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FACULTY WORK: MOVING BEYOND THE PARADOX OF AUTONOMY AND COLLABORATION

Mark A. Hower

A DISSERTATION

Submitted to the Ph.D. in Leadership and Change Program
at Antioch University
in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

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This is to certify that the Dissertation entitled:

EXPLORING FACULTY WORK: MOVING BEYOND THE PARADOX OF AUTONOMY AND COLLABORATION

prepared by

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is approved in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy of in Leadership and Change.

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Abstract

Freedom to pursue one's intellectual interests, known as professional autonomy, is a valued and longstanding faculty tradition. Profound changes in society and the academy, however, suggest new values may be emerging. Collaboration, for example, is increasingly vital to success outside of the academy, and faculty culture, long an individualistic domain, may be shifting in response. This multiple case study explores how faculty members experience the relationship between professional autonomy and collaboration within the context of their department work. Faculty members in four departments were interviewed and both qualitative and simple quantitative data collected. The study found faculty members satisfied with the autonomy they experienced. Collaborative practices were evident, though faculty generally expressed a desire for increased collaboration with colleagues. The interviews also suggested attributes of a collaborative department, one in which collaboration is a more intentional element of the unit practice and design. The electronic version of the Dissertation is at the open-access Ohiolink ETD Center, http:www.ohiolink.edu/etd.

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Chapter I: Collaboration: A Shift in Context

Teams and other forms of collaborative groups have become regular elements of organizational life in America, yet these remain relatively uncommon phenomena in the academy, especially within the culture and experience of faculty. In the private sector, however, teams are simply a standard form and structure for addressing a wide range of challenges and work. A 1993 study of Fortune 1000 companies found that 91% use work teams, and 68% reported that at least some of their work teams were self-managing (Levi, 2007). Also, by 1997, S. Cohen and Bailey (1997) report that 85% of companies with 100 or more employees were using some form of work teams.

In broad terms, as the American economy has shifted away from an industrial model to a postmodern, knowledge economy, everything from the structure of the workplace to the skill set of employees has needed to shift. Increasingly, collaboration is understood to be essential to the success of enterprises across sectors and throughout society. In *Group Dynamics for Teams,* Daniel Levi (2007) points out that workplaces have been shifting from work patterns that emphasize predictable, routine work, to jobs and work that tend to be far less predictable or routine. He explains: “Non-routine jobs involve more complexity, interdependence, uncertainty, variety, and change than do routine jobs. Jobs of this type are difficult to manage in traditional work systems, but are well suited for teamwork” (Levi, 2007, p. 10). Keith Sawyer (2007) further explains:

> A long research tradition shows that when solving complex, non-routine problems, groups are more effective when they’re composed of people who have a variety of skills, knowledge, and perspective. Homogenous groups might work well if everything stays pretty much the same; they might even be more efficient. But the cost of short-term efficiency is eventual failure when the environment changes and innovation is required. (p. 71)

The increasingly interconnected nature of our global economy and community, along with the tremendous social, political and environmental stresses we face collectively both reflect and reinforce this shift toward collaborative structures and practices. Many of the highly complex challenges of our time can only be addressed through institutions and partnerships designed for and adept at collaboration. People who engage in such endeavors must hold varied skills and expertise and they must be capable of effectively coming together and engaging in collaborative work, of listening to and absorbing very different perspectives, and of maintaining an open mind and heart even within ambiguous circumstances. “Today, nobody succeeds alone . . . ,” observe Tamm and Luyet (2004), adding, “The world has become far too complex and interrelated for individuals to succeed without collaborative skills” (p. 4).

In short, collaborative skills have become a prerequisite for a successful career in most professions and fields, and teams have become common and necessary for their capacity to generate new options and to produce results beyond the reach of individual members. J. R. Hackman (2002), author of *Leading Teams: Setting the Stage for Great Performances*, observes: “Teams are . . . wonderful sites for learning—for expanding one’s knowledge, acquiring new skills, and exploring perspectives on the world that differ from one’s own” (pp. 28-29). Given the trends in larger society and Hackman’s assessment of the learning attributes of a team environment, it might seem that collaboration and teams should be relatively commonplace in higher education, where learning is, after all, central to the purpose of the entire enterprise.

A number of scholars have noted a significant shift in higher education as the same forces driving change in the private sector have, inevitably, begun to be felt more directly within the walls of the academy. In an American Council on Education report, Eckel, Hill, and Green (1998) observe: “For most American colleges and universities, the pendulum has swung from the heyday of growth, prosperity, and public favor to new times that call for institutions to adapt themselves to current, harsher realities” (p. 1). In *The American Faculty: The Restructuring of Academic Work and Careers,* Schuster and Finkelstein (2006) report, “The foundations of the economy are shifting structurally” (p. 5). They point to a difficult challenge at the heart of the academic enterprise, noting:

> At the core of this dimension of change are precisely those economic arrangements related to the collection, dissemination, and management of information and knowledge: historically higher education’s core social function. . . . The economic changes, especially in relation to information and knowledge, are associated with a major ideological and philosophical shift in how society views higher education, namely, increasingly as a private rather than a public good and as an “industry” that must be ever more open to competition . . . than as a protected social institution. (pp. 5-6)

How higher education responds to these and other challenges, is of critical importance to all of us in the academy, and indeed to our society generally. The academy and faculty culture will surely need to adjust and evolve, and in doing so, how might we retain what is fundamental and essential from those deep traditions? James Duderstadt (2000), former president of the University of Michigan, predicts, “We are entering a period in which the capacity to nourish and manage change will be one of the most important abilities of all” (p. 35).

As American colleges and universities face these challenges, it is worth noting that it is a higher education system that has been regularly touted as the envy of the world (Blackburn & Lawrence, 1995; Boyer, 1990). This standing could be a point of strength, of course, and it could also be a source of confusion about what is at stake and how to respond. There is much in our institutional traditions and body academic of which to be proud and to hold in high regard. This dominance emerged within a time and cultural context that has changed, however, and the disconnection between context and institution may represent an imperative for fundamental change.

Definitions

Collaboration. The word collaboration covers a range of what constitutes collective, shared work. The basic concept of collaboration, however, seems straightforward. Barkley, Cross, and Major (2005) simply declare: "To *collaborate* is to work with another or others" (p. 4). They observe: "The meaning of the Latin-based term collaborate shines through as clearly today as in antiquity: to co-labor" (Barkley et al., 2005 p. 4). In other words, by combining the Latin origin *com*- + *laborare,* the result or *collaborare*, created the enduring meaning, "work together" (Concise Oxford English Dictionary [COED] Online, 2009; Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary, 2009). To the basic notion of "working together," some scholars have added the emphasis that collaboration should have a purpose and/or an end result beyond shared work. Hansen (2009) points out: "The goal of collaboration is not collaboration but greater results" (p. 44). Rosen (2007) adds that collaboration is "working together to create value" (p. 9).

These definitions notwithstanding, for some, the notion of collaboration can bring up ambivalent, even uncomfortable feelings about subservience to authority or of losing one's personal agency and even identity. A more recent and negative perception of collaboration came out of the Second World War when the word was used to describe the actions of those working with enemy occupiers, especially the Nazis (COED Online, 2009; Rosen, 2007). Whether misgivings remain about the notion of collaboration from this difficult history, perhaps this specific understanding of the word will fade over time.

Nevertheless, in the American context especially, unease about being dominated by a group or an authority is likely to continue, because it is a concern deeply rooted in American culture (Hofstede, 1997; K. K. Smith & Berg, 1997).

Scholarly literature shows significant overlap between definitions of collaboration, groups, teams, and other related concepts. For example, collaboration and cooperation are often used interchangeably or without distinguishing either their similarities or differences. Generally, both collaboration and cooperation involve joint interaction, but the quality and intensity of that interaction is more profoundly integrated and shared by participants engaged in collaboration. In a 1991 ASHE Report focusing on faculty collaboration, Austin and Baldwin (1991) explain,

> Collaboration requires a great deal of cooperation, but the final objectives of the two activities differ somewhat. Individuals who cooperate often reach some agreements but proceed individually toward self-determined goals (Hord 1981). In contrast, people who collaborate work closely together and share mutual responsibility for their joint endeavor. According to this conceptualization, collaboration not only involves cooperative action. It emerges from shared goals and leads to outcomes that benefit all partners. (p. 4)

Kezar and Lester (2009), authors of *Organizing Higher Education for Collaboration: A Guide for Campus Leaders*, compare and contrast several forms of collaborative work, explaining:

> Networks are not deliberately designed, do not necessarily have shared goals, and depend more on the exchange of information and ideas. Cooperative arrangements are usually more formal than networks. . . . They typically involve coordination in which partners share information or work on tasks together but usually do not fundamentally alter their work. (pp. 6-7)

The notion that teams are a higher form of groups or other collaborative endeavors is a common theme throughout the literature (Fink, 2004; Levi, 2007; Parker, 1996; Robbins & Finley, 2000; Wheelan, 2005a). Kezar and Lester (2009) simply described work teams as, “the most collaborative unit” (p. 35). Parker (1996) makes a similar distinction, explaining:

> A group of people is not a team. A team is a group of people with a high degree of interdependence geared toward the achievement of a goal or completion of a task. In other words, they agree on a goal and agree that the only way to achieve the goal is to work together. (p. 16)

Collegiality. Faculty members often speak of each other as colleagues, their association together as a collegium, and their interactions as being informed by a tradition of collegiality. The terms can be understood to imply something akin to collaboration, but the two concepts often diverge significantly.

Like collaboration, the roots of collegiality are found in Latin. Colleague is, quite simply derived from *com*–together, and *legare*—to choose. Collegium comes to us directly from Latin *collegium*, defined as “a group in which each member has approximately equal power and authority” (Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary, 2009). The Latin etymology is congruent with the independent tradition upon which faculty culture is historically based, and suggests the essential, even foundational influence of values related to autonomy and self-governance. The historical context has changed in significant ways, of course, but collegiality still evokes a kind of community represented by a loose camaraderie and mutual respect, extended to others who are members of a shared professional body and tradition.

After conducting hundreds of faculty interviews in 20 universities and colleges, Massy, Wilger, and Colbeck (1994) wrote “Overcoming ‘Hollowed Collegiality’” for *Change*. In presenting collegiality at its best, the authors report: “Collegial organizations emphasize consensus, shared power, consultation, and collective responsibilities—communities in which status differences are de-emphasized and individuals interact as equals. Members of collegial organizations share aspirations and commitments, have frequent face-to-face interaction, and use civil discourse" (Massy et al., 1994, p. 9). However, based on their research, the authors conclude:

> Despite these trappings of collegiality, respondents told us they seldom led to the more substantial discussions necessary to improve undergraduate education, or to the sense of collective responsibility needed to make departmental efforts more effective. These vestiges of collegiality serve faculty convenience but dodge fundamental questions of task. This is especially the case, and is regrettable, with respect to student learning: collegiality remains thwarted with regard to faculty engagement with issues of curricular structure, pedagogical alternatives, and student assessment. . . . We believe these vestiges of collegiality are superficial or "hollowed." And it is this hollowed collegiality that stands in the way of improved departmental functioning and breakthroughs in student learning. Ironically, it can also stand in the way of a more satisfying professional life for a department's members. (p. 11)

Collegiality conveys membership and a certain respectful condition or way of being. That sense of membership could involve joining in a shared endeavor, however it need not include working together extensively, or building close relationships. From their study of collegiality, Massy et al. (1994) declare: a central reality of academic life: faculty work alone" (p. 12). Bergquist and Pawlak (2008) simply note: "the collegial culture nurtures the 'lone wolf,' the 'eccentric'" (p. 33). In *Honoring the Trust: Quality and Cost Containment in Higher Education,* William Massy (2003) adds:

> Strange as it may seem in light of the academy's stated emphasis on collegiality, professors rarely work together on the design, implementation, and quality assurance of teaching and learning. This is consistent with the so-called organized anarchy that many authors associate with academic processes. (p. 180)

Purpose of the Study

How changes in society and higher education may further alter the faculty experience of both being autonomous scholars and members of a larger community of peers remain to be seen. On the one hand, the academy seems to be more fragmented and competitive than ever. Blackburn and Lawrence (1995) observe:

> Competition has replaced collegiality. The pressure to publish . . . and to secure grants has intensified. The university has been hiring superspecialists who seem to have no time for cross-disciplinary intellectual conversations. Their training immerses them in a language all their own, one others cannot understand. (p. 3)

Blackburn and Lawrence (1995) are joined by other scholars in questioning the vitality of the collegial tradition of the academy—at least as it is manifest in the present day. For instance, in a dissertation focusing on faculty collaboration in several university English departments, Judi Nelson Swingen (1999) expresses significant skepticism about the reality of these social and professional conventions. Though Swingen undoubtedly desires an academic culture that is deeply congruent with such collaborative language, she notes that faculty members have very few meaningful and shared professional experiences. Swingen (1999) declares:

> Professors in the United States work in an environment of isolation embedded in a culture that is the most individualistic in the world. The organization and culture of the university help to create feelings of isolation. . . . The "community of scholars" is an illusion. On the surface, it appears to be a cohesive group of professionals working together to transmit knowledge. In reality national culture, institutional history, holdover policies, and traditions have joined to partition the work of the scholar. (p. 80)

Swingen and other faculty members who are more or less frustrated with the state of collaboration in the academy, may be commenting on the overall gestalt of the whole faculty experience. There are, however, indications of some increased collaboration in higher education. For example, Gappa, Austin, and Trice (2007), authors of *Rethinking faculty work: Higher education's strategic imperative,* report that co-authored scholarship has been increasing for years, first in the sciences and now in most disciplines. Research suggests that faculty who engage in co-authoring experience a higher acceptance rate of their articles (Blackburn & Lawrence, 1995). And the highest-performing academics in numerous fields often began to collaborate early, usually during graduate school (Austin & Baldwin, 1991).

Moreover, new interdisciplinary fields are emerging and faculty members increasingly engage in collaborative team teaching and research. By the mid 1990s over half of all American colleges and universities began to offer interdisciplinary curricula in their required liberal education program (Newell, 2001)—at about the time teams were being widely introduced into corporations and other businesses. Collaboration between faculty members also results in: increased and more meaningful knowledge production, improved learning outcomes and experiences for students, and a better overall campus environment (Kezar & Lester, 2009). Austin and Baldwin (1991) add:

> In many fields of study, the image of the solitary scholar working alone in a library carrel or laboratory is no more than a fond memory or historic artifact. . . . Today collaboration is clearly a fact of academic life. More and more professors teach cooperatively. (pp. 19-20)

Just three years after Austin and Baldwin (1991) reported an increase in practices of faculty collaboration, Jon Wergin (1994) wrote an AAHE report with an evocative title: *The Collaborative Department: How Five Campuses Are Inching Toward Cultures of Collective Responsibility.* There may be a cultural shift taking place in higher education, but at a seemingly glacial pace. Depending on one’s sense of the impact and implications of that change, collaboration may be “busting out” all over, but it would seem to be doing so from a context and background that experiences little meaningful and sustained collaboration in its most profound sense. Moreover, the issue would appear to be no nearer to resolution, since Kezar and Lester (2009) declare: “collaboration is not widespread in the academy" (p. 4), practically as Walsh and Kahn (2010) report the arrival of the "social academy" or "collaborative university."

Wergin's (1994) report itself offers a glimpse of pent up hunger for an experience of rich and consequential faculty interaction, even collaboration. In the preface to the 1994 AAHE report, Wergin recalls:

> At the first AAHE Conference on Faculty Roles & Rewards, in January 1993, some of the most intense and animated discussion centered on the idea that higher education needs to shift the focus of incentives, evaluation, and rewards from individual faculty members to departments or other academic units. (p. vii)

When so many experienced, well-regarded scholars can see faculty experience within the academy in such apparently different terms, further exploration and explanation would seem in order. Perhaps these seemingly contradictory perspectives reveal a more complex—and interesting—truth about the nature of faculty work, motivations, and culture.

To begin with, Wergin (2003) points out that research into faculty motivations has repeatedly demonstrated that the first two stated reasons for faculty choosing an academic career have been a desire to experience: 1) professional autonomy, and 2) to be part of a community of scholars. Indeed, new faculty regularly express a desire to be a part of a vital community of scholars, only to be frustrated by the gap between their expectations and what they in fact experience (Austin, 2002; Gappa et al., 2007; Kezar & Lester, 2009; Rice, Sorcinelli, & Austin, 2000; Wergin, 2003). The literature, however, tends to reflect an assumption that these two values cannot co-exist on equal terms, and they tend to be presented as diametrically opposed. Moreover, the traditions and incentives and rewards of the academy overwhelmingly emphasize the primacy of professional autonomy over any other motivations or values. Both values: autonomy and community, however, would seem to have been engaged productively in the conversations in the AAHE conference described by Wergin (1994).

How the academy perceives of autonomy and community suggest a powerful dialectic or paradox (Swingen, 1999). This tension may be particularly strong when collaboration is involved, perhaps because it can be such a visible, even concrete representation of the two elements coming together. But the two faculty values are regularly experienced as opposites, points of tension and ongoing conflict rather than two parts of a complex, nuanced whole. K. K. Smith and Berg (1997) explain that our very way of conceiving of the tension is critical in both creating and resolving paradox. In a paradox, two or more social phenomena are understood to be mutually exclusive at the same time. Since the dialectic or paradox exist as a relationship, any effort to “fix” the situation by getting rid of one part is doomed to failure and will actually tend to strengthen the experience of contradiction and conflict (K. K. Smith & Berg, 1997).

In a very real sense, then, the way of understanding the tension between the imperatives of professional autonomy and of being part of community of peers presents the academy with the possibility of perpetual conflict around both. The confused impression that comes through the literature about collaboration seems to link efforts to encourage and engage in collaborative faculty work as a threat to faculty autonomy. Or, faculty members’ insistence on maintaining their autonomy and authority to choose their own intellectual agenda may be perceived as disengagement from peers and a rejection altogether of working in concert with others. In either case, efforts to collaborate are met with limited success given the tension held between values of autonomy and community.

Conceived of differently, however, the relationship offers new possibilities. For instance, exploring the faculty experience of professional autonomy and work within a community—as an integrated phenomenon rather than as two distinct and separate realms—could provide valuable insights that cannot be found through a focus on a single element or when assuming competition and conflict as the only response.

The alternative, to remain in the grip of this paradox has little appeal. Meaningful collaboration will likely remain uncommon throughout the academy and especially among faculty—at a time when the challenges to institutions and society are particularly problematic, complex, and in need of robust, collective responses. The capacity to work collaboratively may be the primary distinction between success and failure.

Research Questions

The method was meant to explore how faculty experience the often dialectical relationship related to professional autonomy and collaborative engagement with a community of peers. The study sought to identify alternative expressions and experiences of this relationship through individual interviews and dialogue with faculty associated with specific departments. The method involved use of a data-gathering instrument designed specifically for the purpose, administered during interviews of faculty members at multiple institutions meant to represent a variety of institutional types. Each department constituted a single unit of study for a multiple case study analysis. The researcher sought to shed light on two central questions:

1) In what ways do faculty members presently experience the relationship of professional autonomy and collaboration within their departments and institutions?

2) What do faculty members perceive to be the optimal expression of this relationship within their own departments and institutions?

Possible subquestions include:

1) In what ways do faculty members conceive of and engage in collaborative work with peers?
2) How might collaboration enhance both faculty professional autonomy and experience of a peer community?

Positioning

A career in the academy came relatively late in my life. My experience in higher education has included both faculty and administrative appointments at a variety of levels. I am currently a faculty member in the Management and Leadership Program, part of Antioch University Seattle's Center for Creative Change (C3). There are five graduate degree programs in the integrated C3 curriculum, and I was one of the founding faculty members of the Center about seven years ago. The experience of being part of a creative design team, and now the team involved with ongoing development and delivery of the curriculum has been highly rewarding, generative, and intellectually stimulating.

During much of my time in C3, I have also been a student in Antioch University's PhD program in Leadership and Change. This experience has had a significant influence on my thinking about higher education as well as faculty teams and collaboration. I have been inspired by the incredible knowledge and creativity of the program's talented faculty. I have been profoundly moved by their kindness and humanity and their generosity of spirit—with students and each other. They have served individually as mentors and collectively as a living example of the potential of a working faculty team.

Finally, I am aware that my own background contributes significantly to the way I view collaboration, teams and individuals, and this background is, I believe, relatively unusual. My first experiences of school were as a kid growing up in Brazil and then Guyana in South America. My parents had been drawn to the Peace Corps in its earlier years and I accompanied them as a child. Back in the U.S., I lived briefly in Washington, D.C., and then in a small town in the mountains of Idaho. After college, I joined Peace Corps as a Volunteer and was sent to Sierra Leone, West Africa, where I coordinated a water wells construction program. Later, I worked as Peace Corps staff, including a tour as Country Director in the Kingdom of Tonga in the South Pacific. Significant portions of my life have involved being part of cultures with far more communitarian values and practices than is typical of the dominant, individual-oriented culture of the United States. These two "starting points"—communitarianism and individualism—as LeBaron (2003) labels them, constitute an underlying orientation that shapes the way the world is understood and it is acquired through one's enculturation. I have experienced and value both perspectives, and this undoubtedly contributes to the focus of this dissertation.

Overview of Dissertation Chapters

In the five chapters of this dissertation, briefly, I will situate this study in the context of the relevant literature, provide an overview of the method and key findings, share my conclusions related to evolving theory and practice, and make recommendations for implementation and further study.

More specifically, Chapter II provides a review of the literature related to faculty collaboration and teams in higher education. The chapter will briefly summarize theory and provide descriptive accounts of collaborative practices in the private sector, and include an analysis of how the experience of collaboration differs between the two sectors because of the specific nature of faculty culture within the academy. The review will attempt to identify potential leverage and points of understanding for the challenging paradoxes effecting the faculty experience in the academy.

The study method design is described in Chapter III. The data-collection instrument will be described, along with a detailed description the collection and analysis processes. The description will provide further details about selected sites, safeguards for participants, and an explanation of the multiple case study methodology being employed.

In Chapter IV, the interview and other data from each department will be shared, and key themes of that particular case will be noted.

Chapter V will involve the analysis and interpretation of the data to reveal emergent themes. The overall gestalt of the responses will be considered, and possible implications for future action or implementation will be suggested. The fifth chapter will conclude with a few suggestions for future study.

Chapter II: Review of the Literature

Introduction

This literature review is meant to provide a comprehensive summary of the research and theory relevant to an inquiry into faculty collaboration and the context in which it is undertaken. The chapter begins with a brief historical account of American higher education, followed by an overview of the confluence of key forces shaping fundamental changes in the larger society as well as higher education today. How organizations of all types—including business—structure and manage their operations has shifted dramatically, and one notable response has been the increasing adoption of teams and collaborative practices. The literature review turns, then, to an exploration of these social and economic trends, as well as an overview of the lessons learned and key insights derived from over two decades of widespread implementation of teams and collaboration in private sector institutions.

An outline of the essential characteristics of effective teams follows, with a focus on how the academy is interpreting and responding to the systemic pressures that both encourage and make difficult collaboration and collective endeavors. Traditional faculty culture and practices are considered in light of evolving changes in society and academic life. Faculty motivation in relation to collaboration and professional autonomy is also examined, including barriers to collaboration in the traditional academic setting.

The final section of the literature review addresses the role of social construction and working with paradox in shaping potential changes to faculty roles and institutional structures to support increased collaboration in the future.

Changing Context

In understanding where the academy is headed in the future, it is useful to first consider its past. The culture and norms of faculty and the academy are rooted in centuries of tradition. At the genesis of the postmodern age, it is worth remembering that many of the animating values and traditions of the academy come from a premodern time (Bergquist & Pawlak, 2008).

History of higher education. American higher education began in the colonial period with the founding of Harvard College in 1636. Since its beginnings, the academy has been shaped by and in turn shapes larger American society. Over the next two hundred years, a handful of other institutions were added, all based on the English college model (Bergquist & Pawlak, 2008; Boyer, 1990; A. Cohen, 1998). During this period, college was for a very few, and its purpose was primarily to prepare young men for the ministry and to transmit culture to future generations (Blackburn & Lawrence, 1995). These first colleges were collaborative in structure and culture until about the end of the 1800s (Philpott & Strange, 2003), a collective tradition that continues in altered form in liberal arts colleges to this day.

The first notable shift in the American higher education system began in the 1820s, when academic specializations in the form of disciplines and departments began to take shape. As the industrial revolution began to exert its influence throughout society, the academy began to shift to a more professional corps of faculty, moving away from scholars more akin to tutors and mentors. In turn, the academy began to lose the largely unified faculty community of the previous culture (Schuster & Finkelstein, 2006).

These changes also corresponded with a refocusing of the central purpose of higher education, which began to emphasize education for the practical needs of the developing nation (Boyer, 1990). The creation of land grant colleges and universities begun during the American Civil War gave a further boost to this purpose, as the mission of the land grant institutions was to develop the new science, engineering and other technical knowledge and skills to move an expanding nation forward (Boyer, 1990).

The next revolution in American higher education came with the adoption of the German research university model, starting with the founding of Johns Hopkins University in 1876. Other universities soon adopted the model. The German model has dominated American higher education ever since, shaping institutional practices and expectations of faculty, whether or not research is a significant element of the institution's mission (Bergquist & Pawlak, 2008; A. Cohen, 1998; Fairweather, 1996; Schuster & Finkelstein, 2006). The German research model expanded and refined the conversion to specializations and department structures, away from the more "loosely federated and intellectually driven faculties of the liberal arts colleges" (Comprone, 2001, p. 306). The model proved congruent with management concepts adopted from the industrial context. Departments offered greater efficiency and tighter accounting of resources. Moreover, Frederick Taylor's new scientific management principles, used to improve efficiency and rationalize production by breaking down tasks into small parts, were adopted in various ways throughout society and the academy (Weisbord, 1987).

With the dominance of the German model, the relatively collaborative faculty culture of the English college system was much altered, and institutional fragmentation replaced shared vision, values, goals and sense of community within a single campus or institution over time. Divergent cultures developed along disciplinary and departmental lines, including different cultures of inquiry and pedagogies (Kezar & Lester, 2009). Fragmentation and isolation came to influence more than the structures of the institution, but also the mindset or worldview of faculty and other stakeholders. Thus, according to Kezar and Lester (2009), "Specialization became a value in itself" (p. 23).

Even in this time of specialization, several institutions began to develop interdisciplinary curricula, starting with Harvard in 1909 which developed a system of majors and course requirements in fields outside of the student's major. By the 1920s and 1930s, several institutions—including Antioch College, Sarah Lawrence, Bennington, Bard, Goddard, and New College at Columbia University—were established or restructured around a variety of progressive innovations, including interdisciplinarity (Klein, 2001).

With the onset of World War II, research—and the money it brings—became an especially dominant force in American higher education, a trend which has continued to the present (Wergin, 2003). Soldiers returning from the war enrolled in colleges and universities in unprecedented numbers. This "massification" of higher education included the explosive growth of the Community College system, as well as the heavily enlarged enrollments at comprehensive state institutions. From 1950 to 1970, according to the Bureau of Census, the number of higher education students increased more than threefold from 2.3 to 7.9 million (Huber & Hutchings, 2005).

Changing workplace and society. The preceding overview of the history of American higher education suggests an ongoing interplay between societal forces and changes within the academy. In recent decades, this relationship has been particularly evident as the business sector, and related influences shape the present and future of higher education. Evan Rosen (2007), in *The Culture of Collaboration: Maximizing Time, Talent and Tools to Create Value In The Global Economy*, identified four key trends that "are changing the business landscape and are fueling the demand for richer interactions within and among companies of all sizes" (p. 4). According to Rosen (2007), the key trends are:

- Technological: Includes a convergence of technologies (e.g. video, voice, and data technologies) over Internet protocol (IP).
- Economic: no geographic limits.
- Cultural: expectations of immediacy and access are reinforced by the capacity for receiving instant feedback.
- Regulatory: scores of new federal, state, local laws, and treaties, shape the business environment.

Because of the complexity and interconnected nature of these four key trends Rosen (2007) argues that any effective response necessitates increased collaboration within the workplace and throughout society. Indeed there has been a dramatic expansion of teams and collaboration in business, a noteworthy development for all wishing to understand the forces influencing the academy and its possible direction in the future. For example, a place to start is a 1987 study of Fortune 1000 companies which found, "70% of those companies used some type of work teams or problem-solving groups. Moreover, 27% of the companies used self-managing teams" (Lawler, S. Mohrman, & Ledford, 1995). When the study was replicated in 1993, just six years later, 91% of Fortune 1000 companies reported using work teams and 68% said they were using self-managing teams (Levi, 2007).

Though collaboration has become prevalent in the private sector, it has been unevenly adopted. As with any change, retrenchment and false starts are common. Some organizations engage in the appearance of collaboration, not the spirit behind it. Rosen (2007) observes: "They may meet, talk, and exchange data and information but stop short of creating value" (p. 16). He adds: "Our biggest challenge involves organizational evolution. While some organizations embrace collaboration, many others endorse the word rather than its meaning" (p. 253).

In exploring collaboration in the private sector, Rosabeth Moss Kanter (1983) finds: "Integrative thinking that actively embraces change is more likely in companies whose cultures and structures are also integrative, encouraging the treatment of problems as 'wholes,' considering the wider implications of actions" (p. 28). She adds: "The contrasting style of thought is anti-change-oriented and prevents innovation. I call it 'segmentalism' because it is concerned with compartmentalizing actions, events, and problems and keeping each piece isolated from the others" (p. 28). Kanter (1996) later introduces the term "collaborative advantage" through a *Harvard Business Review* article, arguing for the tremendous potential for innovation and learning in organizations that adopt collaborative structures and cultures. David Straus (2002), author of *How to Make Collaboration Work*, agrees, observing:

> When the full range of different interests and points of view is involved in solving a problem or making a decision, the solution is likely to be much more comprehensive and creative than if a small group of like-minded individuals acted on its own. (p. 39)

After conducting extensive research involving over 6000 team members from a variety of businesses and industries, Larson and LaFasto (1989), authors of *Teamwork: What Must Go Right/What Can Go Wrong*, conclude:

> We do not denigrate the significance of individual thinking and creativity in solving problems. We simply acknowledge that the problems that confront us are so complex that we must go one step further and demand that our thoughtful, creative individuals 'put their heads together' to reach the best possible solutions. (p. 15)

Changing higher education. Though the academy is sometimes seen as being set apart from the world at large, higher education is inevitably shaped by the same forces that have influenced other sectors of society. Schuster and Finkelstein (2006), reinforce the point, saying: "Change, as Heraclitus observed long ago, is perhaps the only constant, but . . . change in higher education surely has never before been so rapid or so pervasive" (p. 8).

In a telling example of synergy, Rosen's (2007) four key trends effecting changes in business are essentially the same themes identified by at least four different teams of highly respected academics seeking to understand the forces and trends shaping higher education. Findings of the most recent of these studies are delineated in Table 2.1.

Table 2.1

Four Challenges in Higher Ed.

Trends	**Four Challenges in Higher Education** (Gappa et al., 2007)
Technological	Influence of information and communications technology
Economic	Financial constraints and increased competition
Cultural	Increased enrollment and student diversity
Regulatory	Pressure for increased accountability

Note. The four challenges correspond to four business trends identified by Rosen (2007).

Three additional studies looking at trends in higher education arrive at essentially the same conclusion as those identified by Gappa et al., (2007). For example, Schuster and Finkelstein (2006) identify four corresponding "Megatrends" of higher education. Chen, Fortunato, Mandell, Oaks, and RyanMann (2001) discern the same basic four trends, adding a fifth trend: the increasingly aging ranks of faculty. Finally, Eckel et al. (1998) reported seven "challenges facing higher education," reflect the same four trends only subdivided. (For more detail on these studies, see Appendix A.) Schuster and Finkelstein (2006), further explain:

> Practically every aspect of the life academic is being driven by a host of interrelated developments: dazzling technological advances; globalization that continues to permeate academic boundaries; rapidly increasing numbers of tertiary students worldwide, unprecedented expansion of proprietary higher education; and innumerable entrepreneurial, market-driven initiatives. . . . Taken together, these seismic shifts are profoundly changing how knowledge is acquired and transmitted. (p. xvii)

The volume and complexity of the changes society and higher education face can overwhelm the resources and leadership capacity of institutions. Moreover, as Al Guskin and Mary Marcy (2003) observe, these are likely to be ongoing, long-term trends. In the Project on the Future of Higher Education, Guskin and Marcy (2003) report: "The financial problems that affect us are long-term and structural" (p. 12).

With these many pressures in mind, prominent academic leaders have advocated for greater collaboration. Duderstadt (2000) points to both the challenge and promise for faculty engaging in collaborative efforts, especially for the first time, explaining:

> Those within the academy will need to learn to tolerate more ambiguity, to take more risks. This may mean we will be less comfortable in our scholarly neighborhoods; we may have to relax the relatively stable professional selves that we have preserved for so long. Yet most will find working together much more fulfilling than working apart. Ultimately this will release incredible creativity. (p. 3)

In *Academic Duty* (1997), Donald Kennedy, former president of Stanford, exhorts higher education institutions to reorganize to encourage greater collaboration as a system. While noting that collaboration challenges the traditional context of the academy, Kennedy also expresses confidence that collaboration holds the greatest promise for ensuring academic excellence—and relevance—in the future.

Of course, higher education has a variety of stakeholders and influences and some of these have been advocating greater "integrative thinking" for quite some time. For instance, in the past few years, foundations, regional and other accreditors, business and industry, and government agencies have become increasingly supportive of—even insistent on—collaborative initiatives. Moreover, academic conferences for faculty, administrators, and staff have begun to emphasize collaborative themes (Kezar & Lester, 2009). The trick for higher education is to respond in ways that are both effective and congruent with the unique traditions and mission of the academy firmly in mind.

Changing students. With such wider changes in society, it should come as no surprise that students are also changing dramatically. As the number of students in higher education has grown, so has the diversity of the student population—over a wide range of measures: gender, age, ethnicity, cultural background, and more (Duderstadt, 2000; Marcy, 2002; Newton, 2000). For example, in the 1999-2000 academic year, 37% of undergraduates were first-generation college students. And students identified as members of an ethnic or racial minority accounted for 32% of all undergraduates in the same year, up from 26% in 1995, and 17% in 1976 (Horn, Peter, Rooney, & Malizio, 2002).

In *The Shaping of American Higher Education*, Arthur M. Cohen (1998) compares data from the National Center for Education Statistics from 1975 to 1996. He notes that more high school graduates go on to enroll in college or university generally, but progress is uneven. For instance, the percentage of both white and black students enrolling in higher educational institutions has increased since 1975, yet enrollments for Hispanic students over the same period declined (see Table 2.2).

Table 2.2

H. S. Graduates Enrolled in College (by October following graduation)

Race/ethnicity	**% in 1975**	**% in 1996**
White	51	66
Black	42	55
Hispanic	58	51

Note. Source: National Center for Education Statistics, 1997a, p. 62, 1997g, pp. 194-196 (as cited in A. Cohen, 1998, p. 320).

During a similar time frame, A. Cohen (1998) reports that the percent of women enrolling in higher education expanded greatly at all levels (see Table 2.3).

Table 2.3

Women Enrolled in Higher Ed.

	1975		1995	
Program Type	Total Enroll	% Women	Total Enroll	% Women
Undergraduate	9,679,000	46	12,231,719	56
Graduate	1,263,000	45	1,732,470	56
Professional	242,267	21	297,592	42

Note. Source: National Center for Education Statistics, 1996b, pp. 189-190, 1997g, p. 185 (as cited in A. Cohen, 1998, p. 321).

Another important shift involves “traditional students”—those who can be described as full-time students, living on campus, and between the ages of eighteen to twenty-two – now comprise only about 16% of the student body. Today, over 70% of students work, many choose part-time enrollment for at least a portion of their college studies, and over 41% are over the age of twenty-five (Marcy, 2002).

Moreover, students enter higher education for reasons that are both different and more varied than in the recent past. New students face daunting pressures; their need for a practical education must also help them to understand and address a rapidly changing world. B. L. Smith, MacGregor, Matthews, and Gabelnick (2004) observe that students increasingly, “emphasize teamwork and collaboration and developing problem-solving skills rather than memorization and the accumulation of facts that will soon become obsolete. . . . These capacities have become imperatives in our rapidly changing society” (pp. 7-8).

A student body made up of more engaged, critical learners offers a possible way forward, beyond “business as usual,” and into “third-order, postmodern learning.” As students are no longer simply thought of as passive vessels to fill up with wisdom, it is possible to entertain a different form of relationship between faculty and students. In fact, students may have important experiences to offer the academy. Consider that students are, at least to a significant degree, increasingly experiencing collaborative learning practices and pedagogies throughout their K-12 educations (Austin & Baldwin, 1991; Wheelan, 2005b). This means that many students enter colleges and universities today after having spent some considerable amount of their educational careers involved in collaborative learning. This experience surely has an impact on how students learn best, what kind of interactions feel comfortable in a classroom environment, what they expect of their faculty, their peers, and much more.

Changing faculty. The "traditional" academy also appears to be poised for change, as another of the watershed eras that has marked the history of American higher education seems to be on the horizon. Schuster and Finkelstein (2006) report: "academics historically have been a demographically homogeneous lot: white, male, and middle-or upper-class" (p. 126). This is beginning to change, especially with the substantial increase of women faculty members of late. From 1970 to 1995 total faculty doubled to 932,000, with the number of men employed increasing by 62% and the number of women by 240%. Over that time, the proportion of women in faculty ranks increased from 23% to 40%, with most of the increase occurring in the early 1990s (A. Cohen, 1998, p. 333).

At least a part of this impending change is relatively predictable. A large cohort of American faculty, many of whom entered graduate studies around the time of the Vietnam War, is poised to retire (Hutchings, Huber, & Golde, 2006). R. Eugene Rice (2003) calls this the "changing of the guard," and reminds: "What we have is a rare window of opportunity to shape a new generation of faculty and choose the kind of scholarship and engagement that would be preferable and beneficial" (p. 4).

The new cohort(s) of faculty will not merely be replacing retiring faculty, they will be stepping into a different academic river than that of their predecessors. The academy itself has begun to change, and as Hutchings et al. (2006) explain:

> The work involved in teaching, research and service to community and campus requires a new and larger set of abilities and skills. Teaching a more diverse population of students requires deeper knowledge of pedagogy than before, and advising now extends into new domains like service learning and undergraduate

> research. In most fields, scholarly work is becoming increasingly collaborative, interdisciplinary, and practically relevant at the same time that expectations for productivity (and in some cases even profitability) are on the rise. . . . With heightened demands at work, faculty of all ages can expect to face growing tension between their professional and personal lives. (p. 1)

How the academy—including the faculty—responds to these challenges will be critical. Will a new era with new vision and vitality begin, or might higher education become increasingly divergent and removed from the experience of the broader society? Both possibilities: renewal and regeneration or decline and irrelevance, are in play. Gardner, Csikszentmihalyi, and Damon (2001) offer what could be important perspective, noting that professions are most vital and efficacious when the values of the field are aligned with those of society at large, as well as when expectations of stakeholders are congruent with these values.

Perhaps with this future in mind, Walsh and Kahn (2010) declare the emergence of the "social academy," or the "collaborative university." Ronald Barnett (2010), of the Institute of Education in London, adds:

> Collaboration is surely an idea whose time has come. After all, if we now live—as we assuredly do—in a "network society" (Castells, 2000), then collaboration is but a formulation of ties that are already present. We are already linked to each other whether we like it or not. No man is an island, so the saying goes. We might as well, therefore, make the best of things and work purposively together. (p. xv)

It seems a commonsense argument, and yet the reminder to "make the best of things" perhaps reveals something of the misgivings concerning collaboration that remain embedded in the academy. Moreover, a more collaborative, "social academy" has been articulated over the years. Nearly twenty years ago, Austin and Baldwin (1991) reported:

> Contrary to the popular view, academics are social beings, and much academic work is done in groups, partnerships, or teams. Some theorists now even argue that the very act of knowing or knowledge construction is a social process. . . .

> Within this framework, teaching and learning are best understood as collaborative activities. Similarly, scholarship typically is, to a greater degree, collaborative as well. (p. 8)

The Context of Groups and Teams

Teams can be extremely rewarding, productive places to work, where meaningful issues and creative endeavors are engaged and important relationships are forged. Yet being a member of a collaborative group or team is not without its difficulties. It can be challenging, frustrating, unpleasant or even worse.

Frustrations with collaboration and teams. For all of the descriptions of positive experiences in scholarly literature about collaboration and teams, Straus (2002) asks,

> So why is it that this potentially energizing experience is so unpleasant for so many people? In short, because most people don't know how to collaborate effectively. Collaboration needs to be learned. It's an art, really, that is based on a few powerful principles. But most people aren't familiar with those principles. They've never been taught them. (p. 4)

Because collaboration is rarely taught, Rosen (2007) cautions that we can underestimate its importance as well as its difficulty. He elaborates: "Often, what we call collaboration in shared physical space is nothing more than a meeting, because we may produce no work product and arguably create little value" (p. 252). This kind of lackadaisical approach can be ineffective, and it may even be quite problematic. Morten Hansen, whose work has focused on collaboration for decades, is reported to have declared, "If people knew how to collaborate well, the world would simply work better" (Collins, 2009, p. ix).

Especially in the American context, most of us have never been trained to work collaboratively and in teams. Instead, we have been taught—both implicitly and explicitly—that collaboration is an inferior process leading to inferior products (including questionable scholarship). We learn that we are individually responsible for our own learning, our own success at work, and the like. Straus (2002) vividly explains:

> Think back to your early education. If it was anything like mine, you were taught in school to value and strive for individual success. You studied, took tests, gave presentations, and were graded and given awards individually. Group work was neither measured nor rewarded. (p. 4)

Though a proponent of collaboration and teamwork, Hackman (2002) recognizes that collaborative work can be tremendously challenging and unproductive. He recalls:

> I have felt the frustration that comes from trying to craft a group product that all members find acceptable. And I know from research, but also from experience, that teams can stress their members, alienate them from one another, and undermine their confidence in their own abilities. Many work teams, perhaps even most of them, provide their members with significantly less personal learning and satisfaction than they could. (p. 29)

Douglas McGregor (1960) reported that he had experienced or seen many more ineffective teams in his life than effective ones. Though a strong proponent of teams and collaborative work generally, he also acknowledged that teams are often challenging. McGregor (1985) concluded teams often fail, among other reasons, because:

(a) We tend to have low expectations of groups.

(b) Most of us don’t know what is required to create and maintain effective teams.

(c) We tend to avoid the inherent conflict in all groups.

(d) We focus primarily on the leader to determine team success.

(e) We fail to pay sufficient attention to group maintenance or process needs.

(f) Effective teams are essentially impossible within the culturally dominant (Theory X) management style.

Glenn Parker (1996), author of *Team Players and Teamwork*, is also concerned about the impact of ineffective teams—on team members and the organizations and/or purposes the team is meant to serve. He identifies several signs of trouble that are indicative of an ineffective team. Parker's (1996) "signs of trouble" for teams include:

- The team's mission cannot be easily described.
- Team meetings are formal, stuffy, tense, or unproductive.
- There is a great deal of participation but little accomplishment.
- There is talk but not much communication.
- Disagreements are aired in private conversations after the meeting.
- Decisions tend to be made by the formal leader with little meaningful involvement of other team members.
- There is confusion or disagreement about roles or work assignments.
- People in other parts of the organization do not cooperate with the team.
- The team is overloaded with people who have the same team player style.
- The team does not regularly assess its performance or functioning.

Research suggests that good experiences of collaboration tend to amplify a group or individual's strengths, while poorly executed collaboration is actually worse—in terms of performance or intended outcomes—than no collaboration at all (Hansen, 2009).

The American cultural pattern of ambivalence or mistrust of groups, has another side: the celebration of the individual as the primary unit of social reality (LeBaron, 2003; Stewart & Bennet, 1991). Our responses and beliefs come from deep cultural patterns, of course, and our understanding and experience of collaborative work is no exception. As Keith Sawyer (2007) points out, we continue to count on the lone genius whose keen insight and incredible skills will solve our biggest challenges and change the world. However, explains Sawyer, “The lone genius is a myth” (p. 7).

Anyone seeking to understand groups and teams in an American context must take this history and cultural predisposition into account. Unfortunately, the description shared by Hackman (2002) is probably all too familiar to many who have experienced working in teams or groups. His description need not be representative of the team experience, however. Margaret Wheatley (1999) suggests that we must learn how to be part of a team and how to work together first. Wheatley (1999) explains:

> Beyond the fads that have swept through large organizations, think of all the contemporary leadership problems that are variations on the theme that we don’t know how to work together. . . . I believe that we have been kept apart by three primary Western cultural beliefs: individualism, competition, and a mechanistic world view. Western culture, even as it continues to influence people everywhere, has not prepared us to work together in this new world of relationships. And we don’t even know that we lack these skills. (pp. 163-165)

Framing conflict. A key factor of group or organizational success involves the capacity of its members to be open with and supportive of each other (LaFasto & Larson, 1989; McGregor, 1960; Parker, 1996; Rosen, 2007; Wheelan, 2005a). That may seem a relatively simple proposition in the abstract, but for many of us, it is no easy matter to be open and supportive in the face of the ambiguity, frustration and pressures that can constitute actual practice in teams and other collaborative groups. Some form of conflict is inevitable in teams and groups, of course. Sawyer (2007) explains that the same creativity that can come from having members with diverse perspectives, experiences, and skills can also contribute to conflict. He notes: “But conflict is difficult to manage productively because it can easily spiral into destructive interpersonal attacks that interfere with creativity” (Sawyer, 2007, p. 71). Parker (1996) adds: “Conflicts will occur. The problem is that these conflicts usually are not resolved satisfactorily; most groups have not learned the requisite conflict-resolution skill. . . . Effective teams create a climate in which people feel free to express their opinion" (p. 40).

Though conflict is sometimes presented as a learning opportunity—which it is—it can be difficult to experience group differences and disagreements in a positive light. Many stories of failed teams, however, have conflict at the center of their experiences—either because they suffered so much of it that they could not work together effectively, or the opposite, because they avoided conflict so emphatically that the group never developed the kind of authentic connection that generates productive interactions and a sense of commitment to each other. In either case, the ability to hold tension, or to share concerns—in short, to be engaged in a place of conflict—is a critical and telling capacity for those engaged in any collaborative effort (Creamer, 2004). But without learning such skills, a group and group members are left without sufficient resources when they are most needed.

Morgan (1997) observes, "Conflict arises whenever interests collide. The natural reaction to conflict in organizational contexts is usually to view it as a dysfunctional force that can be attributed to some regrettable set of circumstances or causes" (p. 167). Levi (2007) adds: "Conflict is a normal part of a team's life. Unfortunately, people have misconceptions about conflict that interfere with how they deal with it" (p. 112). K. K. Smith and Berg (1997) conclude: "While it is often said that conflict can be constructive and productive for a group, our observation is that the group members do not 'experience' conflict this way" (p. 10). Wright (2006) adds:

> This paradox comes about because conflict has both constructive and destructive attributes. As conflict leads to the breakdown of social systems, it is also the

> harbinger of social change. . . . Conflict challenges individual viewpoints during attempts at resolution, breaking down existing belief systems and replacing them with new ones. . . . Given that conflict is a necessary aspect of collaboration, the questions is not how to avoid conflict but how to manage or facilitate it. (p. 195)

Unfortunately, people and groups who do not have the skills and understanding to directly address conflict are apt to avoid it, and in the process, they forego what is essentially their only means to move ahead through the conflict and to deal with the fundamental issues involved.

Characteristics of teams. Misgivings about collaboration notwithstanding, its competitive advantage has clearly caught the attention of numerous scholars, many of whom have sought to distinguish the essential factors promoting team and group success. Much of the research has involved for-profit businesses or organizations, especially corporations. The literature shows a range of identified key characteristics, from Likert's (1961) twenty-four to Hackman's (2002) frugal four.

In fact, the bare-bones outline of four key elements identified by J. Richard Hackman (2002) provides a useful place to start. The four key elements Hackman (2002) identifies include:

(a) a clear team task,

(b) clear team boundaries,

(c) clearly specified authority to manage the team's own work process; and

(d) membership stability over a reasonable period of time.

With only minor modifications in wording, Hackman's (2002) four elements are repeated in the lists of team characteristics developed by an impressive group of scholars specializing in the study of collaboration and teams.

Turning to the team characteristics that do not conform to the four key elements already mentioned, further analysis suggests a fifth element. As a rule, the additional characteristics seem to emphasize the quality of a group's experience, or *how* it performs its work. Since Robert F. Bales (1953) introduced his equilibrium model for small group dynamics, numerous scholars have affirmed the importance of work groups balancing a need for task completion with the need for attention to a sound process.. Teams that take on this balancing responsibility, collectively, are able to function effectively and are more likely to produce the intended outcome (LaFasto & Larson, 1989; Levi, 2007; Parker, 1996). Austin and Baldwin (1991) explain, "both interpersonal and task issues must be handled if collaboration is to be successful and productive" (p. 50).

To Hackman's (2002) four elements of effective teams, therefore, I add a fifth element: "process attention," reflecting the consensus in the literature that both task and process must be intentionally addressed by a team or group. The consolidated list of Five Key Characteristics of Effective Teams follows:

(a) clear purpose, goal or task,
(b) clear identity and boundaries,
(c) clarity regarding authority relationships,
(d) committed members, and
(e) process attention.

(See Appendix B for more explanation of the Five Key Elements of Effective Teams, and Appendix C for a summary of team characteristics as identified by noted scholars.)

Paying attention to both task and process when engaged in team work is made both necessary and more challenging by the fact that successful teams must be together for at least six months or more before they are capable of achieving their highest levels of performance (Wheelan, 2005a). It takes time for members to get to know each other, to identify roles and responsibilities and to blend their talents into a more unified whole. It takes time to build trust and build the capacity to handle the inevitable tension of working in teams. Wheelan (2005a) adds: "There is nothing like an unstable membership to slow group development or to stop it altogether" (p. 38). Yet once an effective group has evolved, they are capable of using creative tension and constructive conflict to find solutions for nonroutine tasks. Birmingham and McCord (2004) explain:

> Unless group members trust each other (which is unlikely in newly formed groups), any conflict is likely to be seen as a personal attack, that is, a relationship conflict (Simmons & Peterson, 2000). On the other hand, Leana (1985) found that established groups were much more likely to challenge each other's ideas, even if the challenger held a minority opinion. (p. 80)

Organizational structure and support. Most teams and collaborative groups are part of a larger organizational structure and climate. The work they are meant to perform must support this larger context and in turn must be supported by the organization. Teams become ineffective and are disempowered by a system optimized for the individual. *In Groups That Work (and Those That Don't): Creating Conditions for Effective Teamwork*, Hackman (1990) explains that in a traditional organization where work is designed with an individual focus, constraining structures hinder teamwork. The structures (policies, practices, belief systems, authority relationships, etc.) were designed and have operated over the years to control and monitor employees individually. In many organizations when collaboration is attempted, it is simply mandated, and implementation happens in the organization as it presently exists. But force runs counter to the spirit of collaboration, and the old practices and structures are inadequate for supporting collaboration. Such approaches tend to fail miserably (Mohrman, Cohen, & Mohrman, 1995).

LaFasto and Larson (1989) explain: “If you are not rewarding effective teamwork, don’t expect it to happen,” adding, “Make sure, however, that you’re rewarding the outcome you desire” (p. 112). Robbins and Finley (2000) declare the way to create collaboration, “is neither mysterious nor expensive” (p. 122). They add: “You begin by sending a simple but unmistakable signal through the organization: You stop rewarding destructive, competitive, one-up behaviors, and you start rewarding group-minded behaviors. . . . Then you examine, as honestly as possible, exactly how your organization actually works” (p. 122).

Supporting this principle is the research of Ruth Wageman (1995), who studied more than eight hundred service technicians in 152 groups at Xerox Corporation. In the study, she manipulated the incentive structure to include manager feedback, merit pay increases, and profit sharing. The study involved three groups receiving either: group rewards, individual rewards, or a hybrid combination of both. Wageman found that the group reward most consistently resulted in high performance. Individual rewards were also effective when solitary tasks were assigned, but when tasks required teamwork, group rewards proved most effective (Wageman, 1995).

In addition to an appropriate reward and support structures, Wheelan (2005a) emphasizes the importance of appropriate training for a team context. She argues that trainings about group dynamics or leadership development often fail to achieve better team results precisely because the trainings emphasize individual skill-building, rather than developing groups or group awareness and group skills that actually translate into the work setting at a group or team level. In conclusion, Wheelan (2005a) warns: "Needless to say, research does not suggest that rock climbing, whitewater rafting, blind trust walks, or playing basketball on donkeys increases productivity in any way" (p. 16).

Members and teams. For the individuals involved in collaborative work, studies have suggested that motivation, commitment and job satisfaction are all improved by participating in collaborative endeavors (Denison, Hart, & Kahn, 1996; Kezar & Lester, 2009). And the individuals, in turn, have an impact on the group. Tamm and Luyet (2004) remind, "True collaboration begins inside the individual, not the organization. It begins with an intentional attitude" (p. 8). Straus (2002) makes a related observation: "The place to begin working collaboratively is in your heart" (p. 10).

Many scholars invoke the notion that team members create this kind of heartfelt collaboration in groups by promoting effective communication. Good communications in teams is not an accident, and it necessitates intention and attention. According to Robbins and Finley (2000), communication happens when we all listen with an intention to understand first. They further explain:

> In our rush to be heard and understood, we focus way too much on ourselves doing the talking. . . . But our listening is much more important that our talking, because our listening determines whether we learn anything, and whether actual communication occurs. (p. 140)

The various forms of listening involve more than a passive or uncritical process. Robbins and Finley (2000) warn: "Teams must be leery of members who have no honest intention to work as members of the team . . . ," and they conclude, "Good team members recognize that in order to build trust, they must uncover their own hidden agendas and expose them to the light of day (pp. 23-24).

Parker (1996) picks up on this notion when he argues: “The single most important factor distinguishing effective from ineffective teams is the ability of team members to listen to each other” (Parker, 1996, p. 37). Fiksdal (2001) also encourages participants in a discussion to emphasize listening skills, in an effort to gain a full awareness of the multiple perspectives held by the group. . . . Fiksdal explains: “By hearing voices, I do not mean simply listening to other people speaking; instead, I am referring to the difficult task of hearing another person as a fundamental and yet elusive requirement for collaboration” (p. 179).

Robbins and Finley (2000) add: “Good communication is a series of checks we run, first on ourselves, and then on the other person. Listening is three-quarters of communication” (p. 140). Thus, according to Robbins and Finley, good communication includes (in no specific order), the following four elements: (a) *Talking***,** (b) *Listening***,** (c) *Listening* to ourselves talking, and (d) *Listening* to ourselves listen.

In addition to the emphasis on listening, the four elements may offer an added insight about communications. As with other scholars, Robbins and Finley (2000) seem to imply that the Four Elements of Good Communications are relevant for communications between individuals. However, if the elements are considered from a collective or communitarian perspective, the concepts are likely to be understood differently than if understood from a more individualistic mindset. Note two elements add “ourselves” in the context of listening. If “ourselves” is understood to mean the collective “us” of a group, the meaning shifts dramatically—to something akin to listening to us—*the group*—as we collectively listen/talk.

Considering group-level perspectives should not negate the importance of individual team members, but it can bring added perspective to what otherwise limits understanding to individuals and keeps the collective experience a mystery. For example, the importance of commitment and intention, of listening deeply, are also matters of interest and responsibility at the team or group level, not merely something each individual must attend to separately.

American cultural patterns emphasizing the individual can constrain the way we conceive of team responsibility. Wheelan (2005b) observes that most Americans tend to think of a group as, "a collection of individuals rather than a dynamic system. We tend to think that how a group functions depends on individual group members. Group failure is often attributed to the 'bad apple' in the group or to 'ineffective leadership'" (p. 11). But groups have their own existence, connected to, but different from that of their members. Groups are far from static; they are ever-changing entities in their own right.

Self-managed teams. Should faculty regularly engage in group or team efforts together, the most appropriate fit, according to several scholars, would be some form of self-directed team (Bess et al., 2000; Hackman, 2002; Rosen, 2007; Sawyer, 2007). Hackman (2002) provides a helpful way to think about self-directed teams through a "Team Authority Matrix." The matrix consists of four "flavors" of team management, from teams that are extensively directed and managed from an outside authority, to those that are essentially autonomous and self-led. A short account of the four varieties of team management structures is found in Table 2.4.

Table 2.4

Team Authority and Management Matrix

Authority and Management Levels

Responsibility	**Manager-led**	**Self-manage**	**Self-design**	**Self-govern**
Set overall direction	Mgt	Mgt	Mgt	**Team**
Design team & its operational context	Mgt	Mgt	**Team**	**Team**
Manage work process & progress	Mgt	**Team**	**Team**	**Team**
Execute the team task	**Team**	**Team**	**Team**	**Team**

Note. Mgt = Management Responsibility; **Team** = Team Responsibility. Adapted from Hackman (2002, p. 52).

With the individual and independent nature of faculty culture, it seems likely that a successful faculty team would tend to fall on the right-hand side of the chart ("self-designing" or "self-governing"). The administrative structures of many educational institutions, on the other hand, tend to be more hierarchical in nature. In other words, what could be a preferred form of faculty team is also apt to represent, and in fact operate, in opposition to the dominant structures and values of the institution and its centers of authority.

Hansen (2009) notes that leaders—managers really—all too often, get in the way of collaboration. He attributes this to the default practices of modern management culture rather than any ill intention. And in truth, even with supportive leaders and managers, many of us have yet to gain the experience and skills necessary to be effective team members. Levi (2007) cautions, "Self-managing teams provide a variety of benefits, but they require the development of group process skills and social relations to operate effectively. In addition, team leadership requires new skills and responsibilities compared with those of traditional leadership approaches" (p. 165).

Faculty teams: A proposed model. Taking on the idea of collaborative teams in the academy, Bess et al. (2000) propose a model for faculty teams in *Teaching Alone Teaching Together: Transforming the Structure of Teams for Teaching*. The authors draw on the extensive literature on team-based work in the for-profit sector and explore a model for faculty teams meant to address faculty responsibilities currently found in the academy. The authors propose teams comprised of faculty members within the same discipline—but with different roles and tasks taken up by individual members. The authors outline seven roles to represent the range of responsibilities that an individual faculty member presently handles alone. The new, differentiated faculty roles include: (a) Researcher, (b) Pedagogue, (c) Lecturer, (d) Discussion Leader, (e) Integrator, (f) Assessor, and (g) Mentor.

The authors acknowledge that the current reward system in higher education is not designed to reinforce self-directed teams, and they further note faculty simply have little or no training to work in teams. Though Bess et al. (2000) convey great passion for their model of a team composed of seven highly specialized faculty members, they state that their primary interest is to spark a conversation about faculty and teams, and they assume others will prefer different options. Whatever the team makeup, Bess et al. (2000) argue that some form of self-directed team will best provide for the needs of faculty and academic institutions.

Moreover, the book's editor, James L, Bess (2000), argues for the importance of a faculty team approach precisely because, "there are no extent examples of such teams" (p. 204). Bess also cautions against changes in structure that are merely cosmetic, reminding that faculty in a department typically, "do not constitute a 'team' . . . primarily because they do not collaborate, except intermittently to plan curricula or establish evaluation and credentialing criteria" (p. 209). Bess adds:

> *Knowing that* is important, but for some of the roles, *knowing how* is equally important. Heretofore, faculty members have been expected to know only what constitutes their subject matter area and how to research it. The Boyer (1990) recommendations suggest a broadening of the definition of that skill, but if the team concept . . . is to be implemented, *knowing how* must be expanded beyond research skills. (p. 221)

In exploring what a viable faculty team might be like, Bess et al. (2000) emphasize the division of faculty work into specialized functions and roles. However, in the process, they provide little direction about how individuals in the team could best collaborate. The team concept has the potential for a more collaborative and holistic approach to faculty work, but the focus on demarcating roles and responsibilities has a somewhat fragmenting effect—almost like turning the complex, multifaceted work of faculty into an assembly line process.

Improvisation and teams. Drawing inspiration from a different direction, several scholars have suggested jazz music and jazz ensembles as metaphors for collaborative and creative teams (Cromwell & Stoddard, 2001; Sawyer, 2007; Walsh & Kahn, 2010). Keith Sawyer (2007), author of *Group Genius: The Creative Power of Collaboration* has taken a jazz and improvisational ensemble theme as the focus of his research on the creative potential of teams. Sawyer, an associate professor of Education and Psychology, has participated in a jazz ensemble for decades. In sharing insights from research on this passion, Sawyer (2007) explains:

> In both an improv group and a successful work team, the members play off one another, each person's contributions providing the spark for the next. Together, the improvisational team creates a novel emergent product, one that's more responsive to the changing environment and better than what anyone could have developed alone. (p. 14)

Jazz ensembles thrive on individual expression and expertise while also functioning within a supportive, collaborative effort. Ideally, these perspectives and interactions should be held in a balanced relationship. Rather than following a predetermined plan to solve a previously identified problem, improv and other innovative groups "have to 'find' and define the problem as they're solving it," explains Sawyer (2007, p. 45). Moreover, Sawyer (2007) points out, "Research shows us over and over again that the twin sibling of innovation is frequent failure. There's no creativity without failure" (p. 55).

By and large, Sawyer and other faculty who have suggested jazz and improv ensembles as a model for innovative teams have focused their examples on business settings. Neither Sawyer (2007) nor the other authors explore how an improv group might fare in the highly individualistic academy, with faculty largely untrained in working together in teams of any kind. Nevertheless, since jazz ensembles are non-hierarchical, provide opportunities for individual expression, and seek to "find and resolve problems" there is much in the approach that could appeal to academics.

Social Construction

Sawyer's (2007) work provides a new team model or structure, and for it to succeed, it would also require new mental models structuring the way team members think and behave as team members. K. K. Smith and Berg (1997) note, "'Social reality' and our ways of 'conceiving of reality' are one and the same process. Hence, any concern with what is 'really the case' is an exploration of the human and social process of 'reality construction'" (p. 16).

Social constructionism at its most basic holds to a deceptively simple precept: reality is socially constructed. Scholars with a social constructionist perspective argue that all knowledge is transmitted and maintained in social situations, and therefore what we know is not simply personal perception, or even universal and objective; what we know as reality is a communal creation. (Berger & Luckmann, 1966; Burr, 2007; Gergen, 1994). Burr (2007) simply declares: "When people talk to each other, the world gets constructed" (p. 8).

In explaining social constructionism, Burr (2007) identifies a few assumptions that are often foundational to the social constructionism perspective, including:

- A critical stance toward taken-for-granted knowledge

  Social constructionism invites us to be critical of what we observe and our ability to understand it as it seems to appear to us.
- Historical and cultural specificity

  Our understanding of the world and reality is always historically and culturally derived.
- Knowledge is sustained by social processes

  What we call truth varies over time and culture. Reality then is not fixed or objective, but a product of the social processes and interactions in which people are constantly engaged with each other (Burr, 2007).

The idea of social construction of reality emerged on the intellectual scene for most American academics with the work of Peter Berger and Thomas Luckmann (1966), authors of the classic *The Social Construction of Reality: A Treatise in the Sociology of Knowledge.* However, the concept has a longer intellectual lineage. For instance, in Europe in the 1920s, Karl Mannheim argued that our most personal sense of self and reality, our very thoughts themselves, are deeply shaped by external forces. Mannheim concluded that no human thought was immune to the influences of its social context (Berger & Luckmann, 1966).

In an influential article in *Change*, titled "The New Scholarship Requires a New Epistemology," Schon (1995) traced foundational elements of constructionism to American philosopher John Dewey. Schon explains: "For Dewey, doubt lies not in the mind but in the situation. Inquiry begins with situations that are problematic—that are confusing, uncertain, or conflicted, and block the free flow of action" (1995, p. 31).

Social constructionism is in many ways, a response to the main themes of the Enlightenment, still a dominant influence over the Western worldview. This worldview celebrates the raising of rationality and individuality, and of the search for fundamental principles as central to freeing each of us from the authority of the church, monarchies and arbitrary power. The Enlightenment launched a search for truth and for the true nature of reality—through the application of reason and rationality (Gergen, 1994).

As Burr (2007) reminds, "This search for the truth was often based upon the idea that there were rules or structures underlying the surface features of the world, and there was a belief in a 'right' way of doing things, which could be discovered" (p. 11). And indeed this search did yield new insights. Marx, Freud, and Piaget, to name only a few in the social sciences, sought to discover the deep structures and fundamental principles of the human condition and social systems (Burr, 2007). Nevertheless, this emphasis on foundational structures, as exemplified in the sciences, proved a more problematic fit in the social sciences. Berger and Luckmann (1966) state: "Social order is not part of the 'nature of things,' and it cannot be derived form the 'laws of nature.' Social order exists *only* as a product of human activity" (p. 52).

Moreover, social constructionism finds the individual an inadequate unit of study to fully explain social phenomena, since in any society and organization, the culture, structures, traditions, beliefs, and all the assumptions that support them are a result of socially constructed and maintained meaning. (Berger & Luckmann, 1966; Burr, 2007; Gergen, 1994).

Burr (2007) places constructionism in a larger context, noting: “The cultural and intellectual backcloth against which social constructionism has taken shape . . . is what is usually referred to as postmodernism” (p. 10). She makes a clear link between social construction and postmodernism, explaining that both reject the meta, grand theories in favor of multiple, coexisting perspectives—sometimes called pluralism. Both share the notion that there is no ultimate truth and both reject that unseen structures—especially in a social milieu—define the world we see and experience (Burr, 2007). She adds: “The emphasis is thus more on processes than structures. . . . Knowledge is therefore seen not as something a person has or doesn’t have, but as something that people do together” (p. 9).

Of course, much of what we “do together” is in groups and organizations, and these interactions are rich with social construction. Berger and Luckmann (1966) explain: “Institutions also, by the very fact of their existence, control human conduct by setting up predefined patterns of conduct, which channel it in one direction as against many other directions that would theoretically be possible” (pp. 54-55). Over time, these patterns, beliefs, and structures become even more entrenched, even reified, and though new meanings and reality can be constructed, all subsequent revisions or change will have to encounter and address the patterns that have become the basis for understanding reality. Berger and Luckmann (1966) remind us: "Institutionalization is not, however, an irreversible process, despite the fact that institutions, once formed, have a tendency to persist" (p. 81).

This process is complex in its power and subtlety. Berger and Luckmann (1966) marvel at: "The paradox that man is capable of producing a world that he then experiences as something other than a human product" (p. 61). The authors add: *"Society is a human product. Society is an objective reality. Man is a social product*" (Berger & Luckman, 1966, p. 61). They conclude:

> The objectivity of the social world means that it confronts man as something outside of himself. The decisive question is whether he still retains the awareness that, however objectivated, the social world was made by men—and, therefore, can be remade by them. (p. 89)

Social construction and the academy. Constructionism is important for this inquiry for a number of reasons. First, it adds to our understanding of collaboration, learning and knowledge creation. According to Bruffee (1993), knowledge is, "something people construct by talking together and reaching agreement" (p. 3). Barkley et al. (2005), add: "Rather than assuming that knowledge exists somewhere in reality 'out there,' and that it is waiting to be discovered by human endeavors, collaborative learning, in its tightest definition, assumes that knowledge is socially produced" (p. 6). Matthews (1996) observes "Collaborative learning. . . . is a pedagogy that has at its center the assumption that people make meaning together and that the process enriches and enlarges them" (p. 101). Austin and Baldwin (1991) add: "A key element in collaborative learning is its epistemological perspective that knowledge is socially constructed by communities rather than individuals. . . . Knowledge is not . . . poured into students but rather emerges from the ongoing dialogue and social interactions within groups" (p. 15).

Constructionism also has implications for the academy itself, as like any institution, it is a social construct. In the process of this long-term construction project, the disciplines of the academy have become, essentially, different academic universes, each unto itself. This socially constructed world of separate silos is not easily perturbed, however. It is simply difficult to have a meaningful conversation outside of one's own discourse community. Once social construction has taken hold in a kind of system, change is a possibility but not a simple probability. In describing what happens when people from different cultures and perspectives encounter each other, Berger and Luckmann (1966) explain: "The appearance of an alternative symbolic universe poses a threat because its very existence demonstrates empirically that one's own universe is less than inevitable" (p. 108).

In the academy, the concept of social construction of knowledge has begun to emerge in theory and pedagogic practice, standing in stark contrast to more traditional forms of teaching and learning. Social construction offers very different and powerful epistemological insights about how students learn best. This new understanding is often employed in collaborative learning groups, service-learning, learning communities, interdisciplinary curricula, reflective practice and other curricular innovations (B. L. Smith et al., 2004).

The potential for many, multiple (but not necessarily mutually exclusive) "right" answers is quite striking in the constructionist paradigm. That potential for many perspectives is inherent in socially constructed meaning, which is also characterized by "subjective and value-laden knowledge," interdisciplinarity, relational knowing, reflective learning, and the like. Traditional education is far less comfortable with this kind of uncertain or ambiguous interpretation of reality. Thus when faced with the two forms, and the worldviews of each, a traditional academic training will lead one to conclude the new form is inferior—not simply different, and perhaps useful.

Social constructionism's emphasis on human learning through dialogue is consistent with another long thread in academic tradition. John Dewey and Jack Mezirow, for instance, both argued that the deepest learning, often transformative in nature, is almost always a result of people having to confront the unexpected or surprising. In struggling to resolve the confusion and disorientation brought about by the new perspective, a new mental schema or understanding can be formed, ultimately leading to new behaviors and beliefs. This transformative process happens at the individual level, of course, but it also takes a socially constructed turn. Mezirow (1991) explains: "Perspective transformation is a social process: others precipitate the disorienting dilemma, provide us with alternative perspectives, provide support for change, participate in validating changed perspectives through rational discourse, and require new relationships to be worked out" (p. 194).

Gergen (1994) further amplifies the principle, saying:

> Understanding is thus not a mental act originating within the mind but a social achievement taking place within the public domain. . . . The achievement of understanding is . . . our achievement primarily by virtue of the cultural processes in which we are embedded. (p. 271)

Alternative frames and metaphors. Scholars use metaphors to both construct and reveal socially constructed understandings of reality. For example, Gareth Morgan (1997) explores eight organizational metaphors in *Images of Organizations*. The notion of "images" or metaphors suggests that there are a variety of patterns which shape perceptions of reality and animate organizational life. Metaphors literally shape the world we see. They determine the options we perceive and the choices we make as we experience that world (Knapp, 2001; Lakoff & Johnson, 1999; Sherriff & Wilson, 2006). For example, the influence of the mechanistic paradigm (one of the frames explored by Morgan) on American culture can be seen through the common tendency to focus on issues separately or to think in linear terms. Such fragmentation makes it challenging to see a larger context, and relationships and interdependencies are often overlooked or underappreciated as a result.

American values and traditions celebrate the individual and therefore even in circumstances befitting collective models, the individual tends to be of paramount focus. So, we create organizational environments and institutional structures that support and emphasize individual initiative and accomplishment. The often uncritical celebration of the rugged individual then, has had a profound impact on the way we experience the paradox that comes out of such an uneven relationship of the individual with a group, community or institution (Kezar & Lester, 2009; K. K. Smith & Berg, 1997).

Therefore the use of frames, much like metaphors, to explore organizational life can provide powerful insights and remind us of the rich, ambient potential for multiple perspectives in any given institution and situation.

Bolman and Deal (2003), authors of *Reframing Organizations: Artistry, Choice, and Leadership,* take a similar approach. The authors identify and explore four frames of reference that can usefully describe life in almost any organization. The four frames are: (a) Human Resources, (b) Structural, (c) Political, and (d) Symbolic. Each frame reveals a distinct perspective, informing behaviors, solutions and more within the organization. Each of the frames can be understood independently, but they operate simultaneously, so that each frame is insufficient to explain or express the full range of what constitutes organizational life. However, the authors suggest that the use of multiple frames can, in combination, provide a richer, more integrated and holistic picture of the organization.

Faculty and Academic Culture

The academy has been evolving and socially constructing itself for generations now, and one result is a complex mix of "frames" that can be identified as different cultures, perhaps involving competing or contradictory values and priorities.

Six academic cultures. Bergquist and Pawlak (2008), authors of *Engaging the Six Cultures of the Academy*, identify six cultures specifically in their study of this rich history. Over time, the American academy has needed to adjust to changing societal conditions, and in fact it has proven remarkably successful and resilient. In part, this has been achieved by maintaining elements from previous eras – values, principles, and practices – and carrying them through to the current academy. Each culture, then, is a response to the climate and conditions of a specific time, and each is still viable to greater or lesser degrees because each continues to provide answers to the challenges of today.

The six cultures identified by Bergquist and Pawlak (2008) are: Collegial, Managerial, Development, Advocacy, Virtual, and Tangible. A brief explanation of each follows, including a look at the underlying assumptions and animating practices of each. The reader who has been associated with higher education for even a relatively brief time is apt to find a familiar description in more than one of these cultures or frames.

Collegial culture. Bergquist and Pawlak (2008) start their exploration of academic cultures with what they term the collegial culture, rooted in the English college model from the colonial era. Historically, collegial culture emphasized developing the values and quality of character of society's future leaders as its primary purpose.

Relationships in collegial culture, tend to be informal and egalitarian. Faculty loyalty is centered on professional disciplines, rather than institutions. Research, scholarship, and rationality are prized. Collegial culture places especially high value on academic autonomy, reflected in the principle of academic freedom.

Isolation and individualism are reinforced in the myth of the "lone wolf" or eccentric professor, as well as in the traditional assumptions of learning as a lonely endeavor, engaged and held in the individual's mind (Bergquist & Pawlak, 2008). The collegial culture is increasingly criticized for being a male-oriented culture, with an emphasis on competition and hierarchy (Gappa et al., 2007).

Over time, the German model seems to have been integrated into and even subsumed the colonial era British model. Thus collegiality as a concept may have shifted over time from something akin to collaboration to a more distant, removed relationship.

Managerial culture. The managerial culture is increasingly prominent in American higher education according to Bergquist and Pawlak (2008). It originated in the Catholic college and university systems, and was taken up by community colleges. Each system shares a commitment to serving the needs of local communities, especially providing access to education to underserved populations. Both systems have also tended to emphasize instruction over research or knowledge creation, and teaching is often separated from instructional design, so faculty members often teach from course materials prepared by others.

Institutions shaped by the managerial culture tend to face ongoing financial pressures. They naturally focus on the immediate need to manage resources efficiently. As a result, faculty members in such institutions are often part-time and have reduced influence over a wide range of activities and decisions (Bergquist & Pawlak, 2008).

Developmental culture. The developmental culture, say Bergquist and Pawlak (2008), "finds meaning primarily in the creation of programs and activities furthering the personal and professional growth of all members of the higher education community" (p. 73). The developmental culture originated in the 1960s, in part to address concerns that traditional education emphasizes intellectual development almost exclusively while ignoring other domains of student growth. The development culture values personal openness and service to others, and sees the institution's primary purpose as helping to develop the cognitive, effective, and behavioral maturation among all students, faculty, staff and administrators. Bergquist and Pawlak (2008) observe that campus leaders are likely, "to be preoccupied with structural solutions and with rational planning as the chief means of employing knowledge. As a result, they will often ignore important information about, or be oblivious to needs associated with changes in process or attitude" (p. 88).

The field of Organizational Development (OD) is naturally aligned with the development culture. However, its influence has been limited in the academy. First, the dominant academic focus on rationality tends to discount the developmental culture's emphasis on relationships and feelings. Secondly, the pervasive value of autonomy leaves little patience for building and maintaining relationships (Bergquist & Pawlak, 2008).

Advocacy culture. The advocacy culture, Bergquist and Pawlak (2008), explain, "finds meaning primarily in the establishment of equitable and egalitarian policies and procedures for the distribution of resources and benefits in the institution" (p. 111). The advocacy culture tends to distrust power and bureaucracy, and it values confrontation and negotiation among groups with inherently opposing interests. Faculty members aligned with this culture tend to see institutions—including their own and the academy – as either supporting existing, often repressive structures or, rarely, attempting to establish new and more democratic structures (Bergquist & Pawlak, 2008).

Both the advocacy culture and developmental culture are a response to the managerial culture. They share an emphasis on equity and egalitarianism, which may explain why faculty members oriented toward either culture are often interested in developing courses around service-learning. Nevertheless the advocacy and development cultures have widely divergent strategies and assumptions about how change happens in organizations and society (Bergquist & Pawlak, 2008).

Virtual culture. The first recently emergent culture identified by Bergquist and Pawlak (2008) is called the virtual culture. In the virtual culture meaning is found by "answering the knowledge generation and dissemination capacity of the postmodern world" (p. 147). The virtual culture, values open, shared, responsive educational systems and conceives of the institution's purpose as connecting to global and technological resources to broaden its own and the global learning network. The virtual culture comes out of technological advances of recent decades, and responds to the challenges facing higher education, including economic constraints and declining public support.

The virtual culture also brings challenges to the academy. It essentially involves no physical presence. The virtual culture is independent from the academy. This is significant, as the academy has claimed to influence, indeed inform, the "knowledge economy." Holding influence in such a fluid, distributed system is no easy task.

The virtual culture comes with an imperative for a new epistemology. It changes how we conceive of and understand knowledge and knowledge creation. The culture is comfortable with ongoing construction of knowledge through wikis, blogs, and social networks. Knowledge becomes a work in progress, held collectively, and its meaning is known in relationship, not as an independent, final "truth" (Bergquist & Pawlak, 2008).

Tangible culture. The second new culture as identified by Bergquist and Pawlak (2008) is the tangible culture, which "finds meaning in its roots, its community, and its spiritual grounding" (p. 185). Members of this culture value face-to-face interactions. The tangible culture integrates a value-based approach into all interactions.

The tangible culture can also be understood as a reaction to the ambiguities of the emerging postmodern era. Bergquist and Pawlak (2008) explain that it is based on "the search for a deeply rooted identity, a supportive and appreciative community, and a grounding in religious or spiritual rather than secular values" (p. 186). Moreover, the tangible culture tends to focus on "standards" and "quality," often with a sense of longing for the past. The authors observe:

> Under stress, there is a regression in any society to more fundamental (premodern) forms and functions. Because much of the world is in stress today—as it moves into a mixture of premodern, modern, and newly emerging postmodern forms—we can expect a resurgence of the values and perspectives of the tangible culture. (pp. 188-189)

The six cultures of the academy represent different *socially constructed* responses to the various challenges and opportunities faced by higher education. The different perspectives and values of each culture usefully provide options that would not be possible otherwise. They also bring the potential for tension, conflict and paradox. The many changes and stresses on the academy have created, according to R. Eugene Rice (2003): "a festering cultural split . . . between the *collegial culture* and the *managerial culture*" (p. 5). He explains the split is a consequence of the very different assumptions embedded in each culture. Rice (2003) concludes: "Until we find ways to collaborate across this barrier—building on the best of the two cultures and eliminating the worst—we will continue to struggle with this counterproductive division" (p. 5).

Faculty motivation. Studies of faculty motivations indicate similarities with other American workers. In summarizing several studies of employee needs and motivation across a range of sectors and industries, Gappa et al. (2007) found that the following qualities and forms of motivation were most often identified as being important to workers: meaningful relationships, challenging and creative work, respect, ownership or a sense of responsibility, autonomy, recognition, and feedback (p. 122).

Faculty members have very similar motivations, but the culture of the academy does have some very specific qualities that provide a point of departure. For instance, in the American cultural context, autonomy may be valued in a number of settings by just about every employee, whether a professional, an hourly-wage worker, or otherwise. But faculty surely experience—and expect—a particular form and quality of autonomy that is unusual, perhaps profoundly so, compared to other workplaces.

A variety of intrinsic and extrinsic motivations influence the decision to pursue an academic career. Gappa et al. (2007) note: “Faculty members choose an academic career because it offers autonomy, intellectual challenges, and freedom to pursue personal interests” (p. 105). After extensive review of research on faculty motivation, Jon Wergin (2003) reports:

> Over and over again, the research on faculty motivation has found that those of us who enjoy vital faculty life are driven by a relatively small number of motives: autonomy, community, recognition, efficacy. Some studies come up with a longer list than this, some a shorter list. But nearly all mention these four. (pp. 14-15)

An overview of the four primary faculty motivations follows.

Autonomy. The most frequently cited reason faculty give for choosing an academic career involves the autonomy afforded them as academics and scholars. Wergin (2003) explains:

> Professional autonomy is the freedom to experiment, to follow one’s own leads wherever they may go, and to do so without fear of the consequences. While autonomy is highly valued in nearly all professions, faculty members are likely the most purely individualistic of all professionals (Senge, 2000). Autonomy is what undergirds the principles of academic freedom, probably the most cherished academic value. (p. 15)

Community. A very close second reason for faculty to choose an academic life is the desire to be part of a community of scholars. Nevertheless, notes Wergin (2003), “Some distressing research conducted over the years… shows clearly that the desire to be part of a scholarly community is one of the first to be thwarted as new faculty realize what they have to do to get ahead” (p. 16). In such circumstances, notes Wergin, it is understandable how, “autonomy and community come to be seen as being in conflict rather than complementary” (p. 16). However, this deep desire to participate in a “nurturing community” of peers never really goes away. Wergin adds: “Anything that eases the 'pain of disconnection,' as Parker Palmer (1998) calls it, is a powerful motivator, indeed" (p. 16).

Recognition. The third form of motivation for faculty involves recognition, both concrete and symbolic. Wergin (2003) explains: "People everywhere want to feel valued, to know that others see their work as worthwhile. Faculty are no different" (p. 17).

Efficacy. The fourth important reason for choosing a faculty career is related to the desire to have a sense of efficacy. Wergin (2003) observes, "Efficacy is what gives our work meaning: it is a feeling that what we do matters" (p. 17).

Interplay of motives. The four motivators, says Wergin (2003), are interdependent. This is an important point, as the first two motives (autonomy and community) have almost equal appeal for faculty members, and yet they are often represented as being in direct conflict. This need not be the case, however, as the apparent paradox and tension between the values of autonomy and community is socially constructed. Gappa et al. (2007) lament the disappointment felt by many early-career faculty members who desire to work "in a community where collaboration is respected and encouraged, and where interaction and talk about one's ideas, work, and institution are common" (p. 78). Instead, the authors note, many new faculty members, "experience isolation, separation, fragmentation, loneliness, competition, and occasionally incivility" (p. 78). In other words, both autonomy and relationships are a high priority for new faculty in particular, but many are encountering a system that is optimized for autonomy—sometimes even at the expense of a sense of community.

Gappa et al. (2007) further note that this tradition has been particularly discouraging to women and faculty of color. Ironically, the perspectives such relative newcomers bring to the academy are probably critical to the very changes that are necessary to the male-centric, individualistic and competitive culture. Rosen (2007) makes an interesting observation about the private sector a few years ago, noting: "Positive feelings about collaboration in the workplace seem to have coincided with the increasing numbers of women in organizational leadership roles" (p. 15).

The Power of Paradox

The increasing need for collaboration and use of teams in organizations—because teams are particularly capable of supporting learning and bringing new perspectives to bear on complex problems—provides fertile ground for paradox and for conflict. In *Paradoxes of Group Life: Understanding Conflict, Paralysis, and Movement in Group Dynamics*. K. K. Smith and Berg (1997) explain:

> A group often needs people who are different to fulfill its primary task. This means that differences must be brought into the group and then integrated in a way that provides unity while preserving difference. Difference alone is enough to provide a platform for conflict. (p. 65)

However, the near inevitability of conflict or tension is largely a result of how "reality" is understood by the group, rather than as a phenomenon separate from the group. The ways in which we individually and collectively define our reality, then, can create—or socially construct—a paradox. K. K. Smith and Berg (1997) advise:

> How a group thinks about its experiences of conflict both gives that conflict its meaning and sets the parameters for possible courses of action. . . . Something that is not conflict in its essence can be made so simply by how those involved elect to think about it. That is, the actual domain of conflict may be in the system of thinking of those engaged in the event rather than in the event itself. (p. 47)

When a paradox emerges through the presence of different, seemingly incongruent perspectives, the response is often framed in terms of the necessity of choosing one element (often at the expense of the other), and thus the paradox is experienced as an especially difficult conflict. Morgan (1997) explains: “The dialectical view . . . sees paradox as a product of the internal tensions produced by the fact that elements of both sides of the paradox may embrace equally desirable states. . . . Paradox cannot be successfully resolved by eliminating one side” (p. 294).

On a practical level, this helps explain why Hackman (2002) recommends that to establish successful teams, it is critical that members’ needs and priorities must also be of concern, not simply those of the team. It is also a reminder that the needs of the individual must not always supersede those of the collective. Hackman’s caution serves to reveal the almost ubiquitous nature of this broad individual-collective dialectic or paradox – and therefore of the common mistake of trying to eliminate one of the elements. “The first step in the successful management of paradox,” advises Morgan (1997), “rests *in recognizing that both dimensions of the contradictions that accompany change usually have merit*” (pp. 293-294).

A paradox is best understood, then, as a dynamic relationship. The tension of a paradox is derived from the relationship between two or more elements. Because the paradox exists in a relationship, one element requires the other to exist. So for example, leader and follower exist only within the relationship with each other; similarly, dependency and counterdependency are deeply linked (K. K. Smith & Berg, 1997). The authors advise: “Only by adopting different frames can one begin to understand the entrapping dynamics within any one frame” (K. K. Smith & Berg, 1997, p. 81). K. K. Smith and Berg add: “*Frame contradictions differently* and the self-referential, self-renunciating circularity may well be broken” (p. 16).

The natural response when encountering a paradox is often to try to solve the "problem" and in doing so, group members seek to smooth over the differences, or to reinforce one element of the paradox and eliminate the other, or to artificially make distinctions that hold the elements apart. But since the contradictions exist only in relationship, these strategies are doomed to failure, and are often a source of continued, increasing frustration. K. K. Smith and Berg (1997) explain: "Attempting to undo the paradoxical circumstances often has the effect of further entrenching the oppositional forces and paralyzing the group" (p. 211).

Individual and group identity. Though the potential for paradox in human interactions and systems is almost limitless, in *Paradoxes of Group Life,* K. K. Smith and Berg (1997) concentrate on twelve paradoxes related to individual and group identity, organized into three clusters. All have significant implications for collaborative work in groups and teams. The Paradoxes include:

Paradoxes of Belonging:

- Identity (relationship between individual & group identity)
- Involvement (relationship between involvement & detachment)
- Individuality (relationship between individual & collective)
- Boundaries (relationship between what group is & is not)

Paradoxes of Engaging

- Disclosure (relationship between acceptance and rejection)
- Trust (relationship between safety and fear)
- Intimacy (relationship between the personal and collective)
- Regression (relationship between past and present)

Paradoxes of Speaking

- Authority (relationship between acceptance and resistance)
- Dependency (relationship between dependence and independence)
- Creativity (relationship between creativity and destruction)
- Courage (relationship between doubt and certainty)

(K. K. Smith & Berg, 1997).

Any of the paradoxes exist when the relationship between apparently opposing concepts is not recognized. For instance, the paradox of identity is found in the experience of tension between the unique identity of the individual and that of the group. Individuals entering a group are often concerned about how much of their identity will be given over to the group, and in turn, groups as a whole tend to be concerned about whether the individuals will support the group's identity. One way this is often handled is to establish group norms, whether formally or informally, to demarcate where identity and allegiances begin and end. Interestingly, the creation of group norms actually helps to set up the paradox and the conditions of conflict, as any perceived deviation can foster contention between the group and the individual (K. K. Smith & Berg, 1997).

As another example, the paradox of dependency becomes a factor in a group's experience when the members are unable to see, much less appreciate, the relationship between their dependence on each other, and the need to provide support for independence from the group at the same time. K. K. Smith and Berg (1997) explain:

> The special nature of the paradox of dependency is that to experience independence in collective life, one has to be constantly giving expression to one's dependent side. For only as reliable dependencies are established does interdependence emerge. It is the creation of collective interdependence that provides the notion of independence with meaning. (p. 142)

Chris Argyris and Donald Schon offer several useful insights into group challenges related to paradoxes. In *Organizational Learning II: Theory, Method, and Practice*, Argyris and Schon (1996) note that organizations and groups often create a "Learning Paradox," where the actions undertaken to promote learning actually inhibit learning. The authors argue that only "discussable" issues are identified and solutions are developed to deal with them, while the "undiscussable" issues are left alone entirely. Over time, the weight of the undiscussable issues—which are by their very nature not part of the conversations about problems or solutions—begins to put everyone in a "double bind," making the people and organization less and less effective. (Argyris & Schon, 1996).

The implication for social systems is clear: holding on to previous beliefs and patterns is a common response to pressure for change. However, to remain viable, living systems must change and adapt to conditions as they change and evolve (another apparent paradox). So continuity and discontinuity, stability and change are deeply intertwined, something that at first can seem contradictory and therefore paradoxical—and beyond consideration by rational people. Paradoxes, then, offer extremely rich possibilities for new understanding, which in turn, removes the paradox—or at least its power over a particular set of mental models.

Paradoxes and the academy. Echoing Argyris and Schon's (1996) notion of the "double bind" created through "undiscussables," Massy (2003) points to a familiar dynamic within the academy. He argues: "We have avoided fighting and discourtesy. We have kept up a façade of good manners at the cost of not accomplishing much. . . .

Unfortunately, this often means that the most crucial issues facing the department are never discussed" (p. 181).

Peter Ewell (2002) observes that the academy is caught in a number of such paradoxes, or "key dialectics." He points to the overall curriculum in higher education, where increasing fragmentation and specialization seems to be working against a growing need for coherence (Ewell, 2002). This notion of a paradox of fragmentation and cohesion in the curriculum would seem related to the American cultural pattern that emphasizes the individual, often in opposition to collective purpose. This tradition has assumed and supported a particularly solitary professional life of the faculty. It has yielded great success, of course, within a certain context and historical period. For instance, it has traditionally been assumed that the individual—and his or her academic products—must stand alone. Yet to demonstrate one's unique difference, and to have that difference have any meaning, a scholar must also connect that work of others with related interests. To truly stand alone would negate the coherence that makes meaning and puts into context scholarship that is "unique." Austin and Baldwin (1991) note:

> Research and productivity in our society are generally seen as the outcome of individual initiative rather than the results of a fertile environment that combines the talent and energy of two or more individuals (Nobel 1986). The Anglo-American tradition of research views its past achievements primarily in terms of the "lone wolf," the great individual, or the hero. (pp. 7-8)

The assumptions that support this individual-oriented culture make it difficult to conceive of other ways of engaging more collaborative initiatives and systemic responses. James Fairweather (1996), author of *Faculty Work and Public Trust,* notes that the general emphasis on research regularly supplants the primary purpose of institutions of higher education: to instill learning. The reward structures have evolved to reflect the research focus, and Fairweather reports: “that faculty perceived their rewards to be dependent on research, not teaching, including faculty from institutions with a strong emphasis historically on teaching” (p. 46).

The systemic tensions around research and the individualistic nature of the academic life come together in another potential systemic paradox, involving notions of rigor and academic freedom. Rigor and academic freedom, if framed as the sole province of the individual, exist in a certain range of possibility. This framing reflects what we are accustomed to, and yet it may represent a rather limited and limiting range of what could actually be possible. For example, Day and Eodice (2001) wrote of their attempt to write a joint PhD dissertation, and of the almost universal discomfort and systemic resistance they experienced to their proposal. This belief pattern reflects what Austin and Baldwin (1991) call the “negative paradigm,” a long tradition that generally perceives collaborative teaching, research, and other shared scholarship to be inferior to and less rigorous than that of individual forms.

Nevertheless, Day and Eodice (2001) found a few supporters, including Duan Roen (1997), who in a letter, commented: “In my reading and in my experience . . . collaboration has led to better work, not less work. If anything, collaboration requires more work because two minds are seeing all sorts of revisions to do (August 1, 1997)” (as cited in Day & Eodice, 2001, p. 5). Day and Eodice suggest that a truly collaborative process of writing could be, in a very real sense, peer-reviewed before the product of the collaboration was even submitted. Thus, Day and Eodice demonstrate how reframing a challenge or paradoxical situation can be liberating. Morgan (1997) explains:

> Paradox is one of the major forces stalling change at all levels of an organization. It tends to immobilize at both a psychological and action level. Yet . . . it can be

> transformed into a major lever of change. For in dissolving or transforming paradox, we change the basic rules of the game. (p. 295)

Thus, reframing rigor and academic freedom in a collaborative context need not negate the importance of either. It may change how we conceive of rigor and academic freedom, however. Massy (2003) observes: “Collaboration breaks down the isolation and fragmentation that stand in the way of effective quality work” (p. 182). He later adds: “Collaboration also improves accountability. It’s hard for a chair or other academic officer to track a professor’s effort and progress toward better education performance, but it is relatively easy for fellow team members to do so” (p. 183).

Barriers to Faculty Collaboration

While increased collaboration in the academy brings up intriguing possibilities, the literature review thus far has revealed numerous barriers to faculty collaboration, often as part of the exploration of other topics. However, this section will attempt to pull the themes together into a more cohesive whole. Understanding more about barriers to faculty collaboration could be critical for moving forward effectively. A good place to start is Kezar and Lester’s (2009) *Organizing Higher Education for Collaboration: A Guide for Campus Leaders.* The authors identify numerous systemic barriers to faculty collaboration, and some of these obstacles include:

- Professionalism
- Disciplines and Departments
- Paradigmatic Differences
- Faculty Training and Socialization
- Tenure
- Reward System

- Bureaucratic and Hierarchical Administrative Structures
- Clash Between Academic and Administrative Structures

The barriers identified by Kezar and Lester (2009) will serve as the basic structure for a more in-depth analysis of the systemic obstacles to faculty collaboration. Other scholars have weighed in on the topic, and their insights will be integrated into the discussion as well. Finally, this overview will conclude with a few additional impediments to collaboration not explicitly covered by Kezar and Lester.

Professionalism. As the administrative structures of higher educational institutions became more bureaucratized and rationalized, in line with trends throughout American society, the structures of departments grew to dominate the academic landscape. According to Kezar and Lester (2009), the fragmentation created by such "professionalism" meant decision-making became "more isolated within certain groups and provided more autonomy so that the groups were not required to work together toward the overall benefit of the campus" (p. 24).

In combination with the isolation of faculty from each other, this separation from the life and priorities of the campus can be problematic for all concerned. Unfortunately, this is a self-reinforcing dynamic, so many faculty may not even notice—at least fully—the fragmented and segmented world in which they work. Reporting on insights from Fairweather (1996), Wergin (2003) explains that in faculty work: "The emphasis continues to be on individual merit, not on collective worth to the mission of the institution. As a consequence, there's little faculty investment in activities that require collective action" (p. 30).

Disciplines and departments. Almost immediately upon being formed, each discipline and department naturally began to develop its own culture, assumptions, vocabulary, preferred research methods, and much more. Gradually, the separate identities and conventions made meaningful cross-disciplinary communication—much less real collaboration—more challenging than productive (Bohen & Stiles, 1998; Clark, 1991; Kezar & Lester, 2009). As a result, today, faculty identify with their discipline, having lost a sense of being part of their institution and even of their faculty community (Kezar & Lester, 2009). Cromwell and Stoddard (2001) are even harsher in their criticism, claiming:

> A discipline is a reified set of practices and beliefs to which one apprentices oneself. To be disciplined (adjective) is to be bound strictly to the proper rules and practices of the discipline…. Hence traditional disciplines are fields of power/knowledge bounded with invisible electric fences. (pp. 160-161)

The fragmentation and identification with a narrow group of peers can tend to introduce and reinforce competition between disciplines (Frost, Jean, Teodorescu, & Brown, 2004). Given the diminishing resources and declining public support for higher education, competition can have an especially profound impact on shaping and reinforcing the fragmenting values and practices of the academy. Kezar and Lester (2009) simply point out: “Collaborative work competes with traditional disciplines for intellectual and financial resources” (p. 26). This statement serves as a powerful and perhaps ironic example of how systems, and their underlying assumptions, are self-referential: Even efforts to collaborate translate as competition in a system that is fundamentally competitive in nature.

Departments are also the focus of criticism. Ann Lucas (2000) characterizes departments as a group of “independent entrepreneurs” rather than a team. Comprone

(2001) observes: “Departments are not … real intellectual or academic entities. They are not places where intellectual problems are solved, where faculty go to engage in true intellectual dialog” (p. 307). Walsh and Kahn (2010) make a similar argument, saying:

> members of an academic department may find very little opportunity to collaborate together on substantive pieces of academic work, as opposed to carrying out work alongside each other rather than together with each other. Committees, for instance, may account for many of the occasions on which staff comes together in a department, but primarily involve joint decision-making rather than joint working as such. (p. 58)

Paradigmatic differences. The disciplines are also separated by different inquiry paradigms, which may also exacerbate misunderstandings, miscommunication, and competition between faculty and departments. Kezar and Lester (2009) note: “Inquiry paradigms guide how faculty think about and conduct research” (p. 26), making it more challenging for faculty from different departments to find ways to work together collaboratively.

Faculty socialization. Kezar and Lester (2009) point out that not only are faculty members socialized into particular disciplines and inquiry paradigms, “they also are trained to work mostly in isolation. Particularly in the humanities and social sciences, graduate students may spend many years working in virtual isolation on archival research or on an empirical research study” (p. 27). Though collaboration in research is becoming common in the sciences, Kezar and Lester argue: “However, the hierarchical arrangements of many of these teams and bounded roles often create an environment in which teams are not particularly collaborative and faculty do not necessarily learn collaborative skills” (p. 27).

To shift this pattern of isolation, Austin and Baldwin (1991) advise: “As part of professional socialization, students should be introduced to the merits and processes of collaboration. Certainly, the frequently accepted idea that single-author publications are inherently more valuable than co-authored work should be reexamined" (p. vi). Bess et al. (2000) note the powerful influence of this early socialization process, suggesting that it also has a profound effect on shaping the self-concept of new faculty. In his role as editor, Bess (2000) further explains:

> Faculty, especially those who have been socialized through the doctoral degree-granting process, are professionalized into thought and action modes of radical rationality. . . . And as Zaleznik remarks, supremely rational behavior reinforces feelings of independence rather than more vulnerability and recognition of interdependence. (p. 218)

Braxton and Del Favero (2000) concur, noting that graduate school prepares students primarily for an academic profession that emphasizes research. In part as a response, Bess et al. (2000) suggest a need for inclusion of interpersonal and group communication and related skills in doctoral programs.

Tenure. Research repeatedly indicates that new faculty want to engage in collaborative work with colleagues, yet the culture, traditions and reward system of the academy tends to work against an early experience of collaboration (Austin, 2002; Creamer, 2004, 2005; Gappa et al., 2007; Rice et al., 2000; Wergin, 2003). Kezar and Lester (2009) explain:

> Collaborative efforts are highly discouraged before achieving tenure. For many faculty, this means working independently for at least fifteen years. After such a long time working alone, faculty are not likely to be inclined to work with others and have not learned the skills to work collaboratively. (p. 27)

Moreover, this often means that those who finally achieve tenure are neither motivated nor equipped to support new faculty members entering the academy. Sadly, this is the very time when mentoring and collaborative experience would be most important in a new career—and when an established career might be revitalized and refocused through a professional relationship.

This internally competitive environment and culture of the academy is itself a barrier to collaborative practices, separating the very colleagues who are nearby and could be most available. In a humorous yet poignant commentary on the destructive nature of internal competition within departments and other units of the academy, geneticist Mike Ashburner declares: “Biologists would rather share their toothbrush than share a gene name (Pearson, 2001)” (as cited in Walsh & Kahn, 2010, p. 3).

Reward systems. The faculty reward system, influenced by the German university model, holds the individual and accomplishments of individual faculty as the most significant unit of work worthy of attention. Collaborative scholarship and contributions to collective academic processes and work, such as interdisciplinary programs, are not given much notice or credence (Diamond, 2002; Kezar & Lester, 2009; Lattuca, 2001).

In a study of a collaborative interdisciplinary initiative at Harvard, Bohen and Stiles (1998) report finding that faculty who participate in collaborative programs most often end up adding these responsibilities on top of their regular academic duties. Thus the reward structure tends to ignore the contribution of faculty in collaborative initiatives, and in fact, requires them to engage in extra effort to participate in collaborative work. Academic rewards and recognition systems, then, often seem to actively work against a bigger sense of purpose and connection to the institution and colleagues.

Braxton and Del Favero (2000) lament the consequences of the German university model, saying, “the work of the modern professor commonly separates the research and teaching roles, affording research the number one position in a status hierarchy that is reinforced by well-ensconced faculty reward systems (p. 63). Based on extensive study of faculty compensation and motivation, Fairweather (1996) reports: "*Faculty* are judged individually on their achievements; departments or other units are judged not by a measure of larger good but by the sum of the performance by individual faculty" (p. 205). Fairweather's research found that throughout the academy, teaching was associated with either a negative or neutral factor in determining faculty pay. He further observes: "For faculty in 4-year colleges and universities, the more time spent on teaching and instruction, the lower the basic salary" (p. 53).

Hierarchical structures. The current administrative structures of the academy, as with other institutions, developed as a response to the environment and conditions of that time. Kezar and Lester (2009) explain what is easier to see in hindsight:

> Colleges and universities developed complex administrative structures during the twentieth century. They followed the example of business and corporations of the time, which created increasingly vertical organizations shaped by command-and-control leadership and standard policies and procedures to dictate behavior and ensure uniformity of activities (Knefelkamp, 1991; Schroeder, 1999a, 1999b; Thompson, 1965). Bureaucratic and hierarchical structures limit communication flow across the organization by making horizontal work more difficult as people communicate and interact less often. (p. 29)

A common rationale for promoting collaboration and teams in any organization involves the success of collaborative practices at creating and sustaining innovation. Kezar and Lester (2009) explain: "Yet, multiple studies demonstrate that bureaucratic and hierarchical organizations reinforce compliance, and strict adherence to policies and procedures. In essence, they encourage and maintain what constitutes the routine, and can even be relatively hostile to innovation and change. (Austin, 2000; Barringer &

Harrison, 2000; Googins & Rochlin, 2000; Kanter, 1996; Senge, 1990)" (as cited in Kezar & Lester, 2009, pp. 9–10).

Peter Senge (1996) observes: "When genuine commitment is needed, hierarchical authority becomes problematic. . . . Hierarchical authority, as it has been used traditionally in Western management, tends to evoke compliance, not foster commitment. . . . Yet there is no substitute for commitment in bringing about deep change" (pp. 43-44). Sikes, Schlesinger, and Seashore (1974) make a similar argument for a higher education milieu, stating: "Educational institutions have many blocks to innovation and creativity typical of bureaucracies. A key block is that schools prize order, rationality, predictability, and impersonal modes of operating. . . . Change to some degree runs counter to orderliness and predictability." (p. 39).

Clash between cultures. Many scholars have noted the dissimilar cultures of the faculty and administrators in higher education generally, each with perspectives and priorities that reflect very different worldviews (A. Cohen, 1998; Kezar & Lester, 2009; Rice et al., 2000). Such different, sometimes adversarial cultures need not, but can discourage collaboration.

In their exhaustive research on faculty work, Blackburn and Lawrence (1995) note, "People need to have a sense of ownership and to feel in control of choices, options, and opportunities—that is, a sense of self-efficacy" (p. 86). The authors report that a sense of self-efficacy has at least two key dimensions: one's competence and one's ability to influence outcomes. Through their research, Blackburn and Lawrence found that faculty and administrators in higher education frequently share an unflattering perception of each other. Each group—whether faculty or administrators—judge themselves as competent, yet with insufficient influence over their own areas of responsibility. In their view of each other, both groups generally hold the other group to be incompetent, yet with significant influence over the system. Table 2.5 represents this relationship described by Blackburn and Lawrence (1995, p. 87).

Table 2.5

Perceptions of Role Efficacy in Higher Ed.

Perceptions of Efficacy	**Competence**	**Influence**
Faculty view Self	Yes	No
Faculty view of Administrators	No	Yes
Administrator view of Faculty	No	Yes
Administrator view of Self	Yes	No

Note. Adapted from Blackburn and Lawrence (1995, p. 87).

The degree to which these perceptions translate into actual policies and practices, influenced by what Argyris (1993) calls a "theory-in-use" can be frustrating and even tragic – for both administrators and faculty. The striking nature of the results involves their mirror image. They are the same responses, only reversed, and this suggests that a deeply charged paradox has the whole of the academy in its grip. Clearly, the relationship between faculty and administrators matter, it's just that it is often perceived in mutually negative terms. Wergin (2003) underscores what is at stake:

> Faculty who work for a collective rather than a private good increase their political clout. It's hard to imagine a culture more disempowering of faculty, one that leaves them in a weaker position in the face of external threats, than the one we have. As long as faculty members are individual agents, responsible only to themselves, they will have little power as a group. Thus, shifting the focus from "my work to our work" (Rice, 1996), is not only good for the institution, it's also in the best interests of the faculty. (p. 46)

Additional barriers to collaboration. A few additional barriers to faculty collaboration not mentioned by Kezar and Lester (2009), but addressed in the literature, including: (a) individualism, (b) competition and its impact ton social capital, and (c) knowledge of change.

Individualism. A central factor connecting all of the barriers involves the individualistic academic culture. Individualism is, of course, a powerful tradition in the academy, and it has contributed a great deal to the success of American higher education. Nevertheless, the detrimental impact of a focus on the individual comes up again and again in the literature. It is a common theme discussed by Kezar and Lester (2009), but it simply goes unnamed as a specific barrier to collaboration.

Other scholars do mention it, however. Wergin (2003) cites “faculty individualism” as an impediment to collaboration in the academy. Wergin notes faculty members tend to be introverted, adding: “The freedom and flexibility we enjoy attracts those who, in Bennett’s words, are ‘already disposed to be insistent individualists’ (1998, p. 19), and these dispositions are reinforced by graduate school norms” (p. 42). To illustrate the point, Wergin refers to a 1997 UCLA study of a broad sample of faculty at a cross section of institutions. Participants were asked to identify a valued colleague and then to select from a list of descriptors characterizing that person. Three descriptors were selected by over 80% of the respondents: “dedicated,” “ambitious,” and “competitive.” In contrast, 56% of the respondents chose “team player,” as a valued characteristic (Wergin, 2003, pp. 43–44).

Lucas (2000) adds: “Faculty have not been socialized to be team players. When such conditions exist, decisions made by individual entrepreneurs can cause the department to fragment or to generate the kind of plans and projects that will crumble when stronger factions intervene" (p. 2). Moreover, Lucas notes that this lack of socialization and training in collaboration has a compounding effect since faculty leadership is drawn from the same faculty ranks.

Competition and social capital. Internal competition within any organization can be extremely destructive and wasteful. Levi (2007) observes: "Competition between organizations can help improve productivity (Hayes, 1997). Competitors provide motivating goals and feedback about performance. However, competition inside an organization can be devastating" (p. 80). Internal competition, also works against the kind of cohesion that boosts individual and collective commitment and productivity (Campbell, 2006; Putnam, 2000: Robbins & Finley, 2000). Robbins and Finley (2000) add:

> There is no such thing as friendly competition. Competition . . . is essentially a win/lose proposition . . . Teaming, by definition, looks to competition's opposite—collaboration. Collaboration assumes that all sides can win; not on every point of every agenda; but enough of a win on the important points, so that staying together as a team remains mutually reinforcing and profitable to all. . . . The problem with unhealthy, over-the-top competition is that it creates such a toxic, trust-deficient atmosphere…. It promotes results exactly opposite to what teams are capable of achieving. (pp. 130-131)

In *Bowling Alone* (2000), Robert Putnam introduces a related concept: "social capital." Putnam takes the economic concept of capital and shifts the idea to social situations. He identifies this as social capital, noting that social networks and their various interconnections have real value. Social capital affects the productivity of people and groups, and generates trust and norms of reciprocity. It is created and accumulates when people participate in social networks. A community with many interconnecting social networks is rich in social capital (Campbell, 2006).

Ineffective dialogue and interactions consume social capital, confidence and trust, and unfortunately, regular meetings and other patterns of interaction in most organizations are known for their tedious nature rather than for clarity and thoughtful deliberations. In a comment that must resonate with many faculty members, Campbell (2006) explains: “People leave such a meeting feeling that there is no further value in that particular system. . . . It also develops an unwillingness to participate in that network again, thereby further diminishing the social capital of the community” (p. 48).

Knowledge of change. Research by Sikes et al. (1974) suggests that faculty and the academy generally lack a coherent understanding of the dynamics of collaboration and change. In the early 1970s, the authors explored collaboration through a five year action research project involving eight institutions, each undertaking an initiative to promote collaboration on their campuses. If there is generally little clarity about the dynamics of change or experience with collaboration among faculty members, this could contribute to substantial frustration whenever they seek to influence change within their departments, institutions, or elsewhere. The authors identify several barriers to collaboration and change that seem especially relevant in academic settings, including:

(a) The difficult role of the change agent.

There is a natural tension between those who desire and press for change and those who are responsible for maintaining established power.

(b) Change-oriented people are generally not in the main stream.

Change-oriented people tend to be outside the institutional main stream. In the academy, these are often untenured faculty or those with relatively little authority.

(c) The lack of experience with change-oriented concepts and skills.

Members do not know effective organizational change strategies or have the necessary skills to implement them. This means they tend to use, zero-sum approaches—when they are neither inherent nor necessary (Sikes et al., 1974).

Uncertainty and change

According to an American Association for Higher Education (AAHE) report: *Powerful Partnerships: A Shared Responsibility for Learning*, "People collaborate when the job they face is too big, is too urgent, or requires too much knowledge for one person or group to do alone" (American Association for Higher Education, 1998). With the looming global environmental crisis—to pick just one systemic challenge—something too big and urgent seems to be upon us, requiring knowledge beyond the capacity of any one individual, and requiring the collective understanding and action of many more of us. Chen et al. (2001) observe:

> We live in a world where the question of what is important to know is not easily answered and where the amount of knowledge at least theoretically available to us continues to expand at a phenomenal rate: that is, in a world where such authority is fleeting. . . . No thoughtful faculty person can know enough about what there is to know to make final claims about that knowledge. (p. 330)

Both higher education and society generally are experiencing waves of change. The metaphor, "permanent whitewater," coined by Peter Vaill (1996) comes to mind as a useful description of the often unexpected changes and the sometimes disruptive nature of their consequences. The pace and amount of change, suggests Vaill, makes precise planning and certainty almost untenable. For those of us expecting a more predictable, orderly life and work routine, this newfound experience of ongoing perturbation, even chaos, is unsettling on many levels. Bergquist and Pawlak (2008) add: "Our emerging postmodern era is perhaps best described as an *edgy* experience: we are poised on the edge of both chaos and order. We know something will come, yet do not know exactly what form the *new* will take" (p. 5).

It seems clear that in this postmodern society, uncertainty is commonplace and what constitutes reality is more malleable than most of us can comfortably conceive. This is a particularly challenging shift for the academy and for many faculty members, since academic tradition and faculty culture are so embedded in Western, "technical rationalism" and a mechanistic paradigm valuing predictability, individuality and control. In a fundamental sense, such uncertainty calls into question much of what and how we in the academy know anything to be "true," valid or applicable.

In a profound and succinct insight, Heifetz and Linsky (2002), observe: "People do not resist change, per se. People resist loss" (p.11). With the changes in society and the academy, the very identity of many of us—including faculty—is challenged. And given the fragmented and individualistic culture of the academy, faculty members are apt to find themselves facing this profoundly disturbing possibility alone. Who wouldn't resist that? Heifetz, Grashow, and Linsky (2009) further explains: "The people you are asking to make changes experience your initiative as a threat to something they value" (p. 96). Beyond this individual experience of disorientation and dislocation, moreover, the whole profession and institution of higher education could be well served by a collective effort to understand and to determine how to move forward together.

Wheatley (2007) describes "The Great Paradox," pointing out, "It is possible to prepare for the future without knowing what it will be. The primary way to prepare for the unknown is to attend to the quality of our relationships" (p. 117). Through strong, trusting relationships, then, Wheatley suggests that when challenges do arise, we grow more capable of understanding each other and working together productively. Senge, Scharmer, Jaworski, and Flowers (2004) add: “People often believe that you need to know how to do something before you can do it. If this were literally true, there would be little genuine innovation” (p. 153). The authors continue:

> An alternative view is that the creative process is actually a learning process, and the best we can possibly have at the outset is a hypothesis or tentative idea about what will be required to succeed. Robert Fritz characterizes the essence of the creative process as “create and adjust.” We learn how to do something truly new only through doing it, then adjusting. (p. 153)

When considering systems under stress, Ronald Heifetz (1994) makes a distinction between what he calls “technical” and “adaptive challenges.” Technical challenges involve known challenges for which a solution or response is already available or foreseeable. Adaptive Challenges involve challenges for which there are literally no known solutions, or more problematically, for which a challenge is not even perceived and therefore no solution or response is even being sought. For Heifetz (1994), all persistent, intransigent problems are invariably adaptive challenges of some kind. Moreover, no one person has enough insight or knowledge to either adequately identify the issue(s) or to recommend a response. Only the input and contributions of many stakeholders, particularly those who are closest to the problem, can effectively deal with such challenges (Heifetz, 1994; Heifetz & Linsky, 2002).

The academy should be almost uniquely situated to discover and address significant, adaptive challenges. But adaptive challenges inherently require some form of collaboration and collective dialogue to explore the challenges and to find solutions or responses—together. The individualistic culture of the academy, and its further separation into different disciplines and discourse communities severely hampers its ability to actually put this promise into practice. It's not that the academy is without examples of collaborative work—witness the increasing research and publication of findings with multiple authors. But the dominant academic culture, and its fundamental assumptions of what constitute rigor, best practice, demonstration of professional competence, and more, are all steeped in powerful traditions celebrating the individual and the individual mind. These are rich traditions, of course. And we must engage in them consciously and critically, from a reflective stance rather than a reactive one.

Stephen P. Brookfield (1995) might advise that the academy engage in a reflective process, to "focus on hunting assumptions" (p. 2). In *Becoming a Critically Reflective Teacher,* he explains:

> In many ways, we *are* our assumptions. Assumptions give meaning and purpose to who we are and what we do. Becoming aware of the implicit assumptions that frame how we think and act is one of the most challenging intellectual puzzles we face in our lives. It is also something we instinctively resist, for fear of what we might discover. (p. 2)

Wheatley and Rogers (2007) advise that the best response when living systems are under stress is to seek to "connect it to more of itself," adding, "When a system is failing . . . the solution is always to bring the system together so that it can learn more about itself from itself" (p. 93). The implications are huge and unavoidable. If we wish for the academy and our own profession to remain vital and relevant, whatever answers there are to be found, we faculty are going to need to find them together. During a joint interview with Myles Horton, Paulo Freire paraphrases the Spanish poet, Antonio Machado, observing: "We make the road by walking" (Horton & Freire, 1990, p. 6). Moreover, Freire urges that it is time to get going, saying: "I am convinced that in order for us to create something, we have to start creating. . . . If you don't have any kind of dream I am sure that it's impossible to create something" (Horton & Freire, 1990, p. 56).

Perhaps we in the academy have been socially constructing that future together, by slowly, gingerly taking a few collaborative steps down a much longer road. Senge (2000) declares: "No question is more germane to any institution of higher education than, 'Are we preparing students for the future they will live in or the past we have lived through?'" (p. 275). Answering his own question, Senge (2000) states: "In a nutshell, universities and colleges have become the preeminent *knowing institutions* in a world that increasingly favors *learning institutions*" (p. 276).

As if responding to Senge, Walsh and Kahn (2010) explain:

> Academic collaboration . . . is necessarily epistemological in its implications. But, . . . collaborative work is—in the most generous sense—*pedagogical* in character. For those involved in a collaborative venture will, *ipso facto*, learn from each other; and so, tacitly, will teach each other. (pp. xvii-xviii)

In the final chapter: "Scholarship and Community," of Boyer's (1990) *Scholarship Reconsidered: Priorities of the Professoriate*, Boyer concludes:

> One last point. This report is focused largely on faculty members, as *individuals*. But professors, to be fully effective, cannot work continuously in isolation. It is toward a *shared* vision of intellectual and social possibilities—a community of scholars—that the four dimensions of academic endeavor should lead. In the end, scholarship at its best should bring faculty together. (p. 80)

More recently, Boyer's colleague, R. Eugene Rice, predicts:

> Clearly, although the profession values independence and autonomy, it will have to move toward much greater collaboration and cooperation. Evaluation processes and reward systems will need to shift attention from individual performance to the achievement of departments and the shared contributions of more comprehensive units. (O'Meara & Rice, 2005, p. 307)

Summary

An uncertain, yet perhaps compelling picture emerges from the literature on faculty collaboration and related topics. The literature about collaboration and teams generally demonstrates the "collaborative advantage" of teams and other forms of collaboration in helping business and other institutions navigate an ever-changing, even chaotic, competitive environment. Teams have proven to be highly adaptable and when well conceived and supported, they are capable of finding many innovative responses to the complex challenges of our times.

Consensus in the literature indicates that the forces that contributed to the dramatic shift toward collaborative structures and practices in for-profit businesses have also begun to influence higher education. Calls for reform and change in higher education are becoming routine, and a significant number of scholars have suggested greater collaboration generally—and among faculty specifically—as a critical element of any change.

Perhaps surprisingly, the literature does not reflect agreement on whether faculty collaboration is commonplace. For example, Walsh and Kahn (2010) herald the arrival of the "social academy" or "collaborative university" to signify integration of collaborative practices into faculty work, while at almost the same moment, Kezar and Lester (2009) declare: "collaboration is not widespread in the academy" (p. 4). At the very least, collaboration seems to be an uneven phenomenon in higher education.

It's not that scholars don't know what constitutes collaboration or teams – witness the rich scholarship about teams and what makes them work (or not) in the private sector. But the literature reveals a mixed message about the practices of collaboration and the existence of teams in a faculty context. Making that point, Massy (2003) observes: “Some may argue that universities already have too many teams—except that we call them ‘committees’” (p. 182). That such confusion might exist speaks to the “hollow collegiality” about which Massy et al. (1994) alert us through an important article in *Change*.

Much of the literature advocates for more collaboration among faculty while also suggesting that the barriers are substantial. In the process, the faculty culture is almost universally described as highly individualistic and autonomous in nature. After a study of faculty motivations, Massy et al. (1994) declare: “Overwhelmingly, our respondents identified a central reality of academic life: faculty work alone” (p. 12).

The challenge tends to be framed as if autonomy and collaboration are mutually exclusive – and the default emphasis is on autonomy. While anyone who has experience in the academy can understand this perspective, the reality is also more complex. Wergin (2003) points out that research repeatedly reveals the two most valued motivations for faculty involve professional autonomy and involvement with a community of peers. He and other scholars (Gappa et al., 2007) note the disappointment new faculty experience as they discover that they are expected to work alone, producing knowledge without significant interaction with a scholarly community. Swingen (1999) adds that these two motives,

> form an interesting paradox—the desire for autonomy and the desire to belong to “a community of scholars.” The contradictory promise of the two objectives poses an interesting dilemma (Massy, Wilger, &, 1994)—the challenge of uniting personal desire for independence with “belonging” needs. (p. 2)

Though there are clearly sincere efforts to bring collaboration into higher education, so far it could seem that the academy’s fate is locked in a system increasingly celebrating individual scholarship, and fragmented expertise, while the world—indeed learning itself—increasingly requires integrative, collaborative approaches.

However, in exploring the factors motivating scholars who participate in interdisciplinary work, Bohen and Stiles (1998) discovered a latent reservoir of commitment to a scholarly community. The authors report:

> Often present among well-established scholars is a deep hunger for ongoing learning with known colleagues in the same or similar fields and with those from more distant fields. This is a yearning not just for another opportunity to defend or expound one's well-honed individual knowledge or acknowledged expertise, but a chance to create a forum in which new ideas can be explored and questions expressed—one in which even "dumb" or naïve questions can be posed. This opportunity perhaps represents a return to the original motivation that many individuals had for becoming scholars, that of actually enjoying and thriving in circles of inspired debate and learning. (p. 45)

Less experienced scholars have a similar, deep yearning for the experience of a supportive, vibrant scholarly community, as numerous studies confirm (Austin, 2002; Gappa et al., 2007). Though important and often inspiring, efforts to create opportunities for collaboration have been limited and tend to be found at the academic periphery. Kezar and Lester (2009) explain: "Campuses across the country have attempted to develop a host of initiatives (service learning, learning communities) to improve education without taking on the challenge of reorganizing, often only to find these entrepreneurial efforts thwarted by traditional structures and processes" (p. 22). Gergen (1994) bluntly argues:

> Western tradition is deeply committed to a view of the self as an independent or self-contained unit. As long as this view is sustained, traditional problems of epistemology and social knowledge will remain unsolved (and insoluble). And the broad social practices in which this conception is lodged will remain unchallenged. (p. 210)

Constructionist scholars might remind those of us in the academy that these are challenges of our own making. They are socially constructed. The faculty and the academy need not be limited to choices of enjoying either autonomy or collaboration with colleagues. And higher educational institutions need not create the conditions and structures that reinforce this kind of soul-wrenching choice. Berger and Luckmann (1966) remind us of a paradox: we are “capable of producing a world” that we then experience “as something other than a human product” (p. 61).

The literature reveals an ongoing tension between faculty values regarding their professional, intellectual autonomy and their membership in a peer community. But the literature tends to stop there. Mention of paradoxes or dialectical tensions are made, but again, they tend not to be studied as such. Instead, the literature focuses on one element of the dialectic or another—or both serially. But the *relationship* involving the two elements of a paradox constituting the essential nature of that paradox (K. K. Smith & Berg, 1997) goes unexplored as a phenomenon in its own right. Therefore resolution (or synthesis) also remains unrealized.

Inspiration from K. K. Smith and Berg’s (1997) work about paradox and groups may be useful here. As explained by the authors, the Paradox of Dependence deals with the relationship between group members’ sense of dependence (on the group) and independence (from the group). The authors observe that the way forward cannot involve attempting to remove or negate one of the elements. Instead, the resolution involves a synthesis of both dependence and independence, and one result could be interdependence—a completely different state. In dialectic terms, thesis and antithesis become synthesis and in this way, the tension of the paradox can be healed.

The implications and lessons to be drawn from the Paradox of Dependence, among others, are of great importance to this study. For instance, attempts to bring about more faculty collaboration at the expense of faculty autonomy, is a strategy doomed to failure. Rather, because for the academy, autonomy and a collaborative community exist in a dialectic, the more productive strategy is to understand both concepts in a dynamic relationship. How faculty conceive of and experience this relationship could offer rich new conceptual roads to walk. Learning more about these perceptions and experiences involving autonomy and collaboration constituted the intention of the remaining elements of this dissertation.

Chapter III: Methodology

Multiple Case Study

The research method for this dissertation was designed to facilitate exploration of the nature of faculty collaboration, with special attention to how faculty members experience and make meaning of the dynamic relationship between professional autonomy and collaborative engagement with peers. Among other consequences, the ways in which this often paradoxical relationship is understood by faculty members—both individually and collectively—likely has a significant impact on whether and how collaboration is practiced in the academy.

To better understand the relationship in a range of institutional settings, a multiple case study was used, involving four different academic units, in three institutions. "Case studies are the preferred strategy," according to Robert K. Yin (2003), "when 'how' or 'why' questions are being posed, when the investigator has little control over events, and when the focus is on a contemporary phenomenon within some real-life context (p. 1). Moreover, observes Yin, "A case study is an empirical inquiry that . . . investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, especially when . . . boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident" (p. 13).

For the purposes of this study, *professional autonomy* refers to the freedom to pursue intellectual interests and determine one's own academic path. *Collaboration* refers to working with others toward a common goal. Though professional autonomy and collaboration are dimensions of faculty life that can be perceived as inconsistent, contradictory, and even mutually exclusive, they need not be framed—or socially constructed—as such. In practice, faculty members must engage in relationships that incorporate both autonomy and collaboration simultaneously.

Knowledge Claims

The design of this study was informed by a conceptual perspective called constructionism. For constructionist scholars, knowledge and meaning are socially constructed. In circumstances involving social systems, Michael Crotty (1998) explains: "meaning is not discovered but constructed" (p. 42). Crotty adds: "Meanings are constructed by human beings as they engage with the world they are interpreting" (p. 43).

Constructionism is more fully described in Chapter II of this dissertation. In brief, social construction of meaning is an ongoing process, so that meaning is formed, reinforced, and reformed by social interactions in which we all engage. These concepts apply to the larger society and the academy generally, as well as to faculty culture specifically. Thus, assumptions and behaviors related to faculty motivations for engaging in scholarly work, for choosing to collaborate or to work independently, for determining what is important to study and in what way, and the like—all are embedded in a context that is socially constructed. Moreover, though the socially constructed assumptions and behaviors of any context may be sustained over time, they remain fundamentally and forever mutable and unfixed.

Strategy of Inquiry

In keeping with a constructionist approach, the instrument and process of data collection was designed to explore the relationship of professional autonomy and collaboration through the perspective of participating faculty members. Individual, one-hour interviews were scheduled with faculty members within the four identified departments. A simple interview format was developed which provided participants with the opportunity to express their experience of the phenomenon of study as both a numeric rating (on a 10-point scale) and through qualitative responses to a few open-ended questions. Interviews were voluntary, an hour in duration, conducted in-person, and held within the office of the participating faculty member.

As with any study, there were limitations to be considered, and efforts were made in the design and conduct of the study to mitigate those limitations as much as possible. For instance, the four sites chosen represented a relatively broad range of institutional types and disciplines, yet the faculty experience within the academy is too complex and varied to be fully captured through a single study of this kind, which in any case best explores the phenomenon within the context of a unit.   Further, the seeming differences of the participating departments may nevertheless obscure a certain commonality, as the agreement to participate in the study may suggest some already existing interest in collaboration within each academic unit.

Also, while most of the available faculty members in each unit chose to participate in the interviews, a few were on leave, on assignment elsewhere, or they simply preferred not to participate. Some perspectives, then, might be missing from the story of each department. However, the nature of the interviews allowed participants wide latitude, and they often spoke of the work of their absent colleagues. This meant, by and large, that faculty members who did not participate in interviews were nevertheless reflected in the comments of peers who did. Moreover, the interviews in each unit achieved a point of saturation so that they began to sound familiar, to include overlapping themes, and to fit into already discernable patterns.

Academic unit as the bounded system. Creswell (2007) suggests a case study approach, "when the inquirer has clearly identifiable cases with boundaries and seeks to provide an in-depth understanding of the cases or a comparison of several cases" (p. 74). McMillan and Wergin (2010) add that case studies should, "clearly define the boundaries of the subject and its contents" (p. 92).

A department or similar organizational unit was chosen as the unit of study since that is where faculty institutional life is most regularly centered. Departments offer opportunities for collaboration and/or have a culture that either supports or discourages collaboration. This approach is in keeping with Stake's (2006) recommendation that case studies require an "entity" or location in which to be grounded, since phenomena, functions or activities, "lack the specificity, the organic character, to be maximally useful for case study" (p. 2). Stake (2006) adds:

> Qualitative understanding of a case requires experiencing the activity of the case as it occurs in its contexts and in its particular situation. The situation is expected to shape the activity, as well as the experiencing and the interpretation of the activity. In choosing a case, we almost always choose to study its situation. (p. 2)

Participating sites. Four sites were chosen for focused study. The unit of inquiry—or "bounded system"—was at the academic department (or unit) level of three different institutions of higher education. The sites were chosen to provide as much diversity of institutional types, disciplines and regions as could reasonably be accomplished. In addition to the four sites, conversations with representatives of several other institutions were initiated in case backup sites were necessary. These conversations are not part of the record of the cases, but they did provide useful context. The four sites are identified in Table 3.1 using names assigned for the study.

Table 3.1

Study Sites

Institutional "Name"	**Institution Type**	**Unit "Name" & Type**
Mid Atlantic	R1 State University	Social Science Dept.
Northeast Liberal Arts	Private College	Humanities Dept.
Northeast Liberal Arts	Private College	Natural Science Dept.
Midwest Regional	State Regional Comprehensive	School of Professional Studies

The phenomenon of study: The quintain. When a study involves multiple cases, as in this dissertation, Stake (2006) notes that the chosen cases should be "categorically bound together" (p. 6), in some fashion. Stake's recommended approach is to identify and emphasize what he calls a quintain, pronounced kwin' ton. Stake explains that a quintain: "is an object or phenomenon or condition to be studied—a target, but not a bull's eye. In multicase study, it is the target collection" (2006, p. 6). For Stake, the research starts with the quintain. He explains:

> To understand it better, we study some of its single cases—its sites or manifestations. But it is the quintain we seek to understand. We study what is similar and different about the cases in order to understand the quintain better. . . . The ultimate question shifts from "What helps us understand the case?" toward "What helps us understand the quintain?" (p. 6)

After gathering data through interviews for this study, each case was first analyzed and understood in its own right, from a close study of its own particular context. Stake (2006) explains:

> If the study is designed as a qualitative multicase study, then the individual cases should be studied to learn about their self-centering, complexity, and situational uniqueness. Thus each case is to be understood in depth, giving little immediate attention to the quintain. (pp. 6-7)

Just as the phenomenon studied can seem paradoxical, so too may multicase research. Stake (2006) refers to the "case-quantain dialectic" (p. 39) as a kind of back-and-forth tension between the need to emphasize the case and the whole. He notes:

> Within a multicase project, the study of individual cases will often not be organized around the multicase research question. To some extent, sometimes entirely, each case gets organized and studied separately around research questions of its own. A local orientation, tending carefully to particular sites and activities, risks paying too little attention to what binds the cases together but it is an important step for relating the quintain to the situationality of the individual cases. (p. 9)

The quintain is best understood, says Stake (2006), when it is studied in circumstances that highlight differences in addition to similarities. He maintains:

> One primary focus within the case studies that make up a multicase study will be the characterization of the program or phenomenon. That is, we seek a better description of the quintain. But the characterization will be seen differently in different situations. Therefore, one of the most important tasks for the multicase researcher is to show how the program or phenomenon appears in different contexts. (p. 27)

Data Collection

Individual interviews. The interviews took place in the offices of individual faculty members, or wherever the interviewee preferred to meet in a few instances. The study purpose, interview process, and intended use of the data were shared with faculty members before beginning the formal interview. Faculty interviewees were informed that participation was optional and could be discontinued at any moment.

Each interview was scheduled for a full hour. The interview protocol was used to provide consistent structure, though additional probe questions were also used to follow up on emerging themes. The protocol was designed with only a few questions (both scaled and open-ended) and provided an opportunity to observe how faculty members make meaning of the creative tension found in the relationship of professional autonomy and collaboration. See Figure 3.1 for a copy of the interview protocol.

Faculty Interview Script
(face-to-face interview)

1a. On a scale of 1 to 10 (1 = low & 10 = high), rate the current level of your experience of professional autonomy within this department.
    b. What made you rate the experience as high as you did?
    c. What kept you from rating it higher?

2a. On a scale of 1 to 10 (1 = low & 10 = high), rate the current level of your experience of a collaboration within this department.
    b. What made you rate the experience as high as you did?
    c. What kept you from rating it higher?

3a. On a scale of 1 to 10 (1 = low & 10 = high), rate the level of professional autonomy that you would like to experience within this department.
    b. What makes you rate it ______ and not ____(1a)___?

4a. On a scale of 1 to 10 (1 = low & 10 = high), rate the level of a collaboration that you would like to experience within this department.
    b. What makes you rate it ______ and not ____(2a)___?

5. What would it take to move from ___(1a)____ to ___(3a)___?

6. What would it take to move from ___(2a)____ to ___(4a)___?

Figure 3.1. Script for Faculty Interviews.

The interviews were recorded by hand-written notes. No electronic copies of the conversations were recorded. The decision to forgo an electronic record of the interviews was grounded in four concepts:

1) The format was intended to convey informality and to put faculty interviewees at ease, without the concerns that can come with video or digital recording.

2) The resulting record could provide the faculty participant with an opportunity to reflect upon the topic and then share additional information.

3) I have experience taking notes in this way, and the format makes it easy to add interviewer observations and impressions within the context of the notes.

4) After an interview is completed, reflections or field notes can be added at the end of the handwritten notes, providing a complete picture and coherent information.

Furthermore, I anticipated that I wouldn't be able to establish a connection with most of the faculty members prior to meeting them. Because the topic of faculty collaboration and the tension embedded in the quintain could tap into uncomfortable feelings, a more conversational approach seemed appropriate to promote a sense of ease and encourage greater introspection and candor.

In fact, in establishing sites for the study, my initial interactions with a few faculty members suggested that topics related to collaboration often engender strong reactions, including positive interest but also real anxiety. Beyond any tension around the topic itself, perhaps many faculty members are by training and experience more familiar and comfortable with being on the other side of the "subject – object" research relationship.

Moreover, taking notes during an interview provided an unobtrusive means to include my observations and thoughts as the interview was taking place. Such data and meta-cognitive analysis is otherwise prone to being lost in the ongoing flow of information and conversation of a single interview, and this seems even more likely with a series of interviews over a relatively short period of time.

At the conclusion of the interview, I told each participating faculty member that I would send them a copy of the interview record, and they were free to respond with corrections or additional comments. A few were interested in having a copy, and many seemed to think of receiving (and commenting on) the record as just more work. However, when the additional interaction took place, it helped ensure the accuracy of my notes, and it provided yet another point of contact with faculty members to allow them to reflect on the issues and for me to learn more about them and their unit. Peter Ewell (2004) notes that:

> Cognitive science tells us that individual learners must create their own cognitive maps of any situation before they have mastered it sufficiently enough to act. Members of a campus community are no different. They require reflective, collective opportunities to make sense of provided management information-to take values and contexts visibly into account-before they can bring forth sound decisions. (p. 4)

Additional data collection. The study explored the experience and worldview of faculty within their own contextual working environments. Though the one-on-one interviews with faculty members were the primary focus of data collection, other opportunities for gathering information presented themselves in ways specific to each case and its environment. Additional sources of information and evidence included:

(a) observations of faculty interactions and the unit environment,

(b) internal documentation of faculty routines, practices and culture,

(c) background conversations with key administrators,

(d) department and individual faculty members' web pages,

(e) publication and scholarship patterns of faculty members,

(f) official course, curriculum and program descriptions, and

(g) other site-specific data and practices.

My visit to each campus and department also provided rich opportunities for observing the larger environment and context in which each case was situated. These observations did prove to be informative, and I try to convey that in describing and analyzing each case, at least to the extent that seems useful to the reader.

Data Analysis

Once the data collection was completed for a given site, a record of each interview was typed up. Interview responses were organized into broad themes for further analysis, and a list of predominant themes and impressions was created. A scoring grid was constructed to code all narrative response against the key themes. This provided a ready, visible means for determining the frequency and relative emphasis of responses. It also provided an opportunity to check if initial group of themes might need to be revised. Bresciani, Zelna, and Anderson (2004) note: "In open coding, you are trying to identify themes and sub-themes within the data. This can be an overwhelming task at first. However, it is quite rewarding as you watch themes develop" (p. 66).

In interpreting these narrative responses from the survey, I took an approach to qualitative data analysis informed by the work of Bogdan and Biklen (1998), Bresciani et al. (2004), and Stake (2006). Bogdan and Biklen (1998) write:

> The process of data analysis is like a funnel: Things are open at the beginning (or top) and more directed and specific at the bottom. The qualitative researcher plans to use part of the study to learn what the important questions are. He or she does not assume that enough is known to recognize important concerns before undertaking research. (p. 7)

Briefly, the coding process for each site involved the following:

- Read the record from each interview; jot down ideas.
- After reviewing all data from a site, consider "what is this about?"

- Make a list of preliminary themes emerging from the data.
- Develop a specific code for each theme.
- Read through interviews again, and enter codes next to comments.
- Review coding; recode as necessary for better clarity.
- Identify representative quotes for themes.
- Develop short descriptions of key themes.
- Recheck that quotes represent themes.
- Consider whether other themes are now evident; code and include descriptions.

The data analysis process included an auditor to ensure that there were two perspectives checking and cross-checking assumptions and perceptions of meaning. Further explanation of this auditor role can be found in the discussion of researcher bias later in this chapter.

Once the interviews were typed up and the comments analyzed preliminarily, the numeric ratings of current and preferred experiences of professional autonomy and collaboration that came from the interviews were addressed. Simple descriptive statistics were used to identify patterns. In addition, the scores were plotted on a scatter diagram to help illustrate both the individual and collective experience of the quntain in the present, as well as a preferred relationship of professional autonomy and collaboration in the future. At this point, the qualitative themes and ratings (both scores and plotted diagrams) for a particular unit, were reviewed to see how they compared and whether new questions or insights had emerged within the context of the unit.

Case reports. Once the coding was completed for each individual case, a report was developed to capture the findings in a coherent whole that represents the specific nature of the case. Robert E. Stake (2006) reminds:

> The main reason for doing single-case study research often gets mangled in a cross-case analysis. The case researcher has tried to display the unique vitality of each case, noting its particular situation and how the context influences the experience of the program or phenomenon. (p. 39)

Stake (2006) acknowledges that the cases may have much similarity, but it is the differences that he argues should be emphasized more. He notes that this creates a kind of dialectical dilemma, as an overall theme or premise must exist for the studies in the first place, but the findings of each case are particular to the case in question and are therefore not readily generalized.

Once all cases were completed and analysis concluded, the entire data set was gathered and the process of conducting a cross-case analysis began. Once again, Stake's (2006) text served as a guide, along with his website, which helpfully provided examples of forms that can assist in the sorting of data and subsequent analysis for individual and multicase analysis and reporting. Stake notes that the cross-case analysis should seek to convey the most important findings from each case. These are combined to create assertions, and though Stake acknowledges that some key findings may be "context-bound" within a specific case, there can also be an overall, evidence-based assertion that, while not suitable for a court of law, is "persuasive to critical friends" (p. 41).

The idea is to gain a sense of the "overall gestalt," as Jon Wergin has described it (Personal Communications, September 30, 2009). These insights were then included in the dissertation.

Validity. Maxwell (2005) identifies eight common and effective means of reducing threats to validity in qualitative research, termed a “validity test checklist.” Of these eight elements, all but the first (intense, long-term involvement) were employed in some fashion in this case study. I have underlined those elements designed directly into the data collection and analysis process for this dissertation. In his checklist, Maxwell (2005) suggests consideration and use of the following approaches when engaging in qualitative research:

1) intense, long-term involvement
2) “rich” data (provides a “full and revealing picture).
3) Respondent validation (member checks)
4) Intervention
5) Searching for discrepant evidence and negative cases
6) Triangulation
7) Quasi-statistics (use of simple numerical results)
8) Comparison

Elements not underlined, such as “’rich’ data,” were present, but my ability to influence or control for them was more or less dependent on the specific conditions of each case. Many of the interviews could easily be characterized as having provided “rich” data. Also, “respondent validation,” is, according to Maxwell (2005),

> The single most important way of ruling out the possibility of misinterpreting the meaning of what participants say and do and the perspective they have on what is going on, as well as being an important way of identifying your own biases and misunderstandings of what you observed (p. 111).

Researcher bias and instrumentation. A positioning statement is provided in Chapter I of the dissertation, and it was used as the basis for the positioning statement in the IRB application to assist the IRB reader(s) in understanding the worldview I bring to bear on this research. Van Manen (1990) asks:

> But how does one put out of play everything one knows about an experience that one has selected for study? If we simply forget or ignore what we already ‘know,’ we may find that the presuppositions persistently creep back into our reflections. It is better to make explicit our understandings, beliefs, biases, assumptions, presuppositions, and theories. We try to come to terms with our assumptions, not in order to forget them again, but rather to hold them deliberately at bay and even to turn this knowledge against itself, as it were, thereby exposing its shallow or concealing nature. (p. 47)

Maxwell (2005) makes a special point of focusing on researcher bias as a validity concern, citing two particularly important threats: (a) Selection of the data to fit researcher’s existing theory or preconceptions, and (b) selection of data that “stand out” to the researcher.

Two well-known and complimentary processes were used to address these issues: process debriefing and data auditing. The debriefing and auditing function were performed for each case. Dr. Shana Hormann, a colleague at Antioch University Seattle, took on these roles, for which I am extremely grateful. In conversation, I shared my experience of interviewing faculty members – and in other ways interacting with the institutional and departmental systems of each case site. The auditing process took place for each site, and included an overview of the data collection process, a review of data collected through interviews, participation in coding, discussions about key emerging themes, and discussion about findings and conclusions involving each case. This was good practice to reduce the problems of researcher bias, to check my assumptions, of course. It also allowed me an opportunity to make sense of the experiences I was having. Beyond that, it was simply helpful to have another set of eyes considering the same data.

In addition to researcher bias, McMillan and Wergin (2010) note that another potentially troublesome threat to the credibility of qualitative studies includes “instrumentation.” This study uses a structured interview instrument, but it was primarily meant to serve as a stimulus to a conversation with faculty members at the discretion of the faculty members themselves. In keeping with constructionist principles, the intention was to help generate data, but also to encourage further reflection and discussion during the interviews, and subsequently among faculty members in the departments studied. Thus, the interviews were meant to engage faculty members in their own meaning-making.

Summary

The interview and data analysis process employed in this dissertation is presented in this chapter. In Chapter IV, the data collected from each unit are described and summarized, separately, and presented in reports for each unit. Analysis and interpretation of these findings are further explored in Chapter V, which concludes with implications, suggestions for encouraging collaboration, and a brief description of key attributes of departments engaging more fully in collaborative work.

The research for this dissertation provides a unique contribution to the understanding of faculty and higher education culture, as the study focuses on the intersection of key themes related to faculty motivation: autonomy, and its interrelationship with collaboration. Understanding the relationship of faculty professional autonomy and practices of collaboration is especially important at a time when the academy is faced with critical systemic challenges. This relationship is not addressed in the literature relevant to collaboration, academic culture, faculty development, and the like. The data collection and analysis method for this dissertation was specifically designed to generate new insights into how faculty themselves perceive of the optimal relationship between these two values.

Through individual, structured interviews and subsequent follow-up conversations with the faculty members of chosen departments, this inquiry explored how faculty perceive and experience the phenomenon. The findings provide insights into how faculty members manage the relationship in the present, and suggest how faculty members conceive of preferable alternatives.

Chapter IV: Studies of Four Academic Units

Introduction to Interviews

In this chapter, the content of the interviews with 36 faculty members in three institutions and four academic units will be shared. In addition to formal interviews of faculty, further context was provided through interviews of administrators, along with numerous ad hoc or informal conversations with faculty, staff and others.

By focusing on each unit as a case, I intend to convey the specific reality of each academic unit regarding the faculty experiences of professional autonomy and collaboration. Faculty quotes are used as much as possible to provide the reader with the best sense of what was said. Each entire interview could not be included here, of course, but the comments that are used are meant to accurately represent the interview experience. The comments are also arranged in themes to give the reader an overall sense of the unit's perspective, not simply that of individual faculty members.

In reporting statements from the interviews, several strategies have been employed to ensure confidentiality. Identifying descriptors such as gender, titles and faculty rank have been largely avoided or modified, especially when the case involves a small unit. Also, the interview record for each participating faculty member was assigned a specific code. All faculty statements are attributed to the corresponding code rather than a faculty member's name.

In addition to collecting statements, the interview process gathered numeric values or ratings from each faculty member. The ratings were self-reported, based on the faculty member's sense of his or her experience of (a) professional autonomy and (b) collaboration—both current and preferred (on a ten-point scale). After each rating, faculty members were asked to explain their rationale for a given value. In this way, the rating could be understood in the context of the story or explanation provided by each faculty member. The stories were the principal aim of the interviews, and the ratings were meant to help provide a point of reference regarding the phenomena for both interviewee and interviewer.

At the unit level, the ratings provided a sense of the collective experience, of how a unit perceived the phenomena currently, and what might be optimal in the future. This in turn, suggested the possible direction of change preferred in each unit. It is important to state, however, that the size of the sample, among other things, means that the ratings must be understood as no more than a window onto what is surely a richer, more nuanced narrative. The findings from the four academic units are found in case study reports in this chapter.

Case Study 1: Mid Atlantic State Social Science

Overview of department. Mid Atlantic is known as its state's premier public, research university, located within a major metropolitan city. About 27,000 undergraduate students and another 10,000 graduate students attend the school. My interviews involved full-time faculty in a Social Science department, responsible for about 400 undergraduates and about 80 graduate students on the doctoral track. The department has 26 full-time faculty members, who primarily teach graduate students. Undergraduate students and courses are principally taught by adjuncts.

The department has a strong, steadily rising reputation, and is highly ranked by *U.S. News and World Report*. Its faculty membership has been relatively stable for several years. At least 12 of the full-time faculty have been in the department for 20 or more years. Among the senior scholars are several eminent "stars." The collective work of the senior academics, includes numerous books that have been mainstays of the discipline and are widely read even beyond disciplinary boundaries.

A few associate and assistant professors have joined the department recently. They also bring solid experience and academic credentials to the department. Many expressed a strong interest in collaborative research. This new cohort could have a profound impact on the department's future.

The department developed several specialization areas a number of years ago, in part to provide potential students with a way to identify their own focus within the degree. Recent faculty meetings have been dedicated to refining the curriculum of each specialization. The graduate program has also recently developed an "apprentice model" for the graduate students. In the new design, faculty members are working closely with students as mentors, in part to provide the students with a good chance to develop a publishable paper (as primary or co-authors) before graduation.

This model and curricular coherence have not extended to the undergraduate program. One faculty member (A1) noted: "It's almost like the department is the graduate program." These changes in the curriculum and in faculty membership have taken place with a backdrop of shifting department leadership. The department has moved to a rotating chair model and it is on its second rotating chair after many years with a trusted and long-standing chair. The new chair also seems to be highly regarded.

Overview of interviews. A total of 15 full-time faculty members were interviewed individually for an hour or more. The majority of interviews were in-person, but there were two phone interviews with faculty members who were not on campus at the time of my visit. Of the full-time faculty (n = 26), five were unable to participate as they were on sabbatical, on long-term leave and the like. Nevertheless, 15 of 21 available department faculty members were interviewed for this study.

All face-to-face interviews took place in faculty members' offices, which varied in space and comfort depending on rank and personal style of each faculty member. Office doors were usually closed and offices were situated along the outer edges of the rectangular building wing, linked by austere hallways. Published articles by faculty members, several co-authored with students, decorated the walls outside a few offices.

Throughout my visit to Mid Atlantic R1, I found the meetings and conversations with faculty to be cordial and even friendly. I felt genuinely welcomed. The faculty participants seemed open and interested in the topic of the interviews.

Collegial cooperation. Certain themes emerged almost immediately in the interviews. Respect and regard for colleagues and for their shared profession permeated the conversations. The relationships and environment of the department where described as "collegial," "congenial," and "cooperative." One veteran faculty member (A8) reported that even though there are a few strong personalities among the faculty, "We have always been a surprisingly genial department. There has been very little fighting or division…. People here live and let live. It's the culture." Another senior faculty member (A11) said:

> We can really disagree but not personalize it. We don't take it to the students. We still don't. . . . It's not utopia, but as faculty cultures go, it's pretty healthy. I have been in a department with huge, out in the open battles with administrators present. We don't do that.

A newer faculty member (A3) expressed appreciation for the supportive but not smothering atmosphere as she had interviewed at departments experiencing tremendous challenges, including one that was being torn apart by “internal wars.” She observed: “I see the poor assistant professor caught in the middle. That can’t be conducive for getting work done. So I really appreciated coming here. I’m being socialized to ‘let’s get things done and move forward.’”

Professional autonomy. Professional autonomy is a value that is deeply held by the department’s faculty, and it is understood to apply to all elements of faculty work and life. An assistant professor (A3) described autonomy in the department, saying:

> It is extremely autonomous. I never have a sense anyone is watching, or saying you should do this. They are watching in that they offer to help, but there is no expectation…. We are inherently in this job because we are creative individual thinkers. But we need to be able to get together to move forward. . . . The fun part of faculty work is individual work. I don’t long for more sharing.

As expected, professional autonomy was regularly cited as a key reason to begin an academic career. An associate professor (A9) explained that having significant autonomy “is why I came to the profession in the first place, to pursue whatever fits my intellectual interests and scholarship interests. I’ve never been told what I need to do. I have been in the driver’s seat.” A full, tenured professor (A7) said, “We have a tremendous degree of independence. I can focus on my own agenda and organize my time. The only constraints are professional expectations, but overall, independence and autonomy is extremely high.”

Faculty members uniformly reported that they held a high degree of professional autonomy, and all wanted to maintain that standard for the most part. The self-reported, present level of professional autonomy experienced by the faculty interviewed ranged from 7.5 to 10 on a ten point scale. The average came to 8.82. Interviewed faculty members were largely satisfied with their experience of professional autonomy, so the preferred rate rose only very slightly to 8.86. A senior faculty member (A6) declared: “Nobody is telling me what to teach, or do. . . . That’s good. I don’t need that.” Another associate professor (A2) explained: “Professional autonomy gives me the freedom to explore. The chair is not telling me what to do, and shouldn’t be doing that.”

There is a clear expectation that faculty members are free to do their work—whether involving research, teaching, service or any other matter—as their interests lead them. Autonomy is defined broadly, and faculty members see themselves as the best arbiters of those professional boundaries. A tenured professor (A8) explained:

> There is very little pressure to teach or do something. We are interested in what you can produce. . . . However you want to get it done, as long as it gets done. People teach what they want, do the research they want, have students they want.

