

FACULTY PERCEPTIONS OF THE ONE BAKER INITIATIVE

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Submitted to the graduate degree program in the
Department of Educational Leadership and Policy Studies and
the Graduate Faculty of the University of Kansas
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

While my name is listed as the author of this study, it could not have been completed without the support of a number of people. A special thank-you goes to my committee chair, Dr. Kim for your insights and ongoing encouragement. Thank you also to Drs. Susan Twombly, Lisa Wolf-Wendel, Marlesa Roney, Wanda Bonnel and Martha Baird for your helpful critiques and encouraging words.

I want to thank my Baker colleagues who participated in this study or encouraged me along the way. A special thank-you goes to Dr. Jeanne Mann for helping me in the proof reading process. Without her help, I am not sure I would have gotten over the hump to finish this project.

To my sister Marilyn, who also served as my transcriptionist and plodded through hours of recorded conversations, I am very grateful. Without her comic relief, I am sure this journey would not have been as fun.

Thank you to all of my family but especially to my husband, Dale, who help me throughout this process. Thanks for being willing to help with all the small details. You are a dear.

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The University of Kansas, 2014

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ABSTRACT

The “One Baker” initiative was used by Baker University to promote unity and common purpose across the four distinct academic units that comprise the university (Baker University, 2011a). It was developed because the university was concerned that the units were too separated and isolated from each other. As a part of this proposal, the university is considering implementing a university faculty senate. The purpose of this qualitative study was to determine the faculty’s perception of the initiative.

The conceptual framework for this study is based on an understanding of higher education institutions, effectiveness, communication, formal governance including faculty senates, and loose coupling.

Seventeen participants in the study represented all of the four units of the university and were selected to capture a diversity of opinions. Themes were developed from semi-structured interviews. Participants indicated that One Baker was needed to present a more unified brand for the university and to overcome the lack of appreciation

of the contributions of all of the units. Further developing the initiative would help the university by increasing the faculty member's ability to be a spokesperson for the university, increasing collaboration among the units, and providing advantages for students. Disadvantages would include potential loss of the liberal art identity of the university, and a loss of unit autonomy. Participants identified barriers created by geography, structural differences, and cultural differences of the academic units. They recommended the use of workshops and collaborative projects to help develop more unity. They also recommend ways to improve the effectiveness of the current governance structure, but they did not want to create a university faculty senate.

Policy implications for Baker University and similar higher education institutions are given.

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Chapter 1 – Introduction

The purpose of this study is to explore how the faculty at Baker University understands the “One Baker” initiative, a strategy to promote unity and common purpose across the four distinct academic units that comprise the university (Baker University, 2011a). While not part of a formal strategic plan, the One Baker initiative was identified in Baker’s self-study for the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) in the fall 2011 as a way to address some of the challenges of the university. The university developed this initiative because of concerns that the units were too separated and isolated from each other. It was a way to explain the distinct benefits of centralizing some departments, specifically the registrar and marketing in 2009, as well as promoting more effective communication and common culture across the academic units (Baker University, 2011a).

This study explores faculty members’ understanding of the One Baker initiative including their awareness of this initiative and the reasoning behind its development. It solicits their viewpoints about the advantages and disadvantages of this initiative and asks faculty members to articulate the obstacles to implementing One Baker more fully. Finally, this study asks the faculty members to identify tools that would be useful to promote One Baker including the possibility of developing a single faculty senate that would serve the whole university.

To understand the context for this study, it is first important to understand Baker University as an organization, its current governance structure and the reason the One Baker initiative was implemented. The following section will provide a description of

the university, including its history and governance structure. It will also describe the context in which the One Baker initiative was conceived and why a single faculty senate was recommended.

Baker as an Organization

Baker University traces its beginnings to 1858 when it was established by the Methodist-Episcopal Church and granted a charter by the Kansas territorial legislature (Baker University, 2011a). For much of its history the university has characterized itself as a residential, liberal arts college and served traditional age students in the small town of Baldwin City in eastern Kansas. The university began expansion in 1975 with a Master in Liberal Arts program in the Kansas City area for working adults. This expansion created two separate academic units –the College of Arts and Sciences (CAS) and the School of Professional and Graduate Studies (SPGS) in 1988. By the 1990s, SPGS programs included business programs at the undergraduate and graduate level located at campuses in Overland Park, Topeka, and Wichita in Kansas and Lee’s Summit and Kansas City in Missouri. In 1991, Baker developed a partnership with Stormont Vail HealthCare (SVHC) in Topeka, Kansas to incorporate an existing nursing school located at SVHC to create the School of Nursing (SON). The last academic unit to be added was the School of Education (SOE) in 2005. The undergraduate division of the SOE is located on the Baldwin City campus. Both the SOE and SPGS have graduate programs and they are located on the campuses at Overland Park and Wichita (Baker University, 2011a). The Overland Park campus is about 35 miles from the Baldwin City campus, while the Topeka campus is about 43 miles and the Wichita campus is 160 miles.

The physical campuses of the academic units have unique characteristics. A visit to Baldwin City reveals a very traditional campus with historic buildings built around a large open space with trees, creek, bridge and other landscaping details. The housing units and other campus buildings form another ring around the center campus square. The campus offers services not provided at other campuses, including residence halls, dining hall, health services, athletic teams and a Greek system. The library for Baker University is located on this campus but students from all campuses have access to its virtual resources.

In contrast, the SPGS and SOE campus in Overland Park is located in a suburban office park with a large parking lot, well-manicured lawns, revolving doors, and dimly lighted hallways and rooms with large plate glass windows. It is a rented space that gives the impression that it could easily be morphed into more traditional office space. The space is very quiet in the daytime and the administrative offices are frequently closed during daytime hours. Because this campus serves nontraditional and working students, classes are either held at night or online. SPGS has reduced the number of classrooms it has used over the years as more and more of its classes are offered in a fully online format. The spaces in used by Baker in Wichita and Topeka are very similar to the campus in Overland Park.

The SON fills the second floor of an education building that was built in the 1980s as a part of Stormont Vail Hospital. The four classrooms are in close proximity to the administrative and faculty offices. The students use the hospital's health science library as a study area.

Student Enrollment Data. Data from 2012-2013 indicate that there are 1,336 full-time and 1,872 part-time students for a total enrollment of 3,208 (Baker University, 2013). This indicates that only 42 percent of Baker students are fulltime. The bulk of full-time traditional age students is enrolled on the Baldwin City campus and are either a part of the CAS or undergraduate SOE. Full-time status is defined as 12 hours per semester for undergraduate and nine hours per semester for graduate level programs. CAS has 818 full-time and 118 part-time students or 86 percent full-time students. On the other hand, SPGS has 275 full-time and 994 part-time students or 28 percent full-time students. Students in this program can earn a variety of business and liberal arts degrees at the associate, bachelor and masters level. The SON only offers Bachelor Degrees in Nursing and has an enrollment of 169. The SOE offers bachelor, masters and doctoral degrees. The undergraduate student enrollment is included in the CAS enrollment. There are 701 graduate students in the SOE (Baker University, 2013).

Declines in student enrollment in all of the academic units, except SON, have plagued Baker and have been a major concern for strategic planning the past four years (Baker University, 2011a). Total enrollment at Baker was 4,112 in fall 2008 and declined to 3,208 in fall 2012 (Baker University, 2013). Enrollment data indicate that number of students at the Baldwin City campus decreased by about 60 students from fall 2008 to fall 2012. Enrollment at SPGS decreased from by about 400 students and the graduate program of the SOE decreased by about 730 in the same time period (Baker University, 2013). In the self-study for accreditation with the Higher Learning Commission (HLC), the university attributed declines in enrollment at SPGS and

graduate SOE to a decrease in financial support by businesses for employees to further their education. The university's financial difficulties in 2008 resulted in significant budget cuts in positions, salaries, and benefits. The university financial situation has improved in the last several years but the university has identified low enrollment as a major concern (Baker University, 2011a).

Faculty Data. The majority of full-time, tenure and tenure track faculty members teach at the Baldwin City campus (Baker University, 2013). The whole university has 108 full-time faculty members and 62 of them teach at the Baldwin City campus. In addition, there are a total of 53 tenured or tenure track faculty members and 48 of them teach at the Baldwin City campus. At the SON, there is one tenured faculty member and one tenure-track faculty member; the other 14 full-time faculty members are nontenured. Similarly, at the SPGS there are two full-time tenured faculty members and four nontenured full-time faculty members but there are 248 part-time non-tenured faculty members. In the SOE graduate program, there is one full-time tenured track faculty members and five full-time non-tenured track faculty members. Like SPGS, the other 149 faculty members at the graduate SOE teach part-time (Baker University, 2013).

Table 1 Faculty Data Fall 2012

Unit	Tenured	Tenure Track	Non-Tenure Track	Total Full-Time	Part-Time
CAS Undergraduate SOE	33	14	15	62	24
SPGS	2	0	4	6	248
SON	1	1	15	17	0
Graduate SOE	0	1	5	6	149

Adapted from University Fact Book, by Baker University. (2013). Baldwin City, KS: Baker University. *Note.* CAS=College of Arts and Sciences. SPGS=School of Professional and Graduate Studies. SON=School of Nursing. SOE=School of Education.

Governance structure. The governance structure at Baker University does not include a traditional university faculty senate. The University Academic Council (UAC) serves as the governing body for all of the academic units but does not have the legislative power commonly seen in other faculty senates at other colleges and universities (Schwartz, Skinner, & Bowen, 2009). The purpose of the UAC is to maintain the integrity of the mission of the university and its main task is to review proposals (e.g. new programs, academic calendars, and constitution changes), that originate from the unit level faculty senates (Baker University, 2013). The UAC can either approve the proposal and forward it on Trustees for final approval or return it back to the unit level faculty senate. The UAC has responsibility to ensure that proposals from

the units are in line with the mission of the university before they are presented to the Trustees for approval (Baker University, 2011b).

As a part of the UAC structure, the Baker University's constitution provides for standing committees that include faculty members from all of the units, but there is no requirement for these committees to meet routinely (Baker University, 2011b).

University level ad hoc committees are also used, for example an ad hoc committee was formed to write the self-study for the HLC visit. While there are sporadic activities that include faculty members from all academic units, except for the UAC, there is no consistent governance structure that brings faculty members from different units together.

In addition to the UAC, each of the academic units has its own form of academic senate based on practical considerations related to size and number of full-time faculty members (Baker University, 2011b). Each unit also has standing committees, including committees that are responsible for program evaluation, that report to the unit's academic senate. The CAS faculty senate is composed of faculty representatives from each academic department and chairs from the standing committees. The senators must have at least three years of service at Baker University and they serve three year terms. The senators vote for a chair who can serve a maximum of four years. At CAS the members of the standing committees, including Program Evaluation and Outcomes Assessment (PEOA) which is responsible for evaluation of student learning, are also nominated by the faculty at large. The committees in turn elect a chairperson who serves on the faculty senate. The dean of CAS serves as a member of the Faculty Senate without vote (Baker University, 2011b).

The Town Meeting is a unique feature of the CAS governance. None of the other academic units have this type of assembly (Baker University, 2011b). Town Meetings are held once a semester and the Vice Chair of the Faculty Senate serves as the chair for this meeting. The purpose of the Town Meeting is to generate new ideas, discuss CAS-related concerns and to frame legislation. The Town Meeting is open to all faculty members at CAS but only full-time faculty can vote. Voting members of the Town Meeting may override or veto Faculty Senate decisions (Baker University, 2011b).

The faculty senate at the SON has a similarly stated purpose as its counterpart on the CAS campus but has a much simpler model (Baker University, 2011b). Rather than electing senators, all full-time administrative and teaching faculty are members of the faculty senate. A representative from the Student Senate may attend but without vote (Baker University, 2011b).

At SPGS, the faculty senate purpose is very similar to that described in the CAS section. Seven Teaching faculty and five Administrative Faculty representatives comprise the senate. The senate is not limited to full-time faculty. Their constitution stipulates that representatives are required to have taught at least 6 credit hours the preceding two years. In addition, the constitution notes that “every effort will be made to have representation from all programs offered by SPGS” (Baker University, 2011b, p.30).

The SOE faculty senate is the governing body for both undergraduate and graduate SOE programs (Baker University, 2013). While the goal of this faculty senate is similar to the other academic councils, Baker’s constitution reflects a dependent

relationship of the undergraduate of the SOE undergraduate program and CAS. The constitution specifies that the CAS has authority over general education requirements and academic entry standards for undergraduate education majors. The SOE retains all authority over graduate education curriculum. The SOE senate is composed of the Chairs of the Undergraduate and Graduate Departments of Education, who also co-chair the meeting and all SOE faculty/staff with at least a half-time contract. The Dean of the SOE is a member with vote and the University registrar is a member without vote (Baker University, 2011b).

The formal governance system at Baker is designed to give the academic units, through parallel structures, the authority to propose legislature that is reviewed by the UAC before approval by the Trustees. The UAC is the only governing body that serves the whole university. It meets several times a year to review legislation to ensure that the integrity of the university is maintained. However because of this narrow focus, the UAC is not designed to promote collaboration among faculty.

Reasons for One Baker

The One Baker initiative has been described as a way to bring the university together to solve challenges related to finances, marketing and communication between the four academic units of the university. While never written into a formal strategic plan, the One Baker initiative was terminology that was understood by people at Baker during the writing of the self-study written prior to the HLC visit in 2011 (personal communication, K. Harr, May 7, 2014). One Baker was a way to explain the reasons for restructuring administrative departments, including the creation of a single university

registrar and marketing department in 2009. These changes have benefited the university by decreasing expenses and helping to provide a consistent marketing plan for the university.

According to Pat Long, former president of Baker University, the relationship between the CAS and SPGS units was a key factor in the development of the One Baker initiative. At the time the initiative was developed, there was concern SPGS was very separate from CAS and “doing its own thing” (personal communication, P. Long, September 26, 2013). Because CAS was financially dependent on SPGS, there was a perception that if CAS were to close, SPGS could survive. She points out that SPGS is dependent on CAS for its reputation and accreditation. There was concern by the administration and the Trustees those faculty members from both units lacked understanding of this relationship. Specifically, the CAS faculty members and staff assumed that SPGS would continue to be able to help support CAS financially. Dr. Long indicated that the university’s financial crisis in 2008 and the accreditation process in 2010-2011 required the academic units to be more collaborative (personal communication, P. Long, September 26, 2013).

Financial difficulties. Because it is a private institution, Baker University primarily relies on the income derived from student tuition and endowments to meet its financial obligations. Private institutions need to make marketing and student recruitment a strong focus to remain in business (Johnstone, n.d). Baker’s expansion into multiple units can be explained by its need to continue to enroll greater numbers of students to maintain viability. The university understood that the ability to recruit

increased numbers of traditional students was limited and so expanded into the adult learner market through the creation of SPGS and the graduate program of the SOE. Part of the reason that the university developed financial problems in 2008 is related to the decreased numbers of students in the SPGS and graduate SOE (Baker University, 2011a). The financial climate of 2008 also greatly affected all higher education institutions that dependent on endowments (Wolinsky, 2009). The combination of decreased tuition and decreased availability of funds from endowments created a significant threat to the university.

In its self-study, Baker acknowledges that it had a financial crisis in 2008 but by 2010, their financial situation had stabilized mainly through expense reduction. The writers of the self-study noted “while some of these reductions reflect a positive step towards greater efficiency, other cuts are not likely to be sustainable over the long term” (Baker, 2011a, p.99). The writers of the self-study were concerned that further expense reduction would result in decreased quality in the academic programs. The self-study specifically cited faculty recruitment and retention, professional development, information technology upgrades, and physical facilities improvements as areas of concerns that would affect the ongoing quality of Baker’s programs. The writers of the self-study acknowledged that CAS was dependent on SPGS and SOE for revenue and CAS needs to find more ways to be more financially independent. The self-study laid out plans to increase both student enrollment and endowment funding (Baker, 2011a).

Communication concerns. One Baker also has been cited as a solution to communication problems among the academic units and this lead to a recommendation to

create a single academic senate for the university. During the process of self-study for accreditation through the HLC in the fall of 2011, the university identified the need to build more “effective communication between the four academic units of the university” (Baker University, 2011a; Higher Learning Commission [HLC] 2011). The self-study indicated that there was a need to develop a “common identity and purpose” for a university that had evolved from a small liberal arts college serving traditional students to an institution with very diverse academic programs and student populations (Baker University, 2011a, p.38). The self-study further acknowledges “the Schools and the College often lack primary knowledge about each other (e.g., programs, activities, research-based educational philosophies, administrative structures, etc.)” (p.244). As suggested by the Board of Trustees (Trustees) and the HLC, one solution to the lack of continuity across the units, the lack of communication among units, and the lack of university-wide assessment, is to make changes in the governance structure. At the education committee meeting of the Trustees on April 28, 2011, a committee member “expressed concern regarding ‘silos’ related to each school having separate handbooks.” At that meeting, the education committee made a motion to “recommend that Baker University leadership intensify effort to move to One Baker, in other words, one faculty handbook and one faculty senate. A progress report was requested by February 2013” (Harr, 2011, April 28, p.1). This motion was approved by the Board of Trustees on May 20, 2011. The university senate model was recommended because it was familiar to the Trustees (personal communication, K. Harr, April, 4, 2012). The HLC report echoed the recommendation for a university faculty senate and suggested it as a solution to develop university wide assessment and improve cross unit communication (HLC, 2011).

Personal Interest

As a member of the nursing faculty at Baker since 2000, I agree with the impression that there is little interaction between faculty members of differing academic units. I have served on several university wide committees including the UAC and an ad hoc strategic planning task force. I have also served as the faculty representative from the SON to the Trustees. Most of my influence at Baker resides within my work at the SON. While I contribute expertise with the formal governance processes at SON, such as the faculty senate and other committees, I think that my most significant contribution happens during the informal conversations with my nursing faculty colleagues. In contrast with my experiences with governance within the SON, I have found it difficult to contribute significantly to university-wide committees.

As a representative to the UAC, I attended these meetings on the CAS campus and by phone. Many of the proposals presented at these meeting were out of my areas of expertise and required trust that colleagues, at the SOE for instance, were making reasonable proposals. Part of the problem was that there was not enough time to really get to know faculty members and deans from the other units and develop relationships that would lead to significant discussion and collaboration. Communication when meeting by phone was difficult, but the only alternative was spending several hours driving to meetings.

My participation on a strategic planning committee was the most frustrating university level committee experience, and it highlighted some of the difficulties in trying to implement a workgroup across all four units. The committee was composed of faculty

members from all of the academic units. The stated purpose of the committee was to “serve as the “One Baker” task force that will provide cross-school communication” (Flaherty, 2011). The committee was to study the five strategic goals for the university and make recommendations for action plans that would be university wide. Under the leadership of the deans, each academic unit was to work in planning groups to develop strategies for their schools, and then submitted these strategies to the committee for review. I participated by phone, and not being able to see faces during conversations hindered collaboration. Most of the discussions were about changing the wording of the strategic plan (beyond the scope of the committee) and attending to the practical concerns such as determining meeting times and how to use an online forum. The committee disbanded without making any real progress in accomplishing its mission. This experience highlighted to me the challenges of trying to mold faculty members from different units into a productive work group.

From my experiences, I can see the benefits to developing more collaboration among faculty members in different academic units. I would welcome exchanging expertise with faculty members from other units, but realize this would take a commitment of time. However, my experiences have led me to question whether changing the governance structure would help Baker meet the goals of collegiality and common culture that are a part of the One Baker initiative. I can see benefits to creating more coordination within the organization and developing collaboration with other units, but I also question how practical this would be for faculty members with full-time teaching loads.

Since One Baker was developed by administrators and trustees, I am interested in how the faculty members perceive the administration's initiative. Faculty work, which includes teaching and governance activities, is affected by a One Baker initiative that focuses on collaboration across academic units. I would like to develop a clearer understanding of faculty member's insights about One Baker and solicit some of their ideas about the advantages and disadvantages of making changes in line with the One Baker goals.

Purpose of Study

The purpose of this study is to explore how the faculty members at Baker University understands the "One Baker" initiative, a strategy identified by the university to help with communication among four distinct academic units that make up the university (Baker University, 2011a). It explores whether the faculty members identifies a need for increasing communication between the academic units, and, even if there is a need, what are potential obstacles and challenges to achieve the goal of increased communication. Finally, this study considers what tools might be useful to achieve this goal.

To accomplish the purpose of this study, it is important first to develop an understanding of the faculty member's perception of the One Baker initiative. There seems to be at least three ways to understand the purpose of this initiative. For the writers of the HLC self-study, One Baker embodies the need for the university to develop a common institutional identity, to foster a common culture and to improve communication among the academic units. From a financial perspective, One Baker

means centralizing services to be more cost effective. From the Trustees' perspective, it means making more structural changes to increase uniformity across the units, which includes implementing a single faculty senate. Because there are multiple ways to understand One Baker, it is important to begin this study with the faculty's perception of why this initiative was developed and how they interpret its need and intended purpose. Factors that could influence the faculty's viewpoints include their academic unit, number of years at Baker, experiences with university level committees and professional experiences outside of academia. These demographic factors influence faculty member's perceptions so they will be included in the interview protocols and considered when interpreting the findings of this study.

Based on their experiences at Baker University and their understanding of the One Baker initiative, faculty members are in a position to provide some insights about potential advantages of this initiative. Their faculty role gives them a perception that is different from the administrators or trustees. For example, they may be able to cite specific advantages to having a more complete understanding of other academic units or being able to develop more collaboration with colleagues from other academic units. This may identify opportunities for the university that may not be available within the university's current organizational structure.

The faculty members may also be able to identify some distinct disadvantages of an organization that requires them to shift their focus from their academic unit to the mission of the whole university. They may be able to articulate distinct advantages and efficiencies in the current structure of very different and distinct units. They also may be

able to describe some ways that the implications of One Baker may conflict with values that are important to them, such as the loss of academic freedom. They may perceive some distinct disadvantages in making changes this initiative would require.

In addition to asking the faculty members about advantages and disadvantages of One Baker, learning more about their perceptions of the challenges and obstacles for implementing this initiative is also beneficial. Faculty members can provide insights about the practical challenges of gathering diverse faculty members together for the type of collaboration that might be a part of implementing One Baker. Faculty members with experience in governance activities at the university level might be especially helpful in to providing specific insights of what might be ineffective in the current practices.

If faculty members desire to further develop the One Baker initiative, then it is important to understand what the tools they believe would move the university toward this goal. It is expected that faculty members could offer ideas that involve both changes in governance and development of other programs that intentionally increase the amount of interaction among faculty members at different academic units. The solution to a more connected university may not lie in formal or hard governance systems but in personal connections that faculty members make with people in other academic units. As Birnbaum (2004) notes “Hard governance makes little difference because most of the important decisions made in the university occur outside of the formal system” (p.11). The bulk of the day to day decisions that shape the identity of the university do not happen within the formal governance systems. The faculty members may have suggestions for possible changes and activities that would encourage faculty members to

develop connections and share expertise with faculty members outside of their academic unit.

Finally, because a university faculty senate was proposed by the Trustees as one way to unite the university (Baker University, 2011a), it is important to understand if faculty members also perceive the need to unite the university by creating a university faculty senate. Faculty senates are a primary way for the faculty members to contribute to the governance of the university (Minor, 2004; Schwartz, et al., 2009), so faculty opinion and support would be necessary to for this governance structure to be effective. If the faculty perceive benefits to implementing a university faculty senate, then understanding faculty's commitment and their recommendation on how to make it effective becomes important. If the faculty see no benefits in developing a university senate then it would pointless to try to use it as a tool to help implement One Baker.

Research Questions

Question 1: How does the faculty at Baker University understand the goal of the One Baker initiative?

Question 2: What does the faculty at Baker University perceive as advantages and disadvantages of the One Baker initiative? What does the faculty perceive as the challenges and obstacles of implementing the One Baker initiative?

Question 3: What does the faculty at Baker University consider as tools to implement the One Baker initiative? Would a single faculty senate be an effective tool to implement the One Baker initiative?

Because this study focuses on faculty perceptions, it can add to Baker University understanding of itself as a small private university with a strong teaching mission. Ideally, the running of the university is a shared endeavor and enlists the contribution of all of the members of the institution and this study can be a way to understanding the faculty's contribution. Because faculty members work daily with students and have contacts with constituents outside of the university, they provide a pivotal role in how the mission of the university is played out on a daily basis. The faculty perceptions can be especially valuable when considering the practical concerns of what is working now, what is not working and how improvements can be made in the future.

Chapter II – Literature Review

This chapter presents the conceptual framework for this study and explains how these concepts apply to Baker University. Because Baker is a higher education organization, the concepts of organizations, higher education organizations, and organizational effectiveness are discussed. Higher education institutions are complex organizations and Bess and Dee (2008) identify four challenges of these institutions. These challenges are meeting the demands of a complex environment while managing limited resources, managing structural challenges of multiple specialized units that work toward their own self-interest, providing fulfillment for organizational members and maintaining rituals and symbols to help the institution create a common identity. Organizational effectiveness is a way to determine how these challenges are being met. There are diverse ways to measure effectiveness including the use of rational goal models and sensemaking. The accreditation process is one way that colleges and university can use to measure their institutions effectiveness through process of self-study and peer evaluation.

Baker has identified communication as an organizational challenge (Baker University, 2011a), so communication is included as part of the conceptual framework for this study. Communication helps the organization meet two essential tasks of the organization: exploration and exploitation (March, 1991). Communication, when defined as the complex flow of ideas between multiple individuals in the organization, contributes to organizational learning that provides benefits to the organization (Crossan, Lane & White, 1999).

One of the ways that communication occurs in higher education is through the formal governance structures. Formal governance in higher education institutions typically includes the ideal of shared governance (Schwartz et al., 2009) or the belief that management of the organization should be collaborative. Formal governance and the concept of shared governance in higher education will be discussed. This section will include a discussion of faculty senates and the different ways they can function in higher education institutions.

Finally, this study will use the concept of loose coupling as way to understand Baker as an organization. Loose coupling is defined as the relationships between units that maintain autonomy but yet remain responsive to each other (Weick & Eckel, 1976). Loosely coupled systems benefit the organization by allowing for quick adaption but they can be difficult to manage. This final section of the conceptual framework will explain loose coupling in more depth and present relevant research related the loose coupling phenomena in organizations. It will explain the ways that Baker University functions as a loosely coupled organization.

Organizational Effectiveness

“An organization is a human system in which members pursue goals and satisfactions-sometimes collectively, sometimes individually” (Bess & Dee, 2008, p.112). They provide an avenue for persons to seek fulfillment though the work they produce as individuals or by working in groups with coworkers.

Colleges and universities are complex organizations. Bess and Dee have identified four challenges that are critical to higher education institutions. First, higher education organizations face the challenge of being responsible to an equally complex environment (Bess & Dee 2008, p.3). They must strive to meet demands of from multiple constituents including students, funding sources and society as whole as well as individuals who work in the organization. But this striving to meet multiple, often competing demands, needs to be balanced with the equally important demand to not overextend and waste organizational resources (Bess & Dee).

Second, because they are considered organizations that a very specialized, higher education institutions can present structural challenges. Individuals in colleges and university typically have specialized expertise that can benefit the institution (Bess & Dee, 2008). However, this narrow focus of specialization can produce subunits that drift from the mission of the organization, produce duplication in programs that undermine efficiency and work at cross purposes that compromise effectiveness. In addition, when organizations are broken down into smaller groups, the focus becomes the functioning of the unit rather than the university as whole. This process is labeled suboptimizing and occurs when members of units “identify with and work toward the goals of their own unit rather than the goals of the organization as a whole” (Bess & Dee, p. 177)

The third challenge is present because people within these institutions have a wide variety of skills, abilities and interests that need to be addressed (Bess & Dee, 2008). These institutions are “webs of human interactions” that provide fulfillment for the members. To be successful, the organization needs to maintain “high levels of

motivation, commitment and trust among members” (Bess & Dee, p. 5). The presence of faculty in higher education institutions creates expectations of self-government and majority rule. Faculty, as members of higher education organizations, consider themselves as having “equal influence and equal information” and the ability to contribute to the collective judgment of the institution (Orton & Wieck, 1990, p. 214).

The final challenge is to maintain rituals and symbols that can create a sense of unity and stability to persons both inside and outside of the organization to create a common organizational identity. This needs to be balanced with the need to encompass diverse individuals and ideas (Bess & Dee, 2008, p.5). These competing changes of being responsible to a complex external environment, maintaining the mission of the organization, maintaining fulfilling work for members of the organization, and creating unity of the organizations are all important considerations when trying to understand an organization such as Baker.

Effectiveness and efficiency. Measurements of effectiveness and efficiency are methods that organizations used to determine how they have meet the challenges of multiple demands from students, people within the organization, funding sources and society as whole. Efficiency focuses on the internal processes of the organization and is a measure of how it uses its resources. In contrast, effectiveness is a measure of how the organization adapts to meet its goals. Both are necessary for organizations and help to determine how an organization meets its challenges.

Measuring effectiveness is a complex task because multiple constituencies present diverse opinions about what constitutes the effectiveness of the university. As Cameron

(1986) notes “Judgments of effectiveness are based on the values and preferences individuals hold for a certain organization. The trouble with these values and preferences, however, is that they vary, and they are often contradictory among different constituencies” (p.541). For example, administrators and trustees might find the number of students enrolled as a useful metric to determine institution effectiveness. However, faculty members may consider increased numbers of students as ineffective because education resources are stretched thin and undermine academic quality.

One way to determine institutional effectiveness is through the use of the commonly used rational goal model (Bess & Dee, 2008). A goal is developed when there is a determination about gaps between the idealized version and the actual version of the institution. Once goals are established “an organization is effective if it accomplishes its goals over the long term. Effectiveness is measured by the degree the organization attains identified output targets” (Bee & Dee, p.759). Examples of the goal setting model in higher education can be seen in the practices of benchmarking, performance funding, and evaluation service instruments (Bess & Dee, p. 759).

Another way to consider effectiveness is through the lens of sensemaking, defined as “the development of cognitive frames of reference to understand and interpret experiences” (Weick, as cited by Bess & Dee, 2008, p. 774). Meetings and forums, if they promote positive dialogue, can help participants in sensemaking processes that can result in a critical reflection of organizational effectiveness in ways that could not be accomplished through methods of exhaustive data collection (Bess & Dee, 2008). Sensemaking processes help participants develop mental maps based on the group’s

priorities. As a part of the sensemaking process, participants develop common mental models, set priorities and make predictions about the future that help to determine how to make changes.

Accreditation processes. Meeting the requirements of accreditation can be a way for higher education organizations to use both rational goal models and sensemaking to improve the effectiveness of the institution. The process of accreditation requires members of the institution to both reflect on the effectiveness of the organization and develop future goals to make future improvements. Since the G.I. Bill became law in 1945, the United States government has required higher education institutions to have regional or institutional accreditation to be eligible to receive federal grants or participate in student aid programs (Lattuca & Stark, p.259). The federal government does not have its own accreditation program but relies on these agencies to qualify institutions for participation in government programs. While they are designed to be voluntary programs, participating in the accreditation processes is required to receive federal funds. Since the late 1980s, the federal government has required that student assessment be a part of the accrediting process (Lattuca & Stark).

The organization that provides coordination for accrediting body in the United States is the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA). It describes the process of accreditation as collegial and it requires a self-study by the institution based on general criteria determined by the accrediting organization. Once that is completed, the accrediting body provides a peer evaluation and makes a decision whether to accredit the institution (CHEA, n.d.).

Baker University is accredited by the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) and it uses the process outlined by CHEA. It has general criterion to use as a focus of the accreditation process (HLC, n.d.). These criteria emphasize the organizational mission, and integrity. Two of the criteria focus on teaching and learning and include a review of quality, resources, and support as well as evaluation and improvement. The final criterion focuses on resources, planning and institutional effectiveness (HLC).

The accreditation process has been criticized because it is expensive, curtails innovation and is not transparent (Kelderman, 2013). However, it is still the primary method in the United States to ensure quality and accountability in higher education.

Organizational effectiveness at Baker. While Baker is a small university it is relatively complex and experiences the same challenges as all higher education institutions. The challenge of meeting the demands of multiple constituents with limited resources has been especially acute since it experienced a financial crisis in 2008. The four diverse academic units, each with their own specialized expertise and potential to act only in the unit's self-interest, pose a threat to the university as a whole. The university also needs to find ways to help the members of its organization find fulfillment in their work and continue to maintain and develop symbols to help the university maintain unity.

Baker uses the rational goal model when developing its strategic plans to improve its organizational effectiveness. It also used this model when it participated in the accreditation process. Developing a self-study document, essential for HLC accreditation, required the members of the Baker community to use both rational goal

models and sense-making to help the organization understand itself and develop goals for the future.

Communication

March (1991) has identified communication as a necessary component of the two essential tasks of an organization. It underlies the ability of an organization to both pursue new ideas, which he terms exploration, and the ability to apply what has been learned, which he calls exploitation. Both exploration and exploitation are necessary for the long term health of an organization but he stresses that the exploration tasks should not be short changed because they are important for the long term health of the organization (March). This indicates that the time and expense needed to increase the communication among the units strengthen the organization over time.

Communication is not limited to the transmission of ideas from one person to others (Bess & Dee, 2008), but it refers to the complex flow of ideas among multiple individuals in an organization (Crossan, Lane, & White, 1999). Communication in this context allows for information flow that contributes to organizational learning which is defined as the process of achieving the strategic renewal of an enterprise (Crossan et al., p. 522).

Barker and Camarata (1998) recognize communication as an essential component of organizational learning which they define as “developing new knowledge that changes behavior to improve future performance” (p. 455). Communication has been identified

as necessary to help individuals challenge their mental model, or the way they see the world, to allow them to challenge the status quo (Barker & Camarata).

While individuals can develop insights on their own, ideas become further developed in a group context. Crossan et al. (1999) states that while individuals can “have an intuitive insight and begin to make sense of it through an internal conversational process (i.e., talking to one’s self), but the interpretive process is likely to be much richer and more robust if the conversations and interactions are with others” (p. 525). Wenger (2000) recommends that work groups, or what he calls communities of practice, be intentionally developed across disciplines to encourage different ways of thinking and create a means for individuals to participate in a larger community. The process of organizational learning enables the organization to make better decisions, but it also contributes to the personal growth of the individual (Barker & Camarata, 1998). Using communication effectively allows an organization to convey trust and honesty that can move the organization in a positive direction (Barker & Camarata).

One of the ways to promote open communication is to intentionally build it into the activities of the university. Within higher education, communication and organizational learning can occur in both the formal processes of governance practices and the informal exchanges among organizational members. There is an expectation that faculty will participate in both of these processes. Within their roles at the university, faculty members are expected to participate in formal governance activities such as committee work and collaborate informally with colleagues. This study is designed to

explore aspects of both formal and informal communication with the faculty members at Baker.

Communication challenges. While Baker is a small university, the presence of multiple campuses in different locations decreases the opportunity for faculty members from different units to interact with each other. Practical considerations of geography and different schedules contribute to the insular nature of the academic units and interfere with any ongoing communication among members of different units. This lack of communication among the unit indicates that Baker may be missing opportunities for organizational learning that would be beneficial (March, 1991; Crossan, Lane & White, 1999). This missed opportunity has been noted by Baker (Baker University, 2011a) and the HLC (HLC, 2011).

Formal Governance

Formal governance is one way that an organization can foster communication and make improvements in organizational effectiveness. Formal academic governance is the structured decision making bodies that are prescribed in the official documents of the organization. An example of formal governance in higher education institutions are faculty senates. They are a part of a shared governance model that is common in higher education (Schwartz, et al., 2009). While uncommon in most other types of business enterprises, the belief that faculty should participate in the governance of the institution, is considered a norm at many universities and colleges (Wilson, 2009). Keller (2001) explains processes imbedded in shared governance. “The management of a college or university should be collaborative, with some areas requiring joint decision making and

other areas primarily the responsibility of either the faculty or the administration and trustees” (p. 308). Johnston (2003) and Birnbaum (2004) both argue that shared governance is necessary to create a balance and build connections among faculty, administration and governing boards that are necessary parts of the decision-making process.

Ultimately, the legal authority for the institution rests with the governing board of the institution and the board has the responsibility to ensure that the objectives of the institution’s charter are maintained (Simplico, 2006). In fact, Duderstadt (2004) notes: “From a legal perspective, shared governance is a misnomer. By law or by charter, essentially all of the legal powers of the university are held by its governing board, although generally delegated to and exercised by the administration and the faculty, particularly in academic matters” (p.140). While faculty can be very influential, from a legal perspective, they serve as advisors to the institution. Duderstadt observes that faculty involvement in governance occurs at two levels. At the committee level, faculty can influence hiring, promotion, curriculum and allocation of funds. The work of these committees is designed to help the institution meet its mission and allows deans and other administrators to maintain the support of the faculty. Beyond the committee level, faculty governance involves elected bodies such as academic senate (Duderstadt). At both of these levels of faculty participation, from a legal perspective, faculty exercises an advisory rather than a legal role in the governance of the university.

In contrast to the belief that shared governance is common in higher education (Schwartz, et al., 2009), Baldrige (1982) contends that the presence of shared

governance is a myth in a majority of higher education institutions. He estimates that only about 20% of institutions have an organizational structure that incorporates a significant amount of shared governance. Many two-year institutions, small state schools and liberal arts colleges never developed a model of shared governance. He also notes that since the peak of faculty involvement of the 1970s, environment influences have decreased faculty influence over the decision making of the institution (Baldrige).

There are questions about whether shared governance is still relevant for today's higher education institutions. The demographics of the faculty has changed (American Association of University Professor [AAUP], 2012), and the environment in and around the institutions has become more complex (Collis, 2004; Duderstadt, 2004). Faculty commitment in terms of service in governance is a change that has also been noted (Burgan, 1998; Ginsberg, 2011). The recommendations to strengthen the governance structures of United States higher education institutions tend to move in two directions. On one hand, there is a call to return to the times when academic citizenship and service by the faculty was more valued and accepted (Burgan; Ginsberg; Scott, 1997). These authors note that slow processes of shared governance benefit the organization by preventing potential harmful trends such as developing a strong market focus (Birnbaum, 2004) or decreasing academic freedom (O'Neil, 2004).

In contrast, there are those who maintain that in order for colleges and universities to remain viable, there is a need to respond to environmental threats with strong board and administrative leadership in a much swifter manner than can be achieved with the traditional consensus attributed to shared governance (Duderstadt, 2004; Kaplan, 2004;

Keller, 2004). These writers contend that seeking advice from faculty is a prudent thing to do, but the model of shared governance as universally beneficial to higher education institutions is outdated (Keller). Faculty are too diverse, have too narrow a focus, and are too driven by self-interest to be able to effectively participate in governance beyond the department level (Keller).

Despite the concerns noted with shared governance, faculty or academic senates remain common in higher education and are a primary method used in higher education to implement shared governance (Minor, 2004; Schwarz, Skinner, & Bowen, 2009). In many institutions, they allow faculty control in areas related to academics and share responsibility in other areas with administration (Bess & Dee, 2008; AAUP, 2006). Birnbaum (1989) defines an academic senate as an organization whose members are either all faculty or there is a majority of faculty.

Schwartz et al. (2009) in a survey of 417 higher education institutions found that 90% of these institutions had a university faculty body, and the most common role was “policy-influencing” (59%) with roles of “advisory” (29%) or “policy making” (13%) being less common. In contrast to criticism that faculty senates lack influence, university presidents, chief academic officers and board chairs in this research indicated that faculty senates are both common and influential in higher education institutions (Schwartz et al., 2009).

Functions of faculty senates. Despite criticism of the lack of effectiveness, Birnbaum (1989) argues that academic senates provide important latent functions. He notes that senates are justifiably criticized for a lack of efficiency, for failure to

adequately represent the faculty, and for the inability to develop a consensus of shared values within the faculty. Senates can provide necessarily, albeit hidden, service to the institution. They fulfill symbolic roles, provide a source of status for faculty members and provide a way for the institution to both identify critical issues and maintain stability within the institution (Birnbaum).

Birnbaum (1989) identifies three ways that academic senates can serve as a symbol to the institution. Because they are common within well-respected institutions, the presence of an academic senate is a symbol of legitimacy and quality. The senate can also be a way for faculty members to project concern about academic matters above the basic employee concerns of salary and working conditions. Finally, the presence of a senate can be a symbol of the cooperation among administration, board of trustees and faculty (Birnbaum).

Academic senates also provide status to the faculty and can be a way of enhancing a faculty member's importance on the campus (Birnbaum, 1989). It provides a venue for informal leaders to provide influence without disrupting the role of the administration and governing board. It can also be a way to contain faculty members who might be a disruptive influence to the rest of the institution. Academic senates can provide a way to identify faculty members who have potential to be successful in administrative roles. Faculty members who can garner influence within the senate tend to have both the support of colleagues and the administration. These are useful qualities for academic administration (Birnbaum, 1989).

Because of the complexity of universities, it is difficult to identify the most important concerns of the institution (Birnbaum, 1989). Senates are one way the faculty can signal to administration their most important concerns and then administration can respond. On the other hand, senates can also provide a way to prevent changes from happening within an institution. Senates can slow down potential damaging changes within the institution and allow it preserve the most important parts of the institution. Within this context, faculty senates can provide a useful scapegoat for both administration and the departments to explain to the governing boards why changes cannot be made. Overall, the senate can provide a ritual for faculty, which is helpful because it is a source of stability in an otherwise uncertain institution (Birnbaum).

Models of faculty senates. Not all faculty senates operate in the same manner or perform the same role on all college campuses. In his research, Minor (2004) has identified four models of faculty senates in higher education institutions- functional, influential, ceremonial and subverted. Minor identifies no one best model, and he specifically indicated that he does not make judgment about these models. Their effectiveness of each model is dependent on the people involved in the senate and “issues such as trust, preservation of cultural norms, or aversion among actors” (p.357). Another consideration is that these models are not intended to be static; they can be transformed over time if they are influenced by personnel or structural change (Minor).

The functional senate’s main purpose is to promote the interest of the faculty in the decision- making processes of the institution (Minor, 2004). Through its traditional structure, it seeks to maintain authority in the same areas that were assigned to the faculty

in the Joint Statement- curriculum, promotion, tenure and academic standards. Beyond these domains, the faculty may provide advice to administration but have no real power in the decision-making process. The formal structure of these senates usually includes the election of representatives, the presence of committees with specific formal responsibilities, and the making of recommendations that are adopted through formal voting processes. These structures may also include provisions for deans and other administrators to participate. The functional senate relies on formal governing documents including by-laws, faculty handbooks, constitution or statutes to define the scope of the senate's authority. Functional senates are characterized as being passive unless there is a perceived threat to faculty's rights. Even when threaten, senates tend to block action rather than to initiate solutions. In general, however, functional senates maintain a cooperative relationship with administration (Minor, 2004).

In contrast, the influential senate can initiate change on campus (Minor, 2004). Their influence is expanded beyond the traditional faculty concerns of curriculum, tenure, and promotion. It exerts influence into areas that might be considered the purview of administration – strategic planning and budget. The senate is considered on equal footing with administration, and the culture of these organizations supports a collaborative and collegial relationship between the senate and administration. “The campus community views these senates as influential because they can create change, and other decision-making bodies perceive them as a legitimate governing authority on the campus” (Minor, p.351).

At the other extreme, the faculty in institutions with ceremonial senates view them as inactively and ineffective (Minor, 2004). These senates hold a very limited authority on campus, meet infrequently, and express little interest in campus governance. The administration has a strong presence in these institutions, and academic matters are usually made at the department level. They are viewed as having no decision-making powers, and are only involved in routine decisions of approving the academic calendar and election of officers. The ceremonial senates' relationship with administration is characterized as passive yet cooperative (Minor).

The final model, the subverted senate, has a formal structure in place, but its authority is undermined by decisions made by more powerful informal processes (Minor, 2004). For example, individual faculty members may be much more influential in campus decision-making than any proposal initiated by the faculty senate. There is a skeptical and confrontational relationship between these senates and administration. "These senates are often accused of being narrow in focus, confrontational, and, in some cases, marred by a history of irresponsible decision-making" (p. 352). There is a general lack of confidence that the senate will "do the right thing" (p.354). As a result, their influence is limited, and the senate is limited to very specific areas of formal authority (Minor).

As a final note, structure may not make as much difference as the cultures, communication, and the specific players in the governance processes (Minor, 2004). Minor (2003) found that faculty senates are more likely to be effective at baccalaureate institutions than faculty senates at master's and doctoral institutions. Minor's interpretation of this finding was that it was not institutional support that mattered as

much as faculty's perception that they had influence in the decisions on campus. The baccalaureate institutions were smaller, and their senates could wield more influence in campus decision-making. The ability to impact change makes participation in faculty senates a more worthwhile endeavor (Minor, 2003).

One of the complaints about faculty senates is that they work toward their own self-interest. However, Eckel (2000) found that faculty senates are capable of making hard decisions. He studied four universities that discontinued academic programs. His findings indicated that in each case a shared governance process was used to effectively come to the difficult decision to close academic programs. Each institution had a different process, but in all of these cases the central administration led a process that included faculty and trustees. This study refuted claims that shared governance is ineffective and should be abandoned (Eckel).

While shared governance is a value that is espoused at most higher education institutions (Schwartz, et al., 2009) multiple factors work against this ideal. These factors include the increasing complexity of the university (Collis, 2004; Duderstadt, 2004), the decreasing numbers of fulltime faculty (AAUP, 2012), and the shifting priorities of faculty members away from governance activities (Burgan, 1998; Ginsberg, 2011). Academic senates have been one structure that has traditionally provided at least a symbolic way to express the ideal of shared governance. Minor's (2004) models of academic senates are useful ways to understand the different roles that these faculty senates play on higher education campuses and are helpful in understanding the ways that faculty participate in formal governance processes.

Governance at Baker. The formal governance system at Baker is designed to give the academic units, through parallel structures, the authority to propose legislature that is then reviewed by the University Academic Council (UAC) before approval by the Board of Trustees (Trustees) (Baker, 2011b). The UAC is the only governing body that serves the whole university. It meets several times a year to review legislation from the academic units to ensure that the integrity of the university is maintained. Much of what it does is ceremonial such as approving academic calendars and minor constitutional changes, but it can refuse to forward a proposal to the Trustees. However, because of its narrow focus, the UAC is not designed to promote collaboration among faculty or provide an active role in making changes in the university.

Loose Coupling

Loose coupling theory is one way to understand higher education organizations and is the major framework for this study. Bess and Dee (2008) identify loose coupling as a type of enacted structure. In contrast to formally defined structures, enacted structures are developed by people in organizations as they work together. Weick (1988) identifies enactment as actions by people within organization which creates new events and structures. From this perspective, there is a mental model or structure that develops in the minds of organizational members. It incorporates experiences from the past, and then compares them with present experience to produce forecasts and expectations for the future (Weick). This process results in shared frameworks by people in the organizations that rely more on shared mental models than the formal organizational structure. Since people have shared ideas about how things should function, there is little need for formal

oversight. The role of leaders in these systems is to facilitate collaboration and innovation (Bess & Dee).

Loose coupling is identified as a system that allows its members to enact structure without it being imposed on them. It requires a system that contains components that have weak or indirect linkages. Weick and Eckel (1976), define the loosely coupled events as “responsive, but that each event also preserves its own identity and some evidence of its physical or logical separateness” (p.3). The units in a loosely coupled relationship must be autonomous but there must be frequent enough interactions so that each component influences the other. Orton and Weick (1990) indicate that there are least eight types of components that can viewed as loosely coupled relationships. Loose coupling can occur “between individuals, among subunits, among organizations, between hierarchical levels, between organizations and environments, among ideas, between activities, and between intentions and actions” (p. 206).

The components in this type of system have weak or indirect connections but there is evidence of interactions and collaboration that can benefit the organization as whole (Bess & Dee, 2008). While not universally true, loose coupling can have benefits for the organization. This is in contrast to the process of suboptimizing, where members of the group work toward their own self-interest (Bess & Dee, 2008).

Loose coupling has both cognitive and social dimensions. Loose coupling develops because people in the organization have limited cognitive abilities to manage the total complexity of the organization. Factors such as imperfect information, different perceptions of the environment, poor memory and short attention spans all contribute

coordination gaps (Orton & Weick, 1990). In loose coupling theory, gaps in coordination are viewed, not as problems to be fixed, but as opportunities for members to contribute to the organization (Bess & Dee, 2008). Since they are not connected by formal organizational structure, the social dimension of loosely coupled systems creates connections around collective actions. As members work together, they have connections and influence the organization in ways not always visible if only the formal structure is considered (Spender & Grinyer, 1995).

Loosely coupled systems can provide distinct advantages to the organization (Weick & Eckel, 1976). Because they do not require complex coordination, these systems allow for quicker and cheaper local adaptations. Each unit with a loosely coupled system can respond to the needs of their unique environment without having to coordinate with the larger organization. Another advantage is if one unit is failing, it can be sealed off from the rest of the organization. Trouble in one unit does not harm the rest of the organization. Loosely coupled systems also allow participants to have more control over their work and can provide increased efficacy (Weick & Eckel). But loosely coupled systems can create problems with accountability and unpredictable outcomes (Weick & Eckel) and create gaps in coordination and delivery of services (Orton & Weick, 1990). Because they are held together by interaction of members of the system and not managerial control, they can be difficult to manage (Lutz, 1982; Weick, 1982).

One example of both the advantages and disadvantages of loose coupling can be seen in research done by Hai-Jew (2004). In a descriptive study of a virtual campus created by consortium of 34 community colleges in Washington State, the findings

indicated that the loose coupling system created by the consortium was important to produce innovation. However, as the organization matured, the findings indicated that there was a need for more coordination among the consortium members and for the development of a common culture to ensure institutional survival (Hai-Jew).

Pinelle and Gutwin's (2006) research indicates that there are ways to successfully coordinate changes across a system of loosely coupled units. Their case study records the process of implementing new software in a health clinic, which they identify as a loosely coupled system. They contend that healthcare systems are examples of loosely coupled systems because they are frequently organized in specialized work groups that each develops their own practice standards. This results in a system of groups which work in a semi-autonomous fashion and create considerable coordination problems when organization wide changes are needed. The authors note problems related to decentralized authority within the units, perceptions of inequality, role conflicts and getting a critical mass of people to make the change successful. Based on their experiences they recommend the use of focus groups, the use of bottom up deployment, identification of local champions, and align roles and responsibilities to minimize role conflicts and address inequality issues early (Pinelle & Gutwin).

Danneels' (2003) study of the apparel industry points out some of the characteristics of loose and tight coupling. He observes that tight coupling with current customers allows the organization to be attentive to customer needs and promotes customer loyalty. However, this emphasis on the current customer is detrimental to attracting new customers because of narrow focus of apparel offerings. In this fast paced

business, he recommends that these businesses set up separate units for current customers to prevent alienation (Danneels). The findings from this study are similar to March's (1991) assertion that to maintain its health, an organization needs to continue to explore and learn from its environment as well as attend to applying what it has learned.

Lack of consistent connection, a characteristic of loosely coupled systems, can create isolation that may be detrimental to members of an organization. In a study of a school in Portugal, de Lima (2007) studied the social networks of teachers within departments and how they impacted teacher's professional development. High patterns of social connections contributed to professional development. One of the departments had very low levels of social interactions both within and outside of the department which contributed to decreased professional development of teachers within that unit. The researcher suggested that the structure of loose coupling common in education contributes to isolation of teachers and made it difficult for improvements within education (de Lima).

As a final note, Orton and Weick (1990) recognize that units can also be decoupled or tightly coupled. Like loosely coupled units, decoupled units are independent from each other. But these units are not responsive to each other; they never interact with each other or collaborate on projects. In tightly coupled structures, there is responsiveness between the units but there is a loss of autonomy of one of the units in the relationship (Orton & Weick). Loose coupled, decoupled, and tight coupled unit relationships can all coexist in the same organization (Bess & Dee, 2008).

Loose coupling at Baker. Typical of higher education institutions, the relationships among the academic units at Baker could be described as loosely coupled. Weick and Eckel (1976) define the loosely coupled events as “responsive, but that each event also preserves its own identity and some evidence of its physical or logical separateness” (p. 3). The academic units at Baker have parallel governance systems, serve different student populations, and have a very different mix of fulltime, adjunct, tenured and nontenured faculty. The only exception is the CAS and the undergraduate SOE. They share the same campus and the same students and so have opportunities to interact much more frequently. With some units more than an hour away from each other, geographic isolation results in a lack of spontaneous interaction among faculty members from different units. The differences in the student population that each unit serves and even the differences in academic calendars can contribute to the separateness of the units.

