may contact her via email, phone, or in-person. If you have questions about your rights as a research participant, contact Jerry Rackoff in the IRB Office at x7-3623.

9) **Compensation**: No compensation will be offered for taking part in this study.

10) **Voluntary Participation**: Participation in this research is strictly voluntary. You do not have to answer any questions you do not want to answer, and if you so choose, you may discontinue your involvement at any time by telling Janine Abdallah, the principle investigator.

If you consent to participate to the terms above, please acknowledge by signing and dating below.

A copy of this consent form will be provided to you for record of your participation.

_____   _____

Participant Signature: Date:

The informed consent procedure has been followed.

_____   _____

Principal Investigator Signature: Date: