

Chapter 22

Leadership and Distance Learning: Implications for the Administration of Higher Education Extended Campus Locations

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ABSTRACT

Distance learning programs have influenced nearly all aspects of higher education. Extended campus locations at many colleges and universities have been assigned administrative responsibility for distance learning programs. The merger of these highly visible programs creates an educational leadership paradigm shift that draws attention to itself. This merger requires a re-evaluation of the current educational leadership practices associated with efficient operation of the extended campus location.

And it ought to be remembered that there is nothing more difficult to take in hand, more perilous to conduct, or more uncertain in its success, than to take the lead in the introduction of a new order of things. Because the innovator has for enemies all those who have done well under the old conditions and lukewarm defenders in those who may do well under the new. (Machiavelli, 1505)

INTRODUCTION

The emergence of the Internet as a viable medium for the continued evolution of distance learning programs has changed the traditional paradigm of leadership in higher education institutions (Beaudoin, 2003; Snell, 2001; U. S. Department of Education, 2006a). The geographical separation of students and instructors is an organizational actuality in higher education and the reality of

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distance learning programs is one of increased enrollments, increased revenues, and lower costs (Allen & Seaman, 2004; Muilenburg & Berge, 2001; NEA, 2000).

The role of leadership and administration in higher education relative to the emergence of a knowledge-driven society has been significantly affected by the expansion and growth of distance learning programs. There are a number of factors that have contributed to the growth and development of these programs in higher education including, technological advancements in delivery systems, demographic shifts in learner populations, and a resurgence of interest in the extended campus location as a means of enhancing distance learning. The reality of globalization is such that the population effectively served by higher education institutions is no longer limited by the physical boundaries of the home institution (Waits & Lewis, 2003). The extended campus becomes inherently linked to distance learning programs as higher education institutions increasingly assign administrative responsibility for these programs to the extended campus locations (Duning, Van Kekerix, & Zaborowski, 1993).

Extended campus locations are geographically separated permanent sites that are an institutional unit of many colleges and universities around the world (Shoemaker, 1998). They have long been a part of the traditional higher education landscape (Duning et al., 1993). These locations are referred to by a variety of terms including extended campus location, extension site, continuing education unit, satellite campus, or simply off-campus sites and they generally evolved from continuing education programs launched in the 1950's and 1960's to accommodate adult learners (Dejnozka, 1983; Shoemaker, 1998). Extended campus locations were the forerunner to distance learning programs developed in response to the demands of non-traditional or adult students to access higher education programs without having to attend class

meetings at the home institution (Duning et al., 1993; Shoemaker, 1998).

The extended campus location generally provides academic and administrative services to students as part of an extension division established at the home institution (U.S. Department of Education, 2006b). The current organizational structure of many higher education extended campus locations is such that they are administratively responsible for distance learning programs and directors are increasingly tasked with leadership responsibilities unique to higher education (Boston University, 2006; Illinois State University, 2006; University of New Mexico, 2006)..

EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP

The importance of leadership in the administration of higher education programs has long been acknowledged as an essential element for the continued growth and development of the traditional college or university (Astin & Astin, 2001; Hoppe & Speck, 2003; U.S. Department of Education, 2006a). However, higher education institutions remain uncertain of the role of leadership in the administration of distance learning programs (Beaudoin, 2003; Care & Scanlon, 2001; Marcus, 2004). The growth of distance learning programs in higher education has redefined the role of leadership relative to the administration of these programs (Beaudoin, 2003; Dede, 1993; Marcus, 2004). The technological evolution of distance learning programs in higher education has created new leadership challenges for administrators (Astin & Astin, 2001; Beaudoin, 2003; Dede, 1993).

Leadership in higher education provides the underpinnings for a societal shift from an industrial to a knowledge-based society driven by the technological advances evidenced by the reality of globalization (Astin & Astin, 2001; U. S. Department of Education, 2006a). A report published

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