There are advantages to loosely coupled systems such as those found in the academic units at Baker. Because they are relatively independent, the units can adapt quickly in response and more quickly than in organizations that are more tightly controlled because there is less coordination needed (Weick & Eckel, 1976). For example, SPGS with its flexible five week block schedule can add classes quickly partly because they can hire part-time faculty members to teach classes within a couple of weeks. The current system of distinct individual units is considered one of strengths of the university. In its self-study, Baker specifically identified the need to maintain the distinctiveness of each of its units as a way to serve different student populations (Baker University, 2011a).

These loosely connected systems can also create some disadvantages to the institution. They can create problems with accountability and unpredictable outcomes (Weick & Eckel, 1976) and create gaps in coordination and delivery of services (Orton & Weick, 1990). Because they are held together by interaction of members of the system and not managerial control, they can be difficult to manage (Lutz, 1982; Weick, 1982). The One Baker initiative can be seen as a way to try to overcome the disadvantages created by loosely coupled system. It was developed in response to a need to coordinate more functions among the units (especially marketing) (personal communication, K. Harr, March 29, 2012) and consolidate and downsize departments because of financial difficulties. For example, the registrar's office was centralized at the Baldwin City campus at that time and one dean temporarily became the head of both SPGS and SOE (Baker University, 2011a). The HLC report (2011a) also remarked on the "relatively independent nature of the University's Colleges and Schools" (p. 4) and suggested that it had contributed to the decentralization of assessment of student learning and the lack of assessment on the university level.

Summary

This chapter contains a description of the conceptual frameworks used for this study and describes how these frameworks apply to Baker University as an organization. It explains the challenges of organizational effectiveness in higher education institutions and communication. It describes the contribution of shared governance to higher education institutions and explains the roles and functions of faculty senates in higher

education. It emphasizes the concept of loose coupling and describes research studies that help to understand how it influences organizations.

Chapter III - Methods

Rationale for Qualitative Method

The purpose of this study was to determine Baker University faculty's understanding of the One Baker initiative and the advantages and disadvantages of moving the university toward greater unity. It asks the participants to identify potential barriers and obstacles to improve the communication among four separate academic units that comprise the university. It also asks faculty to identify possible tools, including a single faculty senate, which would help the university to meet the goals of the One Baker initiative. This required a deeper and more nuanced understanding of the faculty member's perspective than can be gained from quantitative methods. Qualitative methods were used because they provided a deeper exploration of faculty's experiences, perceptions and opinions.

A basic interpretative qualitative methodology was used. This type of qualitative design allows the researcher, as the research instrument, to gather data that builds concepts and to suggest hypotheses that provide a description of phenomenon (Merriam, 2002). In this study, the qualitative research questions focused on the individual Baker faculty member's perspectives of the One Baker initiative. The data from 17 faculty members' interviews were analyzed to develop themes that were used to describe the range of opinions, ideas, and recommendations expressed these participants.

Participant Selection

For this study, participants were selected from faculty at each of the four academic units at Baker University, the College of Arts and Sciences (CAS), School of Education (SOE), School of Professional and Graduate Studies (SPGS), and the School of Nursing (SON). Because the goal of this study was to capture a range of opinions from faculty members from all four academic units a purposeful selection process was used. This process, using maximum variation strategy, was used to intentionally recruit participants with a wide range of opinions (Maxwell, 2005). Participants were recruited to capture a range of both academic experience and experience with governance at Baker. I interviewed administrators and consulted committee rosters to develop a list of potential participants to contact. The goal was to recruit participants who had varied backgrounds and years of teaching at Baker to aid in providing a wide range of ideas to add depth to this study. Factors that were considered during the recruitment process included years at Baker, committee participation and experiences that required collaboration with other academic units. Faculty members who are new to the university were recruited with the assumption they had limited experience with governance at Baker. Maxwell calls this purposeful selection and states that when used in a qualitative design it can increase the confidence that the information obtained is more typical than a random selection process.

The primary focus of this study was the full-time faculty at Baker. Despite the deficit assumptions concerning part-time faculty and non-tenure faculty, they can provide many positive attributes and strengths that contribute to the effectiveness of the institution. Kezar and Sam (2010) contend that they add positive value to academia

because they are dedicated to teaching and have field related experiences. However, at this time, they do not play a significant role within the governance structure at Baker (Baker University, 2011b), and so were not intentionally included in this study.

Description of Participants

For this research, the 17 participants were faculty members from all four academic units at Baker University – College of Arts and Sciences (CAS), School of Professional and Graduate Studies (SPGS), School of Nursing (SON) and School of Education (SOE). There were five participants from each academic unit except SPGS which had two. Because their model of instructional delivery relies heavily on part-time faculty, SPGS has only six full-time faculty members (Baker University, 2013). This limited the pool of potential participants from SPGS. Participants' experiences with teaching at Baker ranged from a few months to 35 years. Pseudonyms were used in the discussion of the findings.

Data Collection Process

To help refine the protocol to be used for data collection process, a pilot study using two participants was used. Because of practical considerations, the two participants for the pilot study were selected from the SON faculty. Participants were asked to provide feedback about the clarity and flow of the protocol questions. The interviews flowed smoothly and the two participants gave positive feedback to the interview protocol. One of the participants in the pilot study had no experience with committee work at the university level so I realized that I would need to be flexible with questions

based on the experiences of the participant. Minor changes were made to the protocol questions and recruitment of 15 more participants was completed over the next four months. Participants were full-time faculty members except one participant who held a three-quarters time position. There were five participants from CAS, SOE, and SON. The model of instructional delivery at SPGS relies heavily on part-time faculty and there are only six full-time available to interview (Baker University, 2013). Because of this only two participants were recruited from SPGS. Participants were recruited using a standardized email message and phone calls. I obtained access to phone number and emails through the online directory on Baker's website. Because I see faculty members from the SON on a daily basis, participants from the SON were recruited through personal contact. The participants were purposefully selected to reflect a wide range of experiences in university teaching and governance. Some participants were recruited to reflect experiences as committee chairs and participation on university level committees. Other participants had little or no experience working with other faculty members at the university level. None of the faculty members who responded to requests to be interviewed declined to be a part of this study but three potential participants never responded to emails or phone calls. A fourth participant agreed to be a participant but scheduling conflicts prevented him from being interviewed.

All but one interview was held in faculty member's offices or conference rooms on the campus. The only exception was that one interview for the SON was held at her home at her request. All participants signed consent forms and were given opportunities to ask questions about the research process. Interviews were digitally recorded and I asked

questions to clarify participant's responses during and at the end of the interviews.

Interviews of participants lasted from 25 to 58 minutes. With each interview, notes were written into a log that recorded date, time, demographic information not included in the transcription and a description of the location of the interview. Also included in the notes was general impression of the interview process and content of answers to the protocol questions.

Digital recordings of the interviews did not include identifying information of the participants. They were sent via email to a paid transcriptionist who created a verbatim written transcript. I reviewed each written transcript and compared it to the audio digital recordings for accuracy and made necessary revisions. During this review of the data, I highlighted participant comments that might be useful for determining themes during the analysis process. NVivo software was used to organize the written transcripts, process notes and coding. After the transcript was entered into NVivo, I reviewed each one and coded data that I thought would be helpful in determining themes to answer the research questions. All transcripts were read and analyzed at least three times during the data analysis process. This process was incorporated during the initial reading of the transcript, during the coding process, and during the development of themes.

During the data collection process I also interviewed four administrators, the former president of the university, the executive vice president of academic affairs, the dean of the SOE, and the vice president for institutional and faculty development. These interviews were conducted to gather background information and provide context for the

research. The administrators were not participants. I took notes from these conversations but did not record the conversations.

Another source of data for this study was from artifacts of the university. Documentation of the history of the creation of Baker University and each of its units provided insight in how and why each of the units was created and their missions. This provided context of the current organizational structure of each of the units. The constitution and by-laws of the university and the list of members of the committees were reviewed to gain understanding of the basic governance structure of the university.

Because it was a prototype for governance at all of the other academic units, I attended a faculty senate meeting at the CAS campus. I documented my observations of the interactions of the participants at this meeting and the major topics for discussion.

Data Analysis

Data were analyzed using a constant comparative method, which included reviewing field notes and transcripts throughout the data collection process and doing follow-up and revisions of interview protocols as needed. Transcripts and notes from observations and the artifact review were entered into NVivo software to create a database to supplement the analysis process. For this research, I used the lens of loose coupling which considers separate elements within a system (Weick, 1982) and how they interact with each other. In this case, the separate elements are the four academic units, so I considered data from transcripts, observations and artifacts in the context of the individual units to determine if there were patterns of ideas from faculty members based on their academic unit.

According to typical qualitative research practices, statements from the participants were grouped into text segments and then placed into themes (Creswell, 2002). These themes were used to answer the research questions and describe the similarity and differences of participant's experiences, perceptions and opinions. The participant's academic unit and number of years teaching at Baker were considered during the analysis process.

Validity

To strengthen the validity of this study, member checks were incorporated into the research design (Merriam, 2002). During the interview, I asked questions to clarify my understanding of the participant's comments and participants were told that I would contact them for follow up for clarification. Once the themes were developed, I contacted the participant either in person or by email, informed them of my impressions and requested their feedback for the accuracy of the findings. One participant was not available for follow up.

To further strengthen the consistency and dependability of this research, an audit trail was completed (Merriam, 2002). A written account was made of the details during the research process. This included dates, times, and places of interviews. I also documented the context of the interview which included descriptions of place where the interview took place, and interruptions. Common interruptions were phone calls, text messages, and students visiting the participant to ask questions. I also documented general impressions of the interview immediately after the interview. One dilemma in the presentation of the findings of the data is to maintain some confidentiality of the

participants. Because Baker is a small university, linking very specific descriptions of the settings with the interview would make it very easy to identify individual faculty members. For this reason, a description of the variety of settings was included in an aggregate form. Pseudonyms were also used to help provide some anonymity of the participants.

A final component of the methodology was to include personal reflections on my research process. Because I am a faculty member at Baker University and not an outside observer, it is especially important that I include this reflexive component in this research. Creswell (2002) describes reflexivity as a process where “researchers reflect on their own biases, values, and assumptions and actively write them into their research (p. 58).” During the process of this research, I routinely reflected on my understandings and in what ways my past personal experiences influenced what I was hearing and observing. Including personal reflections within the results of this research will allow the reader to better understand how I interpreted the data (Merriam, 2002). Because I am a faculty member at the SON, I frequently reflected on my biases and worked on trying to capture both the diversity and similarity of responses from all of the participants in this study.

Chapter IV - Results

This chapter provides a description of the participants and the findings from the three research questions proposed in this study.

Question 1: How does the faculty at Baker University understand the goal of the One Baker initiative?

Question 2: What does the faculty at Baker University perceive as advantages and disadvantages of the One Baker initiative? What does the faculty perceive as the challenges and obstacles of implementing the One Baker initiative?

Question 3: What does the faculty at Baker University consider as tools to implement the One Baker initiative? Would a single faculty senate be an effective tool to implement the One Baker initiative?

Table 1

Participant Data

Participant Pseudonym	Unit	Years at Baker	Gender	Unit Committees	University Committees
Ellen	SON	6	F	SON FS	No
Roberta	SON	5	F	SON FS	Yes, UAC, Self- study
Dorothy	SON	4	F	SON FS	Yes, UAC
Alana	SON	2	F	SON FS	No
Helen	SON	3	F	SON FS	Yes UAC
Pam	SOE	new	F	SOE FS	No
Karl	CAS	10	M	CAS FS Chair	No
Sarah	SOE	8	F	SOE FS	yes, UAC
Eric	SOE	1	M	SOE FS	No
Megan	CAS	2	F	none	No
David	CAS	35	M	CAS FS	yes, UAC
Sybil	SOE	7	F	SOE FS	yes, UAC
Frank	SPGS	10	M	SPGS FS other	yes, UAC
John	SOE	10	F	SOE FS	yes, UAC
William	CAS	9	M	CAS FS	yes, Search
Gary	CAS	7	M	CAS FS, P&T Chair	No
Charles	SPGS	24	M	SPGS FS other	yes, UAC

Note. SON=School of Nursing. SOE=School of Education. CAS=College of Arts and Sciences. SPGS=School of Professional and Graduate Studies. FS=Faculty Senate. P&T=Promotion and Tenure. UAC=University Academic Council.

Findings from Research Questions

Question One. How does the faculty at Baker University understand the goal of the One Baker initiative?

For the first question of this study, participants were asked to describe the goals of the One Baker initiative. Five of the participants were not able to answer this question because either they had not heard of the initiative or they had not been able to determine the reason for it. The two participants who were confused about One Baker thought that it implied developing more uniformity among the academic units, and this did not make sense to them. However, the majority of participants were able to identify specific reasons for this initiative. The themes of their perceptions centered on the external and internal challenges of the organization. Participants pointed out that Baker faces a confused public image, and they thought that One Baker was implemented to present a consistent brand to the public. In contrast, some of the participants commented that the goal was to address problems with the relationships among the academic units. For these participants, One Baker was a way, at least symbolically, to help to unite the university by increasing understanding and appreciation for the multiple academic programs the university. This section presents supporting evidence for these themes.

Unsure of goal of One Baker. Three of the participants commented that they had never heard of the One Baker initiative. This lack of understanding can be attributed to either their short time at Baker or lack of exposure to university level governance. Two of the participants, Pam (SOE) and Eric (SOE) had been teaching less than two years at Baker and were unaware of the initiative. Pam, who had just started teaching at Baker

several months before the interviews, commented, “I’ve never heard of that terminology except from you right now.” These comments would be expected because there was no mention of One Baker in the strategic plan of the university in 2013 (Baker University, 2013).

However, more years teaching at Baker did not necessarily mean that the faculty understood that there was a One Baker initiative. Ellen, a participant who has taught at the SON for four years but had no experience with university level committees, made a similar comment, “Well, this is the first time I’ve heard of the name of the concept.” She indicated that she had little experience with faculty or administration outside of the SON.

There were also two participants who had heard of One Baker, but were unclear about its goal. Their underlying assumption was that One Baker was implemented to manufacture more unity among diverse units. Karl (CAS) linked One Baker with a single faculty senate and made this observation, “I think I can speak for most of my colleagues here [CAS], we found it troubling. It didn’t make sense to us We just felt it was really kind of silly to try and force together this [faculty senate] of very diverse elements that actually had very little to share.” David (CAS) commented. “I think it is impossible because we are very different schools...It [One Baker] is just a word.”

External goal for One Baker: Present a consistent brand. Five participants considered the goal of One Baker from an external perspective, specifically the public image of the university. Participants identified a need to present a more unified image to external communities, and they indicated that the initiative was used to rectify a confused

public image. Because of multiple campuses and marketing campaigns, participants felt that there was a need to clear a muddled public perception that could hurt recruitment of potential students. Gary, who has taught at CAS campus for seven years, recalled:

The big issue for me behind the One Baker thing is to present one public face to the rest of the world. ..I do recall an awful lot of discussion about the website and how it looked like we were not one campus. (...)You went to the website six years ago; you saw four different entry points right on the main screen. It didn't look like we were one brand. It looked like we were four different products.

Alana (SON) gave her perspective of the benefits of a consistent brand for Baker:

I think that goes back to the branding, you know how there's one Nike and it doesn't matter what Nike you get, it's going to be cool (...) I guess that would be your advantage if you could market a One Baker better, then you could be known for more.

William (CAS) gave a specific example of the distorted public perception of

Baker:

I think it means that people will think of us both here and outside the institution as a singular entity, as a single institution. I know from conversations that I have had with people I encounter, they say, "Oh, where do you work?" "Baker University" "Oh, I went to Baker" but did they go to CAS or did they go to SPGS? I have found that people's perceptions of Baker largely depend on where they live. People who live in Kansas City, who have no real connection with us, in my experience, think of us as that building on College Boulevard. People in Lawrence or Douglas County think of Baldwin City. In Topeka, I actually had somebody one time when I said I work at Baker, they go "Oh, are you a nurse?" because they were from Topeka and their understanding of Baker is that you're a nursing school.

Ellen from the SON recalled that people have expressed similar a similar confusion to her. "When you say 'I teach at Baker University,' they automatic think you're at Baldwin."

Gary (CAS) commented that the failure of Baker to be understood as a multi campus university has possibly impacted recruiting efforts:

Here's the problem. If you're trying to recruit students to this campus [Baldwin City] and they say, "Mom, I am thinking about Baker University" and she goes, "Oh, isn't that the night school in Kansas City?" I think that might have been hurting some recruiting efforts here at the time.

Recruitment difficulties have an especially strong impact at CAS. While he did not link One Baker to the need to develop a single brand for the university, Karl (CAS) voiced the ongoing concern of faculty at CAS about enrollment:

Every fall, we sweat about freshmen enrollment, every year we worry about that. One of my colleagues once said, "You know I'd like just one year not to have to worry about what the Freshmen class is going to look like or how big it's going to be." We are that tuition dependent. Our raises this year were contingent on our getting 220 freshmen.

While some of the participants defined the reason for One Baker in terms of the university's public image, other participants' perceptions of the goal of One Baker was more internally focused. They pointed to challenges created by a lack of understanding and appreciation for the contribution of all of the academic units.

Internal goal: Develop an appreciation for all the academic units. Seven participants commented that One Baker was needed to create more effective relationships within the university. More specifically, participants indicated one goal of One Baker was to expand the focus of the university beyond CAS. They identified a need to promote an appreciation of the contribution of faculty members and students from all of the academic units. As part of the One Baker initiative, the "Baldwin City campus" became the preferred label over "CAS" or "main campus" because Baldwin City has both CAS and

undergraduate SOE. Despite the change in the name, references to the “main campus” persist in conversations, and I noticed that I used the term frequently in these interviews.

The imagery used by two participants from SON supports the view of the Baldwin City campus as the source of coordination for the university. Alana (SON) frequently referred to the Baldwin City campus as “down there.” She envisioned the implementation of One Baker would “create a culture where we feel like we’re all from the mother ship. It will create more of a team.” In describing her desire for nursing students to feel part of the Baldwin City campus, Helen (SON) commented, “I feel that’s the hub, you know and then we’re the spokes that come out from the hub. “

Participants from outside of CAS described feelings of being disconnected or forgotten by the Baldwin City campus. The dean of the SOE referred to this as the “less than” feeling and said it has receded in recent years, primarily because of the effort of the administration to recognize accomplishments of faculty and students outside of CAS at graduation and other venues. However, this perception still persists in some forms (personal communication, P. Harris, September 19, 2013). This sense of being disregarded was expressed most strongly from participants outside of CAS.

Sybil, who directs one of graduate programs for SOE, expressed frustration at trying to recruit faculty members to serve on dissertation committees. The graduate SOE only has six full-time faculty members (Baker University, 2013), so she depends on doctoral faculty members from other units to serve on committees. Because they have the highest number of faculty members with doctorates, she needs faculty members from CAS to serve. This is totally voluntary. As a result, she is frequently short of faculty

members to serve on these committees. This is very different from her experiences in the K-12 public school system where teachers were given assignments and were expected to participate. She thinks One Baker was developed because:

There is a disconnect; and I still to this day believe that many of the faculty at Baldwin campus don't have a clue as to what we do. I'm sure that it's vice versa (...). We don't teach during the day, we teach at night. Class is over at ten o'clock, I am rarely home before eleven fifteen, sometimes it's eleven thirty if somebody stays to talk to me or something. The fact that none of our students are traditional students, they all have jobs and so when we meet with them, rarely do I have a daytime meeting with somebody.

There is also a perception that the SPGS program, with its focus on adult learners, is not accepted as academically equivalent to similar programs at CAS. Fred (SPGS) gave his perspective:

Basically I support anything that I think increased the rigor of our programs. It's very easy to take pot shots at an evening program and say it's not as good as a residential program. (...) After many years here, I am sure it's true, that our students get a lot more out of their classroom experiences being taught by practitioners. Look at what's happening, the direction is going into the alternative delivery mode [online education like SPGS].

Participants from the CAS campus made comments that some of their colleagues have concerns about the academic strength of the SPGS program but none of the participants that I interviewed had those concerns. David from CAS offered this opinion:

You asked me earlier how I would feel if somebody took a course over there [SPGS] and counted it toward a degree here. I personally would have no problems with it whatsoever. I have always resented people passing judgment on community college courses and stuff as if they had any evidence whatsoever that what we are teaching here on campus is superior to anybody else's. It's all just gut feeling. I am sure there are bad courses taught here and probably very bad courses taught at community colleges. I think there are great courses taught here and there are some great courses at community colleges. You just can't pass judgment.

Two participants, John from SOE and Dorothy from SON used the term

“stepchild” to describe their units compared to the rest of the university. The term was used to describe the lack of respect of the contribution of their units to the university.

John, who teaches graduate courses at SOE, in Overland Park provides this explanation:

But especially I'll speak from the perspective of ... [the] School of Education ... we just kind of felt like stepchildren. Everything from the outside talked about SPGS, we took great offense to that, because we were no longer SPGS. I, and some others, kind of pushed that One Baker thinking because we thought it was better that people on the Baldwin campus, when they referred to Overland Park, didn't say SPGS. They still do that. In fact there was and maybe still is a little bit of angst from Baldwin. They don't think of adjunct instructors and professors of adult students as being really academicians. They're just there. On the other hand, we're raising most of the money for the University, not all but certainly a lot of it. They wouldn't survive [without SOE]... I go to every graduation, every semester, I don't have to, but I do... It's important to demonstrate that we were all in this together.

A similar comment was made by Dorothy from the SON:

I feel that the School of Nursing is viewed as a stepchild and I think it's in very some subtle ways. Even I've observed how it's announced at the Graduation at Baker. At the ceremony I think it's subtle and many ways not so subtle. In some respects and this may relate more to how society views nurses, in terms of trained people. I think that there's either a stereotype or a stigma, that's probably a better word about nursing and nurses and that probably people, this is a feeling I get, don't view us as a legitimate school, so that's frustrating.

The term stepchild was also used by Megan (CAS) when she made an observation about the relationship among the units.

I think for the people who are on this campus, they don't relate to the people who are not on this campus. I think the people who are not on this campus might feel like they are kind of like the “red-headed stepchildren” of it. I think the idea was, we have one president, and we are all working toward the same goal.

While he did not use the term stepchild, Frank (SPGS) commented that the One Baker initiative has moved the university to focus on the contributions of units outside of CAS:

The Board of Trustees would like to see Baker be more of one institution. We have four very distinct divisions and the three schools have very different student populations than does the traditional college... It was eye opening to me to see

how the College of Arts and Sciences at the original campus has traditionally driven so many university wide initiatives. However, in the few years I have been here I have seen that begin to be more balanced. The schools all contribute, in our case quite significantly to some of the initiatives; that I would call One Baker initiatives.

Using descriptions like mother ship (Alana, SON) and center of the wheel (Helen, SON), these participants provide visual images of how the CAS relates to the rest of the university. Participants have noted that the emphasis on CAS as the center of the university has caused the contribution of other academic units to be overlooked. This was exemplified in the participants' use of the term stepchild (John [SOE], Dorothy [SON] and Megan [CAS]). They considered the One Baker initiative as a way help faculty members in the different academic units to learn more about each other and for the university to demonstrate that there is an appreciation for the contributions of all of the academic units.

Summary Question One. In summary, while there were participants who had not heard of One Baker initiative or were confused about the goal of this initiative, the majority of the participants were able to identify reasons for the goal. Four participants considered the goal of the initiative was to help the university develop a more unified public image. The multiple campuses, each with a different mission, created a muddled perception to the public. One Baker was cited as a way to present the university as a more cohesive organization to the external environment.

Seven of the participants in this study indicated that there is a lack of understanding about the contributions of all of the academic units at Baker. Their perception was that the focus the university has been on CAS and that the other units

were being ignored. Also, while the participants did not indicate that they personally had concerns about academic rigor of other programs, they acknowledge that the perception is there, particularly for SPGS. According to these participants, One Baker was needed to promote the value of all the academic units to the university.

Question Two. What does the faculty at Baker University perceive as advantages and disadvantages of the One Baker initiative? What does the faculty perceive as the obstacles and challenges of implementing the One Baker initiative?

After the participants had explained their perceptions of the goals of One Baker, they were asked to evaluate this initiative in terms of advantages, disadvantages, obstacles, and barriers. Participants identified three potential advantages to continuing to develop One Baker. From an external perspective, two participants thought if they understood more about the different programs of the university they could become more knowledgeable spokespersons. Other participants considered One Baker as a way to improve the internal environment of the university by providing more opportunities for collaboration and development of programs that could benefit students. Disadvantages cited by participants included the external loss of the liberal arts identity. Participants also thought One Baker would change the university internally by causing a loss of unit identity and creating a structure that did not use time effectively.

For the second part of this question, participants identified geography, different organizational structures and different cultures as potential challenges and barriers to further implementation of the One Baker initiative. This section presents supporting evidence for the themes developed from the answers to this two part question.

Question Two A. What does the faculty at Baker University perceive as advantages and disadvantages of the One Baker initiative?

Participants were asked to explain the advantages and disadvantages of more fully developing the One Baker initiative. From an external perspective, the advantage of One Baker for participants was that they would become better spokespersons for the organization. One Baker could help them develop more practical knowledge about the organization that would be very useful when they interact with people outside the organization. From an internal perspective, participants cited the benefits of increased collaboration among faculty and increased opportunities for students.

Participants identified disadvantages of more fully developing the One Baker initiative. From an external perspective, participants indicated this may result in the loss of the liberal arts image of the university. From an internal perspective, they identified the loss of local unit autonomy and the inefficient use of time.

External advantage: Faculty could become more effective spokespersons. One of the stated goals of One Baker was for more of the members of the university to become more knowledgeable about the academic units (Baker University, 2011a). Some of the participants in this study are the public face of Baker in the course of their professional responsibilities. Faculty members in the SOE and SON supervise students in practicums in schools and healthcare. Two participants (Eric, SOE and Megan, CAS) are Baker liaisons to high schools. They interact frequently with the external environment and represent Baker to potential students to the community. Bess and Dee (2008) refer to these people as boundary-spanning personnel and they hold important

responsibilities for the university. Two of the participants identified One Baker as a way to understand more about other academic units. They wanted to be knowledgeable spokespersons for the university and be able to answer questions appropriately. This is a potential source of recruitment for the university. Roberta (SON) made this comment:

I do think it's important if they ask me a question about Baker University that I have enough knowledge to be able to speak to, or refer someone to the appropriate person within the schools or at the University level.

Sarah (SOE) commented that an expectation of One Baker would be that she would need to be more knowledgeable about all of the academic units.

The only discomfort I have now is somebody will say, 'Oh, can you tell me about whatever program and I say no I can't'. I try to know contact people to say, 'You'll need to contact this person' and reference people that way. That's what makes me uncomfortable with One Baker is, I know school of Ed, but I don't know all of the other things.

In addition to providing benefits that would improve the relationship of the university to the external environment, One Baker was identified as a way to improve the internal environment of the university. Participants indicated that One Baker could provide the internal benefits of increased collaboration among academic units and provide benefits to students.

Internal advantages of One Baker: Increased collaboration among academic units. Participants described the academic units as being very insulated and referred to bubbles and silos as descriptions of relationships among units. Increased collaboration would be one way to form "a family unit with different members" (Megan, CAS) or for faculty members from different units to be all on "the same team" (Alana, SON) which

could strengthen the university. Participants indicated that they considered collaboration with faculty members from other units was a positive thing. From William, CAS faculty:

Whether it is resources or personnel or just input on things, that [collaboration] would be great. I think that we are both in a position where it is very easy to forget the other is there. As a result, we get in our bubble; we do our thing, and we don't think like One Baker.

From Pam at the SOE: "I think eventually it would be nice if you could maybe have some collaboration that made sense between some different schools." Gary who teaches economics at CAS commented:

I couldn't tell you the name of one person teaching at SPGS in the business curriculum, I don't know who teaches the Econ courses over there and I think that's very common. There might be some gains to be had by coordination with SPGS because there was no coordination, or very little until recent memory.

Collaboration can help provide a set of fresh eyes to review ideas, programs, and teaching materials before they are implemented. Helen from the SON described a situation while she was serving on the University Academic Council (UAC) where collaboration among units was beneficial. When reviewing syllabi for new courses, she had this experience:

I finally said "Okay, these are three different classes that are being offered (and I think they were at SPGS), and every one of these syllabi has a completely different order, a completely different look to them. Things are in different places. If they are from the same school, should they be uniform? They ended up making them all uniform for those pieces of the curriculum.

John, who teaches in the graduate SOE, explained the need for faculty to broaden their expertise (and overcome silos) to be able to advise doctoral students:

Here [graduate program at SOE] we'll take anybody [doctoral student], they'll go anywhere, in any direction, with any kind of [dissertation] theme that's logical or that makes sense. It's up to the faculty advisor to really kind of get up to speed if

they're not already. That begs for generalization not specialization. On the CAS campus, it's pretty much specialization. You've got departments, silos, you belong to the Math Department, and you're in whatever department. That specialization can't go away, but there's got to be greater collaboration amongst its people.

Frank (SPGS) saw an opportunity for collaboration that might help SPGS obtain accreditation for its business programs:

I think we'd like to have help from our colleagues in (...) the CAS Business and Economics Department as we get into this accreditation process because they've been through it. I could see that would be a big leg up for us if they could help us with the process and the steps and the timing and things like that. That's an opportunity, but one we haven't even discussed with them yet.

Internal advantage: Provide benefits for students. Four participants pointed out that increased collaboration could provide improvement in both instruction and experiences for students. Students could be exposed to more diverse viewpoints if faculty members from different academic units worked together. Also, there could be more varied course offerings if faculty members worked across academic units. As one faculty member (Gary) pointed out, CAS has had a decrease of about ten faculty position in the past five years, which has stretched resources. Having more faculty teaching classes across academic units, could have the effect of increasing the types of courses that could be offered to students.

Student enrichment could be one outcome of such collaboration. Megan (CAS), commented that SPGS faculty members could provide students with insights into life after graduation:

[Faculty at SPGS] have so much that they could share with our students here. As a professor, they have so much that they could give to our students about what

happens later . . . To pair those people up with people here it would be really interesting, I think.

Two participants mentioned that it would be a benefit for students to have the option of taking classes at either SPGS or CAS, something they are not able to do now. William (CAS) explained that especially since many of the Baldwin City students are from the Kansas City area:

I think there are advantages. . . If there were a class that SPGS offers, that they would be able to tick a box [meet a requirement] for something here, that would be great. However, just another negative (. . .) that can't happen as we're set up right now, which is head scratching to me. Our students can't take courses at SPGS and here's why. First of all they have a cohort system; you start as a group and move as a group. If you just want to take a random class, I don't think there is a mechanism to allow that to happen.

Gary from CAS made a similar comment:

I would see some potential gains in coordinating. If you could make a SPGS course part of a CAS faculty member's load, I see the opportunity to deliver very high quality education to the Kansas City market. Not that I know that the education they are getting there is low quality, but I know that the stuff here is pretty good. It's just a matter of making it feasible and doable.

David (CAS) commented that having avenues to express concerns and expertise with other academic units would be helpful. He is very willing to help other faculty members in his area of expertise:

I have been concerned about this a bit. If they are offering say a course in philosophy that's not really up to par, then somehow I suppose we ought to be able to express our concerns, and they ought to be taken seriously. We probably know more about the quality of a philosophy course than whoever running the show over there [SPGS] does.

In addition to the advantages of One Baker, participants identified the disadvantage in factors that encompass both external and internal factors. They express

concerns that One Baker could result in a loss of the identity of the university by the external environment. The also commented that One Baker could result in the loss of unit autonomy and be an inefficient use of time.

External disadvantage: Loss of liberal arts identity. Several participants from CAS expressed concerns about losing the uniqueness of a small liberal arts college and Baker trying to move beyond its mission. William from CAS expressed this concern that Baker's liberal arts identity would be lost:

I think there is a general fear among faculty at CAS that if we truly embrace the other campuses, particularly SPGS, and we are really just one giant institution, that we lose a lot of what makes us a small liberal arts institution.

Megan from CAS expressed a similar concern that Baker could become too diluted:

It ends up looking like Baker can serve all purposes and Baker is a small specialized school that doesn't necessarily pull a KU [University of Kansas] This is what our identity is; we should live in that rather than be something we're not.

Internal disadvantage: Loss of unit autonomy. Participants also were concerned about the loss of unit autonomy that might result from a more centralized organization created by One Baker. All participants were generally positive about their contribution to the governance of their academic unit. While there were comments about meetings being unnecessarily formal (Eric, SOE), none of the participants commented that unit level faculty senates were ineffective. As a faculty member of SOE, Sarah observed "I trust each of the different schools to know what needs to be done to make their school most effective. I don't want One Baker to compromise what's going to make this school the most effective."

A striking difference among the academic units is how curriculum is developed and implemented. According to Charles (SPGS), the sense of ownership of the curriculum is very different between SPGS and the other units. CAS faculty tend to place a high value on academic freedom. This sense of independence in developing content was supported by a statement made by David (CAS). He implied that the faculty are the content experts and expressed this concern, “I think we ought to trust the experts. I don’t want them telling me how to teach philosophy.”

In contrast, at SPGS, faculty members are required to have their syllabi approved and use a peer evaluation process. These practices would be considered interferences in academic matters for many of the faculty members at CAS according to Charles (SPGS) and John (SOE). In addition, the culture of collegiality, which can be observed at CAS, SON, and SOE, is not practical at SPGS because of the extensive use of adjunct faculty. Adjunct faculty members at SPGS work part-time and are spread out among multiple campuses. They only meet as a group several times a year and so have fewer opportunities to develop collaborative relationships.

Charles [SPGS] noted One Baker could lead to standardization of academic requirements that would be very impractical to implement. He was involved in the development of SPGS and thinks there is a clear need for each academic unit to maintain control of their own graduation requirements:

It became very clear, for instance, in some of the discussions that there needed to be different sets of requirements. For instance, one of the things that happened in Baldwin City was there were talks about students taking a semester for travel overseas. Adult students and nurses couldn’t do that, so there was no need to talk about some kind of core requirement or requiring language for all undergrads.

Languages wouldn't be something that the other schools could or want to offer. Each college or school can come up with their own core requirements, and there is no duplication of degrees, or at least there hasn't been for a long time.

Internal disadvantage: Inefficient use of time. With the loss of unit autonomy, could come the loss of flexibility for units to respond to student and market needs in a timely manner. One of the disadvantages of One Baker cited by multiple participants is the potential for the university to evolve into a very cumbersome organization that wastes faculty time. One example of this is the speed at which curriculum changes are made. Charles pointed out that curriculum changes need to be made more quickly at SPGS in order to serve adult student's needs. He observed that "Where the College of Arts and Sciences might want two years to develop a Gen Ed program; we might do it in six months." He appreciates that CAS needs to move at a more thoughtful pace, but that would be detrimental to SPGS.

There is a need to move much more quickly than the College of Arts and Sciences moves. They do things in a reserved way, for good reasons. Their timetable is extremely different than the other timetables...I am not suggesting we change things every day. I think when you're in a cutting edge kind of program that has to compete with what's going on in the business world; if you don't change you're lost.

Karl (CAS) agreed that the rate of change at CAS and SPGS is vastly different:

They [SPGS] are lot more agile than we are in terms of their structure and the way that they employ faculty, we're much more plodding, changes here take a lot longer. There is a tremendous amount of inertia here; getting changes pushed through is very difficult, takes a long time.

The waste of time in meetings because of a lack of common concerns was a major concern voiced by the participants. Karl (CAS) made this observation:

In terms of governance I don't know that I have a lot to contribute to your [SON] governance, I don't know what I could offer you. Do you know what I mean? I think many of us feel that way here... there would be a lot of cross talk. There's not a lot that we have in common.

Roberta [SON] made a similar observation, "I think we might end up wasting time talking about something that really doesn't apply across the whole Baker..." Charles [SPGS] voiced a similar concern: "As I look at the whole Baker One concept I still see the differences ...I am not sure that is the most efficient and effective way to do it."

Gary [CAS] spoke to the need to use time wisely:

Even an hour or two a month is a significant loss to a lot of faculty members. Creating a super committee to judge on issues like that is not disrespectful of our time, it just shows somehow a lack of awareness of what it is we do and how much we do here. The current system works, so why change it.

Charles (SPGS), who helped design the current governance structure, thinks the current system meets the needs of the university:

It [the current governance structure] seemed to be streamlined, and it seemed to work, minimized time and I think all the campuses liked it. I think College of Art and Sciences liked it because they really didn't want to spend time talking about other issues on other campuses which is how it originally evolved. I think that form of governance was an efficient structure.

Question Two B. What does the faculty perceive as the obstacles and challenges of implementing the One Baker initiative?

In addition to advantages and disadvantages of the One Baker initiative, the participants identified specific challenges to creating a more unified organization. These are categorized as themes of barriers created by geography, different organizational structures, and different cultural expectations.

Barriers created by geography. The distance between the academic units was cited by six participants as a particularly strong barrier to developing more coordinated units. Charles, from SPGS, put it simply, “Geography is a very, very strong force.” He commented that, because of the distances between the campuses, an hour meeting can turn into a half-day meeting. Charles recalled, “We’ve moved the meetings to different campuses but often times there are people who say ‘It’s too far or I am not going to that, because I don’t have the time or am too busy.’”

Sybil (SOE), who lives 80 miles from the Overland Park campus where she teaches, expressed a similar comment:

It [the disconnection between the academic units] doesn’t have anything to do with the governance part of it. It has to do with our location.... The way we are structured, we’ve got people in Overland Park. The main campus is at Baldwin... We’ve got Topeka, we’ve got adjuncts in Wichita and we’ve got adjuncts all over the place. There is going to be a certain amount of disconnect, no matter how hard anybody tries.

This physical separation makes collaboration among units difficult. Sarah (SOE) “Time and geographic distance is an issue. I know we have the virtual capabilities, but it’s not the same, in my mind, when you’re trying to solve problems and have some creative thinking. “

Distance makes it easier to not get involved. Ellen (SON) made this observation: “I think overall... we are not aware of what goes on there [at the Baldwin campus]. We’re just far enough away distances wise that I certainly don’t get involved.”

The practicality consideration of meeting obligations at one campus and attending a meeting at another campus was also mentioned. Sarah (SOE) also commented that

driving to university level meetings at times conflict with teaching evening classes.

Megan (CAS) has some responsibilities that require meetings with SPGS that require her to drive from Baldwin City to Overland Park. She explains her situation:

Everybody else likes to do their meetings at four o'clock on Thursday or Fridays, but we have lab until then. For me to get from here, all the way out there is like an hour, forty-five minutes, but close to an hour at four with traffic. So I am never going to the meeting on time. They made it almost impossible for me.

Conference calls are used to eliminate the need to travel to meetings, but this can limit interactions between committee participants. Dorothy (SON), who has served on the UAC, explained the difficulties of making meaningful contributions to meetings via phone:

When people can't see a face, it's not as meaningful a connection, and it's easier to disregard people that aren't in the room. For instance, when they have UAC meetings, there's a group of people sitting at Baker campus, and there's a couple linked in phone connections and I think that it's difficult for those people sitting in the room. Being on the phone link side of it, I found it pretty frustrating at times we're not even acknowledged, our names have been left off minutes when we've been present. ... People pay attention to facial cues. They know when somebody wants to say something. On a phone link, it's really hard, we'll start to talk and then somebody else, in the room, will talk over us or start another facet of the conversation.

Different organization structures of the units. Participants identified that the different organizational structures of the units creates difficulties in promoting uniformity and coordination. The different structures also affects the speed that change can occur and increases the time needed to establish collaborative relationships. The units were established with different structures related to finances, personnel, and scheduling of courses that make it difficult to create uniformity across the units. Charles (SPGS) explained that Baker has different financial aid rules for students based on which

academic unit they attend. Hiring, salaries and benefits (e.g., sabbaticals) differ among the units. He gave a few examples:

We clearly have at least three or four different sets of rules. It makes it pretty hard to say Baker One for several reasons: The contract with Stormont Vail is not like anything else. The contract between SPGS and the Institute for Professional Development in Phoenix is not like anything else; there are certain restrictions that come with those kinds of things. For instance, Stormont Vail does the hiring and pays the salaries. That's not anywhere else, so trying to make us all alike when we're not alike is a difficult process.

William (CAS), who has some experience with trying to coordinate classes between SPGS and CAS, made this comment:

The financial component was an incredible obstacle. There was also that whole thing of their cohorts; we just don't work that way. I understand from a marketing and business model, why that's important. For us, a liberal arts institution, [students] take a class here, take a class there. You can't do that at SPGS. In that regard, they seem very foreign to a lot of people at the CAS campus.

The uniqueness of each of the academic units and the lack of shared experiences creates a need for more time to establish collaborative relationships. Roberta (SON) explains this:

There are some very unique parts to each of our expertise. There are areas that do not overlap and can't really be shared experiences. So to me the disadvantage would have to spend a lot more time and energy when we're already time crunched to understand and contribute to other departments.

Sarah (SOE) also voiced a similar concern that the different structures of the units create barriers to collaboration, "I think it would be easier if we had some time to problem-solve some things. That's one thing I don't see happening because of different designs, and different programs in the school. That's going to be very hard to do. "

Different cultural expectations. Participants commented that cultural expectations and values of the academic units could create obstacles to One Baker. Participants in this study had a wide variety of backgrounds before they entered academia. Some of the participants from the SON, SOE, and SPGS have had experiences working as managers and administrators. They have different expectations than faculty members who hold traditional values of academic freedom and faculty independence. Participants indicated that this creates different expectations related for following administrative directives and participating in teaching evaluation processes. The differences in the cultures of the units also affects the speed at which change can be accomplished.

Eric (SOE), who teaches undergraduate students at the Baldwin City campus, thinks change can happen within the current structure, but it is difficult. He has noticed that faculty at CAS can ignore administrative directives if they want. Compared to his experiences at the K-12 public school system, change is slower, and part of it is related to the tenure system. He explained:

The fact that they [faculty] have tenure...provides some disincentives to come on board. That's one thing I have seen here, if someone wants to ignore something, seems they can. I felt like K-12, you can't just ignore it because there's a process in place to nudge you along.

Sybil (SOE) also pointed to her background as a K-12 public school administrator and expressed frustration with a culture of CAS that allows faculty members to function so independently of administration directions. "They [CAS] operate differently; they're more the traditional faculty. All of us [SOE] have retired from being administrators

either in K-12 or higher ed ... We're used to [the expectation that] whatever you get assigned, you do. You don't ignore people."

Faculty members from CAS confirmed the independent attitudes of their colleagues at CAS. Gary (CAS) made this observation: "For a group of particularly older faculty, who've been around the block a time or two, I think they resist the idea that they are being forced to do something." Karl (CAS) also commented that tenure provides disincentives to participate on committees.

John (SOE) points to the traditional mindset of CAS. "I think that sometimes the whole campus [CAS] is myopic, and they go through life with blinders on. They are ... traditional academics." He gives the example of evaluation of classroom teaching, which he points out is a norm within the SOE but would be rejected by CAS. "We come from a different mindset that being evaluated is okay." Charles (SPGS) made a similar observation. He explained that there is an expectation that at SPGS faculty teaching would be evaluated. He thought that the typical response from CAS to these processes would be "Not going to happen, I don't want anybody in my classroom."

Summary Question Two. Participants were asked to examine the One Baker initiative in light of potential advantages, disadvantages, and obstacles and barriers. The participants' perceptions of the advantages identified the need to improve understanding and connections among members of different academic units. Participants identified the positive outcomes of One Baker as being able to become better spokespersons for university when they interact with people in the community. They also saw benefits in

developing more collaborative relationships within the organization that could provide benefits for the students.

But participants were concerned about specific losses that would be the result of changes that might happen with a One Baker initiative. Two participants from CAS were concerned that Baker would lose its liberal arts identity if the university would become more homogenized. However, a stronger concern was that One Baker would mean a loss of control at the unit level because more decisions would be made at the university level. The participants who identified this disadvantage felt that they had the expertise to know what is best for their unit. In addition, participants were concerned that if more decision making was required at the university level, meetings would become more cumbersome and waste their time.

While participants thought there were advantages and disadvantages to further implementing One Baker, they also identified potential barriers and obstacles. They cited challenges created by the units being geographically separated. They also noted that different organization structures and different cultural expectations would continue to be challenges if changes were to be made university-wide.

Question Three. What does the faculty at Baker University consider as tools to implement the One Baker initiative? Would a single faculty senate be an effective tool to implement the One Baker initiative?

After discussing the advantages, disadvantages, and obstacles to implementing One Baker, participants were asked to express some of their ideas or tools that would

help further this initiative. Participants only suggested tools that focused on helping faculty develop better relationships across academic units. They suggested the university should develop activities that were specifically designed to promote relationships among the units, use technology to help develop relationships and overcome geographical barriers and increase the visibility of the University Academic Council.

In the second part of this question, participants were asked to give their opinion about developing a single faculty senate. None of the participants was in favor of this proposal. Six participants had concerns that a single senate would create distinct disadvantages for the university including a loss of local control and creation of unnecessary conflict. This section represents the supporting evidence for the themes developed from the answers to this third question.

Question three A. What does the faculty at Baker University consider as tools to implement the One Baker initiative?

Participants considered improved communication and collaboration important tools as a way to further implement the One Baker initiative. To accomplish this, participants made suggestions related to four general themes. These themes were: Designing activities to promote relationships among academic units, increasing the use of technology, developing collaboration based on identified needs, and making the university academic council more visible. The following section explains these themes in more detail.

Develop activities to promote relationships among academic units. Participants provided specific suggestions for activities to promote interactions among faculty members from different academic units. Helen (SON) indicated that workshops over topics of interest to faculty members from all academic units would be helpful. There was one that was held August of 2013 at the Baldwin City campus that she thought would have been interesting, but was unable to attend because of other commitments. Providing university wide workshops would require advanced planning and considering commitments of faculty members at all of the academic units would help increase participation at these events. While it may difficult to implement, Roberta (SON) indicated that all- faculty retreats would be beneficial to help faculty members develop relationships and develop ideas for collaboration.

Periodic face-to- face meetings are important to develop relationships. Sybil [SOE] made this comment:

It's better than not meeting, and some of it is really more for camaraderie. So we all know that we all exist, and you put faces with people. I think that piece is good, and I usually bring something for them to eat. It just gives them a chance to visit. I think that is helpful.

Implementing a method of recognizing faculty participation in university wide activities was one method that has proven to be effective. Because of a pressing need for faculty members from all campuses to participate on dissertation committees, John (SOE) gave this example:

When we started the doctoral program, I designed, created and purchased a round pin that we started giving anybody who served on a Dissertation Committee. ... It took a while but then you started seeing them on robes at Graduation. People were

starting to wear them, and it's kind of taken off. We are well beyond that feeling that it's us and them.

Social events that include all faculty members, similar to the Baker picnic currently held in August, were suggested by Alana (SON). Helen (SON) and Megan (CAS) also suggested activities on the Baldwin City campus that include students from all the campuses might be helpful in developing more ties between students at other campuses.

Increase use of technology. Because of the challenges of spending time traveling and the dissatisfaction with meetings held by conference calls, the use of video technology was suggested as a way to improve the quality of collaboration. Participants suggested that using video technology would overcome some of these barriers to collaboration. Overland Park and Wichita campuses currently have such technology. John (SOE), “When you can see who you’re talking to and back and forth, it just takes away that problem of distance. I think more and more of that will occur.”

Roberta (SON) pointed out that even if video conference is used, an effort needs to be made to keep participants engaged. “Having worked on many committees that try to pull people from Kansas ... [there is a need] to try to make sure everyone has an opportunity to participate, otherwise, I am afraid people will not stay engaged in the process.

Eric (SOE) would like to avoid meetings, video or otherwise, to keep informed about what is going on in the university. This is his comment about improving communication:

I'm a believer in, if you can do it without a meeting if you can email it or give it to me on paper, let me read it on my own time, study it at home or whatever, over a cup of coffee, I'd rather have it that way. I am getting lazy in my old age too.

Develop collaboration based on identified needs. Participants emphasized that collaboration should not be forced by administration but should develop from identified needs of the university and common interests of faculty. Collaboration should be a natural response to commonsense goals of the university. Karl (CAS) identifies these connections should develop in a natural or what he considers organic. He would support new initiatives:

If it were organic, yes. For instance, if I found some common interest that shared with another faculty member or program at another academic unit and reached out to them and worked with them then yes, but that's what I mean by organic to bubble up from our interests. To have it sort of imposed upon us and say 'Okay, I want you to have closer communication with the School of Professional Graduate Studies.' It's like 'Well, why?' if I don't have a reason for doing it.

David (CAS) expressed willingness to share expertise:

If they asked me, sure I've consulted with a lot of people over my years in a lot of different schools. I've done a lot of faculty workshops. If they wanted to invite me and ask for my expertise, I could probably help them.

Pam (SOE), as a new faculty, also expressed a similar idea. "I would think, as just part of the Baker community that I would want to get to know people." She saw possibilities in "collaborations that made sense between some different schools."

As a practical consideration, Gary (CAS) mentioned that coordination and collaboration is needed "among the programs that have footprints in both campuses." He noted that CAS faculty has more contact with the SOE and SON because they share students. But this does not happen between CAS and SPGS. He notes:

I couldn't tell you the name of one person teaching at SPGS in the business curriculum ...and I think that's very common. There might be some gains to be had by coordination with SPGS because there was no coordination, or very little until recent memory.

Gary (CAS) indicated that collaboration between SPGS and CAS could be helpful:

I think there are probably some synergies that I haven't devoted a lot of time to exploring those things or thinking about those things. There is some push to do that, we're a little bit light on faculty here in the department. We have had more losses than gains over the past few years. I think there was some push for us to work on developing an accounting program in Kansas City, and maybe that faculty member can provide some relief on this campus. We would hire a full-timer, he would teach there most of the time, but also offer a little service here.

Make the university academic council more visible. The final suggestion to move toward One Baker was to improve the visibility and effectiveness of the University Academic Council (UAC). Currently, the University Academic Council (UAC) is the coordinating body for academic governance. It serves to provide coordinating oversight for the schools and colleges of Baker University... It is this body that has responsibility for assuring integration of the programs of the University, maintaining the integrity of the institutional mission as a center of higher learning, and promoting academic and intellectual excellence through broad-based cooperation and conscientious communication (University, 2011b, p.3).

Three participants indicated a need to make improvements in the effectiveness of this committee. Even though he has been a faculty member for nine years, William (CAS) made this observation: "UAC, for being such an incredibly important committee, I never hear anything about UAC. It's kind of like this mysterious entity."

Helen (SON) suggested that an orientation to the university would help her be

more knowledgeable about the issues that are being discussed:

I think if somebody's going to be a member of UAC, I think that they should get a little bit of orientation to the different systems [of the university] ... some of the things we talk about in UAC, I am like I have no idea, so I just kind of agree.

Improving the functioning of the UAC by making it a more decisive body would also be helpful according to Dorothy (CAS) a current member of UAC.

I have felt frustrated because it feels like the group of the UAC committee has a difficult time reaching decisions, and they either beat something to death that is minutia or they're vague, and they sort of hem and haw and can't come to an agreement or a decision.

Question Three B. Would a single faculty senate be an effective tool to implement the One Baker initiative?

In the second part of this question, participants were encouraged to express their opinions about the development of a single faculty senate. None of the participants thought that a single faculty senate would be supported by the faculty. Six of the participants made specific comments that it would not be supported by the faculty. They also thought that a single senate would be ineffective because it would cause unnecessary conflict and result in the loss of unit control.

A single faculty senate is not supported by faculty. While a few participants suggested ways that might make a single senate more effective, none of the participants said they would actively push for it. Several participants expressed just the opposite. Karl (CAS) explained his perception of how he and others at CAS reacted to the possibility:

I don't know, but that [University Faculty Senate] came definitely down from the administration that didn't bubble up from the faculty at all. I can remember the meeting when somebody broached the notion of a common faculty senate, and people were just like, 'That's just nuts.'

The only person who had specific ideas of how a university faculty senate would be helpful was the dean of CAS. He envisioned this body as being able to help solve specific problems. He would like students to be able to take courses at multiple academic units and resolve inconsistencies in grading scales and salaries. While still maintaining the diversity of the academic units, he would like to see more partnerships develop among the units (personal communication B. Posler, August 8, 2013).

A single faculty senate would create unnecessary conflict. Participants were also concerned that a university senate would decrease organizational effectiveness because it would create unnecessary conflict. Two participants were concerned that a single faculty senate could potentially result in a governing body that would be characterized by competition and conflict. The current UAC reviews only proposals from the academic units that affect the university as a whole. For example, if a unit wanted to add a new major, that would be reviewed by the UAC before being sent to the Trustees for final approval. The UAC does not initiate any legislation. A single faculty senate would have legislative power and senators from each academic unit would be in competition for resources. John (SOE) explains it this way:

I think once you get faculty members who vie for limited resources involved in any kind of decision making then there is a potential for conflict... We are hardwired for competition, and that hardwired attitude means that we know that there are only so many dollars. I am going to get in there, and I am going to fight for my department, my school or whatever. I am going to fight for that, because if I don't that pile of money is going to go somewhere else. It brings about conflict.

Charles (SPGS), a strong supporter of keeping the academic units separate and independent, expressed a similar concern about a single faculty senate. A single faculty senate might create alliances of senators from different academic units that would have the power to block needed changes. These alliances could create a dysfunctional system. He thought this conversation among participants in such a senate might be common:

This is something that's for our campus; we're going to vote on it. If it's something for another campus we're either not going to vote or we might vote against it.' So there is this representative body but that process almost enhances the chance that you've got some conflict.

A single faculty senate would result in loss of unit control. The participants commented that a single faculty senate would be ineffective because it would result in the loss of control at the unit level. Four of the participants envisioned a single faculty senate moving the decision-making from the unit level to the university level. They thought that it would result in an ineffective governance structure because decisions would be made by people who did not understand the needs of the individual academic units. There would be more layers of approval needed to make changes, and there is a fear that units would lose decision-making control. Charles (SPGS) thought a single senate would be a 'bulky group' that would have a hard time meeting. Dorothy (SON) that: "You could get bogged down with a bunch of details, you know just crap from each school"

Charles (SPGS) recalled a time when the academic units did not have separate governance systems. He recalled a point in Baker history when SPGS and SON were newly formed satellite units that maintain governance in Baldwin City. He recalled:

At one time, the entire governance structure (in 1990s) was for the College of Arts and Sciences...the committees were comprised of College of Arts and

Science faculty and staff who didn't really have any understanding of these satellite programs... basically, nothing was getting done.

Dorothy (SON) had similar concerns that a single senate would result in the individual identity of the academic units or colleges. "I would vote against it. Just because I think that it would mean one government [body] basically making decisions for all of the colleges. You'd end up losing personal identity... and your distinction as a college."

John (SOE) thought that a university faculty senate might make it harder to get approval for new programs:

We can contain and control things that go on in this School of Education Faculty Senate. It's not very big and it's manageable. Once it goes to University ... who knows what would happen... I think they would chew on things and spit them out, send them back and reject and whatever to a much greater extent than UAC does.

David (CAS) explained his perspective, "I think they're so distinct, the three schools, now there's four, I guess, it would probably be best to stay out of each other's business."

Summary Question Three. The participants in this study did not recommend major structural or governance changes, but rather they presented suggestions that could be used within the current structure. Also, their ideas centered on improving communication and increasing opportunities for collaboration. They thought specially designed activities would help faculty from different units to get to know each other. They also suggested that collaboration should not be forced but be based on common

interests. Increased use of technology and making the existing UAC more visible were also suggested as tactics to improve communication and collaboration between the units.

When asked about developing a single faculty senate, none of the participants saw a need for this radical change in governance. In fact, some of the participants felt that this would be harmful to the organization because it would result in loss of control at the local level and create unnecessary conflict.

Additional Findings

Value of Service. All of the participants made primarily positive comments about their participation on committees at the unit level. Three participants from CAS noted that they found value in serving the university through participation in governance activities. While they stated this work requires a significant amount of time, the participants indicated that their work provides a service by upholding the integrity of the university (Karl), making decisions about the academic careers of faculty (Gary and David) and providing a stabilizing influence for the university. David commented on the importance of faculty participating in governance from his 35 years at Baker:

The faculty are the people who are here year after year. The deans, they come and go (...). That makes you want to be very conscientious too. You don't want to make a mistake because you have to live with the mistake. The Deans can go away.

Positive Relationships with Administration. From the perspective of the participants in this study, the climate of interactions among the faculty and administrators at Baker is positive. In addition to the comments by the participants about the role they play in shared governance of the university, there were several comments that indicated

an appreciation for the way that the administration accepted openness and free speech. There is evidence that the administration honors the faculty's right to be a part of the decision-making process. Two of the participants made specific comments that expressed appreciation for the work of administration at Baker. William (CAS) appreciates that administration allows faculty to express their opinions:

I do think that there is a sense at CAS that, even though sometimes administration might bite their lip while we're doing it, we are given an opportunity to have our voice heard.

Sarah (SOE) expressed her appreciation for the work of administrators:

I try to admire the people in leadership because it's not an easy place to be in (...) to get all of this to work. I think ... [it is important to] support and say thank you, and I don't want your job.

A general positive working relationship between administration and faculty and faculty commitment to the university and to the mission of educating students are benefits that provide a strong starting point to make changes that the university determines that it needs to make in the future. These strengths form a strong base to maintain a culture of shared governance as the university meets its challenges.

Summary of Findings

Questions One. How does the faculty at Baker University understand the goal of the One Baker initiative?

Participants were asked to identify the goal of the One Baker initiative. Three participants indicated that they had not heard of One Baker. Two of these participants were very new to the university and the third one has not participated on any university

wide committees. Four of the participants specifically commented that the One Baker initiative was impractical because of the differences of the academic units both in terms of structures and missions. From an external perspective, participants indicated that there was a need to create a more unified brand for the university. From an internal perspective, participants noted there was a lack of appreciation for the contributions of all of the academic units and One Baker was a way, at least symbolically, to create a remedy for this concern.

Question 2: What does the faculty at Baker University perceive as advantages and disadvantages of the One Baker initiative? What does the faculty perceive as the challenges and obstacles of implementing the One Baker initiative?

Participants identified the advantages and disadvantages of a more fully implemented One Baker initiative. They identified external benefits to the university because it would allow faculty members to become more knowledgeable spokespersons for the university. One Baker would also benefit the internal environment of the university by providing more opportunities for collaboration and development of programs that could benefit students. Disadvantages cited by participants include the external loss of the liberal arts identity. Participants also thought One Baker would change the university internally by causing a loss of unit identity and creating a structure that did not use time efficiently.

Participants also identified barriers and obstacles to creating One Baker. They identified circumstances of geography, organizational structure (e.g. finances, personnel,

and scheduling of courses) and cultural values as potential barriers that would need to overcome before One Baker could be fully implemented.

Question Three: What does the faculty at Baker University consider as tools to implement the One Baker initiative? Would a single faculty senate be an effective tool to implement the One Baker initiative?

Participants articulated ideas that would increase the interactions among faculty members and among students of different academic units. They also recommended that technology should be used to make meeting that were not face-to-face more effective. Several participants expressed a strong desire to have points of collaboration develop in a commonsense, organic manner and not be force. Strengthening the University Academic Council (UAC) by providing more orientation and working toward making it a more decisive body was suggested.

None of the participants in this study were in favor of implementing a university faculty senate. They cited concerns that it would be ineffective because it would create unnecessary conflict and result in loss of unit control.

As a final note, participants have notice some improvement in the relationships between the academic units since the One Baker initiative was put into the strategic plan. Sarah (SOE) explained the changes using this metaphor, “There’s first the umbrella and then the separate entities, I think before it was the separate entities and potentially an umbrella but one that was definitely battered by the wind.”

However, there are realistic concerns about the how far One Baker could be developed. While participants articulated ways that the One Baker initiative was a positive ideal and suggested a variety of ideas to make improvements, they presented realistic concerns about how a change would occur or if too much coordination would actually be harmful to the organization. William (CAS) made this observation:

I think the fact that it's faded just shows how incredibly entrenched each individual campus is in its own way of doing things and what a difficult process it would be to really bring about any effective and meaningful change.

Chapter V- Discussion

A discussion of this study is presented in this chapter. Following a summary of the investigation, a summary of the results is presented accompanied by application of the conceptual framework and current research on the topic. The chapter includes suggested policy implications specifically for Baker University and general implications for similar higher education institutions. This section concludes with an explanation of the limitations of the study and suggestions for further research.

Summary of Investigation

Higher education institutions are complex organizations and Bess and Dee (2008) identify four challenges of these institutions. These challenges are meeting the demands of a complex environment while managing limited resources, managing structural challenges of multiple specialized units that work toward their own self-interest, providing fulfillment for organizational members and maintaining rituals and symbols to help the institution create a common identity. Organizational effectiveness is a way to determine how these challenges are being met. There are very diverse ways to measure effectiveness, including the use of goal models and the use of sensemaking. These concepts are helpful in understanding the diverse challenges that Baker University faces as an organization and the methods that it employs to meet these challenges.

The concept of communication was also used in this study because Baker has identified communication among academic units as a challenge of the organization (Baker University, 2011a). Communication helps the organization meet two essential

tasks of the organization-exploration and exploitation (March, 1991). Communication, when defined as the complex flow of ideas among multiple individuals in the organization, contributes to organizational learning that provides benefits to the organization (Crossan, Lane, & White, 1999).

One of the ways that communication strategies are used in higher education institutions is through the use of their governance structures. Formal governance in higher education institutions typically includes the ideal of shared governance (Schwartz et al., 2009). Shared governance is the belief that management of the organization should be collaborative and faculty senates are a common way to put this belief in practice (Minor, 2004). This concept is useful in this study because one part of the One Baker proposal is the adoption of a single faculty senate for the university. At Baker, the formal governance structure includes faculty senates at each of the academic units, indicating that the university supports faculty participation in shared governance at the unit level. Instead of a traditional university-wide faculty senate, Baker uses the University Academic Council (UAC) as a way to implement shared governance at the university level. While it does not have legislative power, the UAC serves as a review body to ensure that proposals from the units are in line with the university's mission.

Loose coupling, one way to understand organizations, is defined as the relationships between units that maintain autonomy but yet remain responsive to each other (Weick & Eckel, 1976). Loose coupling systems benefit the organization by allowing for quick adaption, but they can be difficult to manage. The relationships among the units of Baker can be described as loosely coupled. The units are separate

from each other, but remain responsive to each other. In addition to the separateness created by the geographical distances of the campuses, the units maintain their independence to serve different student populations through different financial arrangements, course schedules and curriculum focuses. The loose coupling of the academic units is beneficial to the units, because they can quickly respond to opportunities such as developing new programs. However, loose coupling can create a lack of coordination and isolation. The One Baker initiative was developed to overcome the separateness and isolation of the academic units and the concept of loose coupling can be used to understand why these challenges have occurred in the university. This study starts with the assumption that the academic units operate very independently from each other. The research questions were designed to ask participants their perceptions of this system and make recommendations for changes that would improve the effectiveness of the organization.

Summary of Methods

For this research, 17 participants in this study answered questions from a semi-structured interview format that was designed to answer the three research questions. All participants were faculty members from all four academic units at Baker University – College of Arts and Sciences (CAS), School of Professional and Graduate Studies (SPGS), School of Nursing (SON), and School of Education (SOE). There were five participants from each academic unit except SPGS. Their model of instructional delivery relies heavily on part-time faculty members and there were only six full-time faculty members at SPGS (Baker University, 2013) that meet the criteria for this study.

Participants' experience with teaching at Baker ranged from a few months to 35 years, and they had varied experiences with governance activities at both the unit and university level. Participants were purposefully selected to reflect the diversity of opinions and experiences of faculty. The data from these interviews were analyzed and coded into common themes. These themes were used to present the findings for this research.

Interpretation of Findings

Question one with interpretation. How does the faculty at Baker University understand the goal of the One Baker initiative?

As a foundation for this study, participants were asked to identify the goal of the One Baker initiative. Three participants indicated that they had not heard of One Baker indicating that One Baker was not universally known by the faculty. Two of these participants were very new to the university and the third one had not participated on any university wide committees. Not knowing about the initiative is reasonable since One Baker is not a part of a formal strategic plan, but was used as a symbol to direct changes within the university.

Writers of the self-study document for the Higher Learning Commission (HLC), administrators, and the Board of Trustees have identified three purposes of One Baker: The need to develop a common identity and culture (Baker University, 2011a), to place Baker in a better financial position by centralizing departments (Baker University, 2011a), and to create uniformity by developing a single handbook and faculty senate for all of the academic units (Harr, 2011, April 28). However, participants in this study had

different perceptions of the need for One Baker. Four of the participants specifically commented that the One Baker initiative was impractical because of the academic units are very different in structures and missions. From an external perspective, participants indicated that there was a need to create a more unified brand for the university to improve the effectiveness of recruiting new students. One of the disadvantages of loosely coupled systems is that they have gaps in coordination (Weick & Eckel, 1976). Participants commented that each unit of the university had independent marketing strategies and this created public confusion. They understood One Baker as a tactic to present the university to the public in a more easily understood format.

From an internal perspective, participants noted there was a lack of appreciation for the contributions of all of the academic units and One Baker was a way, at least symbolically, to create a remedy for this concern. Research indicates that loosely coupled systems can create perceptions of inequality (Pinelle & Gutwin, 2006) and social isolation (de Lima, 2007). Similarly, participants from SON and SOE also indicated that the contributions of their units to the university have not always been appreciated by members of other academic units. They noted that One Baker was an attempt to recognize that all of the academic units have made important contributions to the organization. These findings emphasized the need for Baker to continue to work at developing a culture that understands and acknowledges the contributions of all the units to the success of the organization.

Question two with interpretation. What does the faculty at Baker University perceive as advantages and disadvantages of the One Baker initiative? What does the

faculty perceive as the challenges and obstacles of implementing the One Baker initiative?

The second research question asked participants to explore reasons for and against further developing the One Baker initiative. It also asked participants to identify some the expected challenges and obstacles that the university may encounter if it tried to move forward with this initiative. The participants' responses to these questions are a reflection of their experiences in working within a loosely coupled system. One Baker was seen as a way of overcoming the disadvantages created by the autonomous nature of the academic units. Baker's self-study for the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) noted that "the Schools and the College often lack primary knowledge about each other (e.g., programs, activities, research-based educational philosophies, administrative structures, etc.)" (Baker University, 2011a, p.244).

Two of the participants thought the One Baker could improve the relationship of the university to the external environment. Because they consider themselves representatives of the university, Roberta (SON) and Sarah (SOE) thought One Baker could be used as a way to understand more about academic units. They want to gain some basic understanding of the other academic units and to know key contact people so that they could more effective spokespersons.

Participants also identified ways that the initiative could provide benefits within the university. One Baker was seen as a way to overcome the insular nature of the academic units, and increase faculty collaboration across academic units. Participants identified that increased collaboration would create more unity within the university

(Megan [CAS], Alana [SON]), development of ways to share resources (William [CAS], Gary [CAS]), and development of new perspectives (Helen [SON]). More specifically, increased collaboration could help SPGS attain specialty accreditations (Frank, [SPGS]). Participants also identified that increased collaboration among the academic units would result in benefits to students by improving both instruction and student experiences.

The specific benefits identified by the participants are examples of the collective actions to create the connections needed by loosely coupled systems (Spender & Grinyer, 1995). These potential areas for collaboration, or collective actions, requires the complex communication among multiple individuals that enables organizational learning that could contribute to better decision making and personal growth of the individual (Barker & Camarata, 1999).

Participants also noted that One Baker might result in the loss of distinct advantages of a loosely coupled system, specifically the autonomy of the units that allows units to have control over their work and to make changes without having to coordinate with the larger organization (Weick & Eckel, 1976). Two participants from CAS, Megan and William, did not want Baker to lose the liberal arts identity if changes required all of the units to have the same structure. Participants also felt strongly that they did not want to lose their unit's autonomy. While participants may notice problems of coordination and isolation, they did identify the benefits of distinctive units and noted that increasing coordination among the academic units might not be effective use of time. They were wary of changes that would require them to navigate multiple levels of approval and consider that this would be a waste of time.

Participants noted barriers that have been formed as the university evolved from a small liberal arts college to a multiple campus structure with four academic units with distinct missions, student population, operating structures and cultures. Participants identified barriers created by the geographical distances among the academic units and by the different elements including different financial structures, different mixes in types of faculty (part-time and full-time), and different methods in scheduling courses by units. These are practical concerns that have contributed to difficulty in developing experiences that promote faculty collaboration across different units. It also makes it difficult for students to take classes in more than one academic unit. The cultures of the academic units also create barriers. For example, CAS maintains its roots as a liberal arts college and faculty hold values of independence and academic freedom. In contrast, SPGS, with a structure that resembles a for-profit model of instructional delivery, has more of a market focus. These barriers are important to consider when developing activities to increase collaboration among the academic units. Strategies to overcome these challenges need to be developed and implemented to ensure success of collaborative efforts.

Question three and interpretation. What does the faculty at Baker University consider as tools to implement the One Baker initiative? Would a single faculty senate be an effective tool to implement the One Baker initiative?

This question asked participants to articulate some specific ways or tools that One Baker could be implemented. It also asked them to consider the possibility of developing a single faculty senate.

Participants recommended the use of workshops and collaborative projects to increase the interactions among faculty members and among students of different academic units. These activities can be a way to improve the effectiveness of the university. While using a goal setting model is one way an organization measures institutional effectiveness (Bess & Dee, 2008), participants' recommendation to use workshops and collaborative projects are examples of the use of sensemaking, "the development of cognitive frames of reference to understand and interpret experiences" (Weick, as cited by Bess & Dee, 2008, p 774). If used to promote positive dialogue, meetings and forums can be tools that can enhance organizational effectiveness (Bess & Dee). To help improve the interactions during these activities, participants suggested the use of face-to-face meetings whenever possible. When it is not practical to hold in-person meetings, participants recommended the video technology. However, special care is needed in these meetings to ensure that all of the participants were included in discussion and decision-making. No matter the venue, whenever faculty members from different units do meet, leaders need to allocate some time for people to develop relationships. Faculty members from different units do not know each other, so some intentionality is needed to make this happen.

Several participants expressed a desire to have points of collaboration among units that were based on common interest and not be forced. They suggested that collaborative projects could be implemented for faculty who share similar students or similar academic interests. Basing projects on identified needs and interests is a way to ensure that faculty members find these experiences worthwhile and will work toward

making them succeed.

None of the participants in this study were in favor of implementing a university faculty senate. They cited concerns that it would be ineffective because it would create unnecessary conflict and result in loss of unit control. However, participants did recommend making improvements in University Academic Council (UAC) so that it would be more effective. William (CAS) indicated that it was a “mysterious entity” and faculty may be unclear as to its function. It was suggested that new members should be orientated to the UAC to help them understand its importance (Helen [SON]). Participants thought that UAC meetings could be made more organized so that it could be a more decisive body, and the decisions of this body should be more clearly communicated to the whole university.

What I learned from the study. The idea for this study grew out of a desire to learn more about the university where I have taught the past 14 years and developing a bit more understanding of the faculty who teach at the other units at Baker. While I have participated in some university level committees, I found it difficult to get to know much about the university or develop ongoing relationships with faculty outside of my own unit. I discovered that many of the participants in this study shared my viewpoint. They desire to have more collaboration across academic units but the opportunities are limited. The participants in this study also want to keep the benefits provided by a system that allows most of the control of the organization to remain at the local level. They want to keep the distinctiveness of their own unit but they also desire more points of contact with faculty from other academic units. Most of the participants in this study do not want to

formally change the organizational structure of Baker but they would like to find ways to overcome some of the isolation (and frustrations) that such loosely coupled units create.

Policy Implications of the Findings

This section identifies policy implications for Baker University and for similar higher education institutions based on the findings of this study. It recommends that Baker consider its strengths and challenges that have been brought to light in the findings of this study. This section also considers how the findings of this study have policy implications for higher education institutions similar to Baker.

Implications for Baker.

Build on current strengths. This study revealed some specific strengths of Baker University. First, all of the participants in this study were committed to the university and want to see the organization succeed. This commitment was displayed in the participants' enthusiasm for the teaching mission of the university. They were all positive about teaching and interaction with students at Baker. This commitment was strongly expressed by the participants who thought increased collaboration, as exemplified by One Baker, could improve student learning and experiences. This emphasis on students, the central mission of all the academic units, can be a motivating factor as the university works toward collaborative projects that involve the cooperation among members of multiple academic units. This underlying commitment should be used to help the university to overcome the barriers of time, distance and the daily inertia that makes it difficult for Baker to make changes.

Another strength that became apparent in this study is the commitment of full-time faculty and administration to shared governance at the unit level. This commitment is shown both in the structure laid out in Baker's constitution (Baker 2011b) and observations by participants in this study. Baker's constitution establishes a governance system that enables administration to make joint decisions on curriculum, student policies, and promotion and tenure. These are all examples of the types of decisions commonly ascribed to shared governance (AAUP, 2006).

A general positive working relationship between administration and faculty and faculty commitment to the university and to the mission of educating students are benefits that provide a strong starting point to make changes that the university determines that it needs to make in the future. These strengths form a strong base to maintain a culture of shared governance as the university meets its challenges.

Challenges. One Baker does not have to mean that units lose their distinctiveness but rather it is a call to consider ways the university can improve communication and collaboration among the units. There are two ways that would help the university meet these challenges. One way is for the university to make improvements in its university level governance structure. The other is to establish ongoing programs well as integrate ongoing activities that promote collaboration across academic units.

It is recommended that Baker develop ongoing programs or institutes that focus specifically on the teaching mission of the university. One example is the Centers for Teaching Excellence that are present in many universities, including the University of Kansas, Texas A&M University, and University of South Carolina. This type of program

could include faculty from all academic units and provide opportunities for collaboration around common projects. The effort required to establish such a center at Baker may be worth the investment of the resources of time and finances.

It is also recommended that Baker seriously investigate how to improve the effectiveness of governance activities at the university level and find ways to bridge the coordination gaps that are the result of the need to manage very independent academic units. It is recommended that Baker make structural changes to its university level governance, as laid out in its constitution and by-laws, as well as continue to developing ways to increasing the informal collaboration among faculty members of different academic units.

As mentioned previously, the University Academic Council (UAC) is the main university governance, and it has five standing committees, faculty representatives, program evaluation and outcomes assessment, learning resources, artist and lecture series and faculty hall of fame (Baker University, 2011b). A review of the committee roster from 2012-2013 indicates that a number of faculty members served on multiple committees, and there were vacancies in many of the committees. Comments from several participants indicated that they were listed as members of committees that either never met (Gary, CAS) or stopped going because they committee was not accomplishing anything (Karl, CAS). This lack of participation suggests that some of the UAC standing committees may not be necessary and could be eliminated. However, the Program Evaluation and Outcomes Assessment committee is an example of a standing committee that could play a critical role ensuring that there is university level assessment, a deficit

noted in the HLC recommendations. It would seem logical that the UAC should review these standing committees and move forward to make changes that would improve the structural aspects of governance at Baker. Having committees that regularly meet and are given significant tasks can create consistency to meet goals. It would be a way for faculty from all of the academic units to work together. Unlike implementing a single faculty senate, these changes would bring the governance structure in line with actual practice and use the current structure to help meet some of the challenges facing the university. The structure that these committees provide can help to overcome some of the difficulties of inertia and finding time to attend to priority concerns.

Tierney (2001) blames some of the difficulties with committee work in higher education institutions to loosely coupled nature of these organizations. He points out that creating more tightly coupled institutions is not appropriate, but there are ways to improve the decision- making processes in colleges and universities. He recommends that the committees start creating agreement by laying the groundwork before the committee meets. It is important to define goals and develop time frames to prevent good ideas from floundering, and also to investigate what has been done by other organizations. He emphasizes the need to effectively communicate the ongoing progress of the committee to provide and create an atmosphere that actively encourages innovation (Tierney, 2001).

However, the formal structure may not be as critical as the actual interactions that occur in both formal meetings and informal exchanges (Kezar, 2004; Birnbaum, 2004). Kezar asserts that leaderships, relationships, and trust are critical factors that can

overcome poor structure. Good leadership can provide a sense of direction, increase the commitment of members, and help to provide meaning to governance activities. If there are relationships that instill trust, then members of the organization will be willing to share and work toward goals beyond their personal agendas. This trust creates an atmosphere where people are willing to ask for help. These attributes- leadership, relationships and trust, make it possible to affect lasting change (Kezar, 2004).

Implications for Institutions Similar to Baker.

While this study focused on the concerns of one private university, many other small tuition-dependent universities have also expanded in ways that are similar to Baker. These institutions have added academic units that focus on very different student populations to help maintain a consistent revenue stream. They have similar challenges of balancing both the diversity of independent units and the desire to develop a common culture that provides a uniting force. Some of the implications of the findings in this study can provide a broader application that can be used by similar organizations. Developing symbols that resonate with the members of the organization, paying attention to deficits created by the loosely coupled systems, and using collective actions to build connections among people of the organization are recommended.

Develop symbols that resonate with members of the organization. This study illustrates that the use of a slogan, such as One Baker, can be helpful for an organization trying to find a starting point for developing a framework for decision making. Weick (1982) recommends the use of symbols to manage a loosely coupled system and the One Baker initiative served as a symbol for the university. The term was coined during a time

when the university was facing severe financial problems and went through painful downsizing. One Baker was used to understand the consolidation of departments and to guide the development of a more uniform marketing plan. It was also used to encourage collaboration to write the self-study for HLC, a process that included people from all of the academic departments.

Beyond these changes, One Baker also symbolized a way to overcome some of the inequities felt by members of academic units outside of the College of Arts and Science (CAS). Visits by administrators to all of the campuses and graduation speeches that include references to working students from SPGS were symbolic activities that came out of the One Baker initiative and helped the university see itself as larger than just the Baldwin City campus. One Baker illustrates that the use of a symbolic term, even if it has different meanings to different people, can be very helpful to organizations trying to meet its goals. It also illustrates that symbolic initiatives can provide a strong framework to make decisions and changes.

The use of a multiple purpose initiative, such as One Baker, can be interpreted many ways and can cause confusion for people within the organization. This highlights the need for leaders to clarify the positive elements of the institution and provide, when appropriate, realistic assurances that elements thought to be critical to the university would not change.

Pay Attention to Deficits Created by the System. This study also illustrated the problems that can be created by loosely coupled systems and the need for leaders in these organizations to pay attention to them. While there are benefits from having relative

autonomous units, it is important for leaders to attend to problems created by lack of coordination, isolation (de Lima, 2007; Weick, 1982), and inequities (Pinelle & Gutwin, 2006). In this study, participants indicated that the isolation of the academic units has contributed to the loss of opportunities to share expertise through collaborative activities across the university that could benefit students. The insularity of the units has meant some potentially lost opportunities that could benefit from more collaborative interactions. This study serves as a reminder for leaders in loosely coupled systems to pay attention to issues related to problems caused by lack of coordination, isolation or inequality and find ways to address them.

Use Collective Actions to Build Connections among People within the Organization. As a final recommendation, it is important that leaders within loosely coupled systems develop strategies to foster relationships that span very separate units. Finding ways to help people develop personal connections is important to combat the isolation and insular nature of units within these systems. Spender and Grinyer (1995) recommend that leaders promote collective actions to encourage people to come together through mutual interest and work. These actions could provide ways to overcome the social gaps created by loosely coupled systems (Spender & Grinyer).

Limitations

The following are limitations of this study:

1. This study focused on a specific problem at one private university with its combination of unique history, culture, people and social interactions. The interplay of these factors

creates some viewpoints that may be unique to Baker University and produce findings that have limited generalizability to other higher education institutions.

2. As a qualitative study, the study attempted to reflect the diversity of opinions and experiences of faculty members. There were only 17 participants and the breadth of Baker faculty's viewpoints may not be captured in this study. Participants of this study may have volunteered because of a special interest in the topic or a desire to be helpful to the investigator. Because of these factors, the study results do not guarantee a reflection of the opinions and experiences of a majority of Baker faculty.
3. This study focused primarily on perceptions of full-time Baker faculty members. However, full-time faculty members are only one-fifth of the total faculty at Baker; the rest are part-time faculty who mainly teach at SPGS and the graduate SOE. Not including them in this study only creates a partial understanding of the faculty perspective of the One Baker initiative.
4. While this study used pseudonyms, the small size of Baker's faculty makes it difficult to keep these comments completely anonymous and this may have affected the participants' responses to the protocol questions.
5. The investigator for this study is a faculty member at the SON at Baker, and my experiences in this role have the potential to influence the interpretations of the findings.

Recommendations for Further Study

Further study of faculty perceptions about their work would be helpful for higher education institutions. Faculty members are the people who enable the institutions to fulfill teaching and research mission and their viewpoints are critical to add in ongoing improvements higher education institutions. This study focused on the perceptions of full-time faculty, but part-time faculty members are becoming a large part of the higher education system (Ehrenberg, 2012). Because of their growing presence on campuses it is important to understand what types of systems promote their professional growth and ability to contribute to the mission of their organizations. They have a potential to present a unique view of the university that would be useful.

As a final recommendation, there is a need to understand the effect of increased requirements for accountability that pressure higher education institutions to be more tightly controlled. Loosely coupled systems make it difficult to coordinate change across the organization (Pinelle & Gutwin, 2006) and case studies that illustrate how academic institutions accomplish this task would be helpful for all higher education institutions.

Conclusion

The idea for this study began from trying to understand the recommendation to establish a single faculty senate by Baker University's trustees and visitors representing the Higher Learning Commission (HLC). This idea had no faculty champion but it really was one proposed solution to a large challenge of the university. The dilemma is to how

to balance the need to maintain independence and distinctiveness of individual academic units and still maintain some commonality and connectedness across the university.

When the units are too insulated, there is a loss of collaborative opportunities which results in lost opportunities to share expertise that could benefit the university. However, the relatively independent academic units have made a positive impact on the university. These units have been able to adapt and increase enrollment over the years and the revenue from these programs have allowed CAS to survive (Baker, 2011a). The academic units have had relative freedom to determine what works best for them and the populations that they serve. The independence of the units has allowed them to trial new programs and ways of doing things without requiring layers of approval that would be the part of a more centralized organization. The loss of unit autonomy would also create real disadvantages for the university. The key is to balance separateness and connectedness to bring out the best of both aspects of the organization and this is an ongoing process.

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Appendix A

Protocol Questions for Faculty Interviews

1. Introduction and gathering demographic information – Number of years teaching at Baker, Unit affiliation, Academic department.
 - a. Tell me about experiences that you have had with faculty governance at the unit level (faculty senate and/or committees).
 - b. Tell me about experiences that you have had with faculty governance at the university level (e.g. UAC, ad hoc committees).
2. Questions related to research question number one: How does the faculty at Baker University understand the goal of the One Baker initiative?
 - a. As part of the strategic plan, the university has indicated a need to develop an identity of “One Baker.” What do think One Baker means? Why do you think it was it was included in the strategic plan?
 - b. One of the reasons for the One Baker initiative is to improve communication between the four academic units- CAS, SOE, SPGS and SON. Do you think there is a need to improve communication between the units? Can you give me some examples of why or why not?
 - c. What are some of your experiences that have shaped your understanding of how the units work together? How does that compare with working with faculty within your academic unit?

3. Questions related to research question number two: What does the faculty at Baker University perceive as advantages and disadvantages of the One Baker initiative?
What does the faculty perceive as the challenges and obstacles of implementing the One Baker initiative?
 - a. What do you think are some benefits to further developing the One Baker initiative?
 - b. What are some disadvantages to further developing the One Baker initiative?
 - c. What do you anticipate would be the challenges and obstacles to further developing the One Baker initiative?

4. Questions related to research question number three: What does the faculty at Baker University consider as tools to implement the One Baker initiative? Would a single faculty senate be an effective tool to implement the One Baker initiative?
 - a. What are some ways that Baker could further implement the One Baker initiative?
 - b. A single faculty senate has been suggested by the Board of Trustees as one way to further develop the One Baker initiative. The HLC report agreed with the Trustees and suggested that a single senate that would improve the communication and collaboration between the units. What do you think about this?
 - c. Do you think that a single academic senate would be effective in unifying the university?

- d. What would be some challenges to implementing a change the governance structure to include a single academic senate?

Appendix B

Protocol Questions for Administrators

1. Introduction and gathering demographic information – Number of years affiliated at Baker, current responsibilities
2. Tell me about why the One Baker initiative was developed? Why was it identified as a goal to improve the university?
3. In what ways do you think that the One Baker initiative has accomplished its purpose? What else needs to be done? Do you think the One Baker initiative is still needed?
4. What changes do you think should be initiated to make Baker more unified?
5. What role does the faculty have to play in improving the communication between the academic units? What is your opinion about changing the governance structure to include a single faculty senate?

Appendix C

Approval Letter University of Kansas



6/12/2013
HSCL #20906

Susan Larson
ELPS
JRP

The Human Subjects Committee Lawrence Campus (HSCL) has received your response to its expedited review of your research project

20906 Larson/Kim (ELPS) Faculty Perceptions of One Baker

and approved this project under the expedited procedure provided in 45 CFR 46.110 (f) (7) Research on individual or group characteristics or behavior (including, but not limited to, research on perception, cognition, motivation, identity, language, communication, cultural beliefs or practices, and social behavior) or research employing survey, interview, oral history, focus group, program evaluation, human factors evaluation, or quality assurance methodologies. As described, the project complies with all the requirements and policies established by the University for protection of human subjects in research. Unless renewed, approval lapses one year after approval date.

The Office for Human Research Protections requires that your consent form must include the note of HSCL approval and expiration date, which has been entered on the consent form(s) sent back to you with this approval.

1. At designated intervals until the project is completed, a Project Status Report must be returned to the HSCL office.
2. Any significant change in the experimental procedure as described should be reviewed by this Committee prior to altering the project.
3. Notify HSCL about any new investigators not named in original application. Note that new investigators must take the online tutorial at https://rgs.drupal.ku.edu/human_subjects_compliance_training.
4. Any injury to a subject because of the research procedure must be reported to the Committee immediately.
5. When signed consent documents are required, the primary investigator must retain the signed consent documents for at least three years past completion of the research activity. If you use a signed consent form, provide a copy of the consent form to subjects at the time of consent.
6. If this is a funded project, keep a copy of this approval letter with your proposal/grant file.

Please inform HSCL when this project is terminated. You must also provide HSCL with an annual status report to maintain HSCL approval. Unless renewed, approval lapses one year after approval date. If your project receives funding which requests an annual update approval, you must request this from HSCL one month prior to the annual update. Thanks for your cooperation. If you have any questions, please contact me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Stephanie Dyson Elms'.

Stephanie Dyson Elms
Coordinator
Human Subjects Committee Lawrence

cc: Dongbin Kim

Appendix D

Approval Letter Baker University



Oct. 3, 2013

Dear Susan,

The Baker University IRB has reviewed your research project application and approved this project under Expedited Review. As described, the project complies with all the requirements and policies established by the University for protection of human subjects in research. Unless renewed, approval lapses one year after approval date.

The Baker University IRB requires that your consent form must include the date of approval and expiration date (one year from today). Please be aware of the following:

1. At designated intervals (usually annually) until the project is completed, a Project Status Report must be returned to the IRB.
2. Any significant change in the research protocol as described should be reviewed by this Committee prior to altering the project.
3. Notify the OIR about any new investigators not named in original application.
4. Any injury to a subject because of the research procedure must be reported to the IRB Chair or representative immediately.
5. When signed consent documents are required, the primary investigator must retain the signed consent documents for at least three years past completion of the research activity. If you use a signed consent form, provide a copy of the consent form to subjects at the time of consent.
6. If this is a funded project, keep a copy of this approval letter with your proposal/grant file.

Please inform Office of Institutional Research (OIR) or myself when this project is terminated. As noted above, you must also provide OIR with an annual status report and receive approval for maintaining your status. If your project receives funding which requests an annual update approval, you must request this from

the IRB one month prior to the annual update. Thanks for your cooperation. If you have any questions, please contact me.

Sincerely,

Thomas Peard
Chair, Baker University IRB