Another tenured professor (A11) observed: “a huge perk is autonomy. You decide what you want to do, whether in research, or teaching. . . . It’s a huge part of being a college professor.” Thus, for many, the concept of professional autonomy is closely linked with the notion of doing what one wants, and not doing what one doesn’t want.

Autonomy and teaching. In addition to largely determining their courses and schedule, faculty members reported that they felt completely free to teach what they wanted within a given class. Not surprisingly, this content and pedagogical freedom was regarded as an element of professional autonomy. Some observed that the curriculum requirements for specializations could sometimes pose limits to that sense of autonomy in the form of pressure to take up a class.

A full, tenured faculty member (A15) explained: "I can feel constrained by the environment because a course is needed by the department, but in research, I have great freedom." Nevertheless, if scheduling challenges present themselves, an equitable resolution was usually found. A senior professor (A8) reported: "People are pretty reasonable. There are no big problems finding a person to take a class. If people talk, we find a way to work through it." Underscoring the point, a junior professor (A13) suggested that everything, has certain limits, stating: "I could sacrifice my autonomy…. Something gets lost in the mix. I have to be flexible, to cover the class."

Service and administrative duties. Every department has administrative duties in which faculty should participate, such as policy and curriculum committees, tenure review, or a search committee. Several faculty interviewees referred to such activities as "service." Most faculty members in the department do some form of service, and it is generally perceived as something that is relatively unimportant. These collective responsibilities are, however, generally fulfilled.

Service was not interpreted as a form of collaboration. It was perceived as sometimes necessary, and also an impingement on faculty autonomy. Some faculty conceded that collaboration could be part of other faculty duties—at least once they were asked to consider that possibility. But the overall response is probably best represented by the comments of a senior faculty member (A7) who said:

> Yes, there are administrative duties. Almost all of us do them and share them, like committees. . . . Is this collaboration? I see it as something outside of collaborative work. Some could see it as that. . . . But it tends to feel as a burden and responsibility. If we could skip out, we would.

Relationship between autonomy and collaboration. The faculty expressed a range of perspectives on whether a relationship between collaboration and autonomy exists. Faculty members of all ranks often said they retained their professional autonomy while collaborating—because they still had the capacity to use their judgment and make choices. One assistant professor (A14) noted: “Yes, there is a relationship. It can be a problem when people are at different power points, for example, full professor and assistant professor. Or, if at the beginning there is no conversation about what is expected.” A full tenured professor (A7) advised that as a general rule, in order to avoid getting caught in “power plays,” it is important that “junior faculty in particular need to be more careful about who they work with.”

Another assistant professor (A13) observed: “Power relates to autonomy.” The faculty member (A13) added an important insight, saying, “It’s related to Exit, Voice, and Loyalty,” referring to the work of Albert O. Hirschman (1970).

None of the faculty members indicated concern about this power dynamic in the Social Sciences department. In fact several noted that the department was exceptionally supportive of the work of the junior faculty. Nevertheless, the interviews point to the importance of paying attention to power in collaborative relationships as a safeguard of professional autonomy. The interviews reveal that the key element of autonomy is power: the power to choose, to act, and to speak. Thus, it would seem that collaboration requires autonomy—the freedom to choose—for that collaboration to be genuine.

A senior faculty member recalled a previous department retreat, noting that conversations indicated a general consensus that a greater sense of community and more opportunities to collaborate would be welcome. The senior faculty member (A8) reported: ““It’s probably still true,” adding, “I was surprised. I was not sure they meant it. People do their own thing and do it well. If you do too much collaboration, that gets in the way of [your] ‘own thing.’”

Autonomy and collaboration: Current and preferred. The department faculty tended to see collaboration as less important than autonomy, though there was some preference that collaboration be increased. Ratings of the preferred level of collaboration added almost a full point to the current level on a ten-point scale. The level of professional autonomy was already judged to be about optimal. The ratings from the interviews are found in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1

Faculty Ratings: Mid Atlantic Social Science

Interview Code	Collab 1 (current)	Collab 2 (prefer)	Auton 1 (current)	Auton 2 (prefer)
10O	5	**6**	8	8
10N	3.5	**6**	8.5	8.5
10M	7.5	7.5	9.5	9.5
10L	7	**10**	8.5	8.5
10K	3	**10**	8	**10**
10J	8.5	8.5	10	10
10I	6	6	8	**10**
10H	4	**6**	8.5	8.5
10G	10	10	10	10
10F	8	8	9	**6**
10E	0	0	0	0
10D	8	8	10	10
10C	7	7	7.5	**7**
10B	8	**6**	9	9
10A	8	8	9	9
Mean	6.68	**7.64**	8.82	**8.86**

Note. Prefer change from current experience: **bold** = prefer more; **underline** = prefer less.

Only two faculty members suggested that it might be optimal to have less autonomy than they currently experienced. In both instances, the rationale was to increase collaboration and collective responsibility in the department. The ratings provided by each faculty member in Table 4.1 are plotted on Figure 4.1.

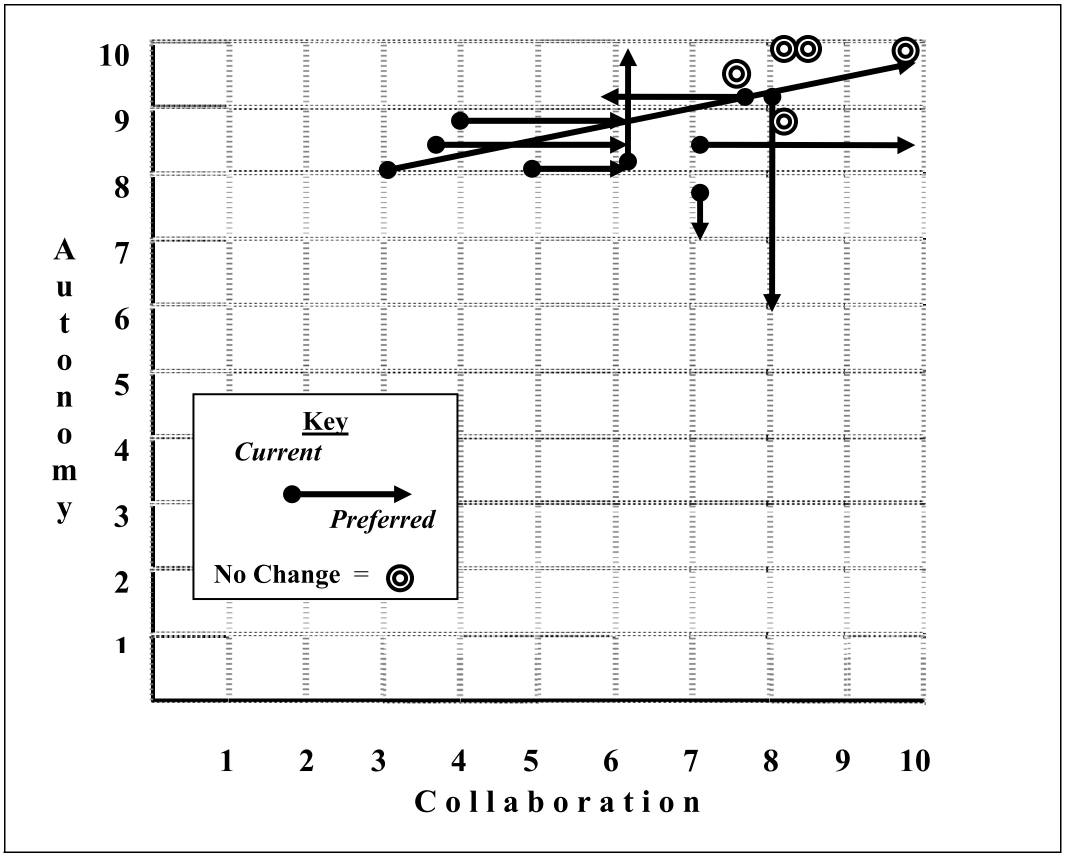


Figure 4.1. Collaboration and Autonomy: Mid Atlantic Social Science.
Symbols on the graph represent the responses from each faculty member interviewed. Arrows indicate responses that involved a change. The base of an arrow indicates the point of intersection of the current level of autonomy and collaboration, and the tip of the arrow represents the respondent's preferred level of the relationship. Together, the points form a line, with the arrow point indicating the direction of the preferred change from the present experience of both values. Finally, the symbol "◎" represents a faculty response in which both current and preferred levels of the phenomena received the same rating ("no change" desired).

The ratings and patterns found in Figure 4.1 suggest what the interviews also reveal: faculty members in the department appreciated their professional autonomy, and at the same time, many would like more collaboration with peers. When the ratings are considered in combination with the interviews, the interest in collaboration is further suggested. For instance, four of the five faculty members represented with the "no change" symbol in Figure 4.1, self-identified as being collaborative. They provided numerous examples of collaborative work with unit colleagues. Moreover, of the two faculty members who said they would prefer less autonomy than presently experienced, (represented by a downward pointing arrow), the associated conversations suggest that "less autonomy" was essentially understood to provide for "more collaboration."

Collaboration and Research

Given the nature of an R1 institution, perhaps it is not surprising that faculty comments regarding collaboration were centered almost exclusively on research and/or publication. When asked how a faculty member would characterize collaboration within the department, the response tended to imply that the question was focused on research – collaborative research. A few faculty participants checked on this assumption. One assistant professor (A14) remarked: "When you say collaborate, do you mean research? When I say collaboration, I primarily mean research." An associate professor (A1) said: "When you say collaboration, do you mean research? The department generally is not a very collaborative place. . . . But there is very good collaboration in research."

Several faculty members remarked that collaboration was only relevant in connection with research, especially resulting in some sort of concrete outcome. An associate professor (A9) explained that in thinking about the term collaboration, "The way I count it, it is more active and it results in publication and/or a grant."

Though there was little evidence of collaboration in other areas of faculty responsibility, the interviews suggest that the department faculty members are engaged in a number of collaborations with each other involving research and publication. The interviews revealed that of the 26 faculty members, at least 15 have active research and related scholarship in play with each other now or just completed within the very recent past. Confirmation of such collaborative practices can be found in the lists of publications and other scholarship described in faculty Curriculum Vitae. Many of these faculty members are engaged in multiple projects with one or more unit colleagues.

One of the new members of the faculty (A9) noted: “This is the first department I have had an active collaboration with my [department] colleagues. I’m very happy to be here. It’s the department where I’ve found the closest research interests with mine. At other departments I never collaborated with colleagues.” Another faculty member (A13) stated: “I actually think a lot of collaboration. A lot more within the department collaborate than pursue individual [scholarship].”

Besides those who engage in collaborative projects with department colleagues, an additional eight department members have significant research and publication records with scholars outside of the department. These faculty members clearly work with colleagues in other institutions, but they expressed less interest in or had less knowledge of collaborative research between their department colleagues.

A full professor (A7) who has primarily collaborated outside of the department reported that collaboration within the department is “limited.” He (A7) added, “In this department, there is a high degree of autonomy and there are lots of opportunities elsewhere. So it reduced internal feuding. It is good and bad. There are trade offs. You lose a sense of community.” Another tenured professor (A11) with numerous co-authored articles and other publications agreed, saying: “Most of us have no clue of what others are doing. It’s a characteristic of a big department.”

Of course, a few of the faculty were not particularly interested in collaborative work, whether inside the department or not. One faculty member (A5) explained:

> I haven't been asked to collaborate or to do much in the department. They've left me alone. The fact that they let me do isolated work keeps [me here]. . . . I feel as autonomous as I could in a department. I define my own agenda, follow my own direction. I've always been a highly productive scholar. Being productive buys you that kind of autonomy. So, those who run the university are happy to leave me alone to do my work. I've been on tenure committees and others that I feel are important. But I don't do anything if it feels trivial. I haven't suffered adverse consequences as a result.

Accounting for the contradictory descriptions of the department as either a place where collaborative research happens extensively or almost not at all is far from a straightforward proposition. According to one of the senior faculty members (A10), part of the explanation probably includes the fact that some specialization areas are inherently more collaborative and/or interdisciplinary.

Collaboration as better, practical scholarship. Several of the interviewed faculty members shared their rationale for collaborating with colleagues around research and publication. An experienced faculty member (A6) declared: “I'm a collaborator. I'm not a ‘lone wolf.’ I enjoy working in a team of two or more. I have two research projects right now with a member of the department.” She (A6) also argued that she is seeing an increasing trend toward funders that favor collaborative work, explaining: “There is less money now, so that is part of the shift.” She (A6) then concluded: “When I think of research, the goal is to share it. It's a collective exercise. It should be shared with others.” By implication for this member of the department, the notion of *not sharing*—of working individually—essentially means one is working counter to best practice and the intention of research in the first place.

Another tenured, full faculty member (A8) shared that he engages in collaborative research because: “I think it makes for better research and better quality work. So if administrative policies could help, I would love that.” However, he (A8) also noted that he was “not too optimistic it can be managed.” This uncertainty aside, the faculty member (A8) then described a survey research project in which he and a colleague from the department are engaged, explaining: “I probably could have written a proposal that was 90% as good, but things are so competitive now, that extra 10% is the difference. . . . It makes something that is good into very good.” The faculty member (A8) concluded, “It’s the difference” between having the proposal accepted or rejected.

A junior faculty member felt that collaboration improved the quality of other, individual scholarship as well. The faculty member (A14) shared: “What collaboration should do is help you think about the project at hand, but also about others going on. . . . I have five projects now, and three are collaborative. The two that are independent are being informed by the collaborations.”

Yet another senior faculty member (A10) named three colleagues in the department with whom he has recently worked, adding, “Those doing good research in the department are doing collaborative work [here or elsewhere].” He was especially proud of the way he and the faculty within his specialization area work together and with the other faculty specializations. He (A10) declared: “We collaborate with the rest of the department. It’s a model of science that I believe in.”

Of course, not all faculty members were so sure of the desirability or efficacy of a collaborative approach to their work. One (A3) expressed what must be a common refrain uttered on college and university campuses across the country. She exclaimed:

“More collaboration takes more work, more meetings, more investment [of time and relationships]. I am not sure that’s ideal. I’m not sure I want to be in meetings longer!”

Collaboration as more than transaction. Collaboration is clearly a means to an end. It can enhance research and improve the chances of publication. The recognition of this often gave the interview responses something of a transactional tone. Yet several of the faculty members suggested that collaboration can and should go deeper. One assistant professor (A14) remarked that a “collaborative environment” is something more than a place where faculty members work together, “it’s the whole environment, it’s broader. You form relationships for the long term. I see that in the department.”

A colleague described with deep feeling how the addition of a couple of faculty members with similar intellectual interests and a desire for collaborative work had rekindled a passion for research and publication. The professor (A2) added: “Working together breaks down the barriers. How happy people are is dependent on how they feel connected to a larger community here. You have increased choices. I like doing it.”

Rank and tenure. The interview responses of the new assistant professors were peppered with references to meeting the standards for their reviews or making it to the associate rank and beyond. To a person, they were actively consulting with mentors in the department, and though they were clearly attentive to what was required for tenure (especially in terms of publications) they also seemed confident of their capacity to achieve it. A few references were made to single-author publication. The collective sentiment of these new department members seemed to be that sole-authorship was not of paramount importance. For example, an assistant professor (A4) declared:

> I like to collaborate—almost to a fault. . . . I always co-author. I’m not sure if I have a good balance. My first chair told me I might want to do solo research. I’m

> new, but I am not so sure. I do know that I want to always collaborate, though, not with the same person all the time. I haven't gotten a strong message that I should be doing individual articles.

The assistant professor (A4) added: "I love the work I do. I have co-authored in so many different ways. Sometimes I write, and others edit, or their may be lots of interactions." In hearing these statements, I noted the practical considerations embedded in the comments, but the overriding sense conveyed was of tremendous passion and commitment to collaborative work, for the rich learning potential it represented for this faculty member. An associate professor (A9) suggested a similar perspective, saying:

> Collaboration has only done wonderful things for my career. In certain departments, they push for the sole author. I haven't had that. For me, it help speeds things up—because we are held responsible [to each other] for the results. Only my dissertation and one or two other [articles] are not co-authored.

The overall sentiment among all ranks seemed supportive of collaborative research. However, a few senior faculty members seemed to hold contrasting views. A full professor (A15) noted:

> Collaborative publication is a better product. But it is not fully agreed upon. Certainly it is more prestigious if one publishes on one's own. It means your own ideas. We should do more of this. We talk about it, for example, when we evaluate junior faculty for tenure.

Another senior faculty member (A11) remarked: "At tenure review, what you want to know, is it their research, their set of ideas?"

In the interviews, it was not clear how the two different perspectives on collaboration and tenure might be resolved. Perhaps the junior faculty members were simply saying what they hoped would be true. Or perhaps there is a generational shift underway, and the experience of the senior faculty will not be fully replicated. Both new and senior faculty members are, nevertheless, involved in collaborative scholarship.

University support for collaboration. Several faculty members mentioned recent changes at the university level that encouraged increased collaboration, both between departments and with other institutions. For example, there are seed grants available for those who are interested in working with faculty members across the state campus system. One of the associate faculty members had recently been contacted by a faculty member from a different campus and discipline about a possible collaborative project. The two crafted a proposal and submitted it. The associate professor described this new development with great animation, enthusiasm and confidence.

Case Study 2: Northeast Liberal Arts Humanities

Overview of institution and department. Northeast Liberal Arts College is located in a town of about 5,500, stretching along one bank of a scenic river. The entire valley shares a number of other small communities, several boasting their own college. Though the town is small and rural in feel, several major metropolitan areas are within a two to three hours drive. Northeast is well-regarded, has a prototypical liberal arts campus, with beautifully landscaped grounds and historic, Georgian-style buildings. The school's approximately 2,300 undergraduate students are predominantly Caucasian, and roughly 55% are female and 45% male.

A new Gen Ed core curriculum has just been implemented after two years in development. Students are required to participate in at least one significant, cross-cultural learning experience—whether overseas or in the U.S. Many departments require a senior project or thesis involving faculty and students working collaboratively.

My introduction to the school and department began with a delightful breakfast with a senior faculty member in a charming and friendly local café. We spoke at length about the college and community. After that informative background conversation, we went to campus to begin the formal interviews. The interviews took place in two separate departments, for this study, named: The Humanities department and the Natural Science department. The interviews in the Humanities department will be described first here.

Overview of interviews: Humanities department. The Humanities department at Northeast Liberal Arts is relatively small, with seven full-time faculty members and a couple of adjuncts. I conducted formal interviews of five of the full-time faculty members. One department member was on sabbatical and another was overseas. Numerous interactions and conversations took place outside the department interviews. All helped in building a picture of the department.

The Humanities offices were located on the top floor of a beautiful three-story building. The department had an inviting central lounge area surrounded by the offices of the department faculty. The offices varied in size, but were generally not big. They appeared comfortable, quite functional, and each had furniture, decorations and a layout that immediately conveyed a sense of each individual faculty member.

As I met and interacted with each faculty member, I felt welcomed and had the sense that they saw the work of the dissertation as interesting, perhaps even important. One of the faculty members made tea for me. Another rushed from a meeting to make sure our interview was on time. And I had another relaxed and very helpful breakfast meeting later in the week with a different member of the department. Department faculty members referred to other members by first name, and conveying a sense of regard for their work and contributions to the department and students.

Student learning and interactions with the students was clearly emphasized in the department. Some faculty members referred to Northeast as a "teaching school." Yet the conversations suggested a wistful desire for more time and space for research. Even then, teaching and work with students were clearly regarded as foundational and rewarding.

The department has experienced recent shifts after years of stability. The unit had four members for years, and in the past year, three faculty members have been added.

A number of consistent themes emerged through the interviews, and in sharing them, the need for confidentiality in a small department was kept in mind. One strategy employed here involves keeping the gender and the exact faculty status ambiguous.

Autonomy. Professional autonomy is highly valued by all of the faculty members interviewed in the department. One of the experienced faculty members (B5) reported, "I have a great deal of autonomy. I don't feel pushed. I can focus on any topic in class, and it would be well received or at least allowed. There is a lot of space to explore in teaching." The faculty member (B5) added a more general example of autonomy, saying,

> Part of how I judge it is, how acceptable is it to come in [to the office], say 'hi' and close my door. I feel that it is okay. There are various ways of doing one's work. Some faculty doors are always open. So I feel that within the time and space of the department, I have that autonomy.

"I'm a 'lone wolf,'" declared another department professor (B2), adding, "I'm very happy with the degree to which colleagues don't intrude." The faculty member (B2) recalled that autonomy was, "one of the reasons I got into academia," and added, "I would find team teaching difficult. I've never done it, and I would have lots of chips on my shoulder. As an institution, there is increasing pressure to team teach, to collaborate."

Later in the interview, the faculty member (B2) added:

> We are very able to do what we want. . . . Look, this is a place where the responsibility is put on you and with it comes freedom to do any number of things, to do research, work with the community, students. . . . There are very few instances when an expectation is even inferred. It has felt more like it would be "good" or "recommended," like when it involves state requirements.

Collegial interactions. When asked to describe the collaborative nature of the department, a junior faculty member (B4) said: "Mostly its general, like cooperation or respectful interactions with colleagues." A colleague (B3) added: "We get along in a professional way. In terms of discussing students, we are on the same wavelength in that collegial way."

An experienced faculty member (B5) characterized collaboration in the department as: "Good. But I realize it's limited." The faculty member (B5) continued, saying, we "discuss our networking, recruiting and service work. . . . But the time as a faculty member involving teaching, scholarship and service, we see others only a little." In conclusion, the faculty member (B5) characterized collaboration involving teaching as "mostly informal interactions," and research as "very low, essentially nil."

Faculty members report that they consciously make an effort to show up and participate in any special event featuring another faculty member and/or department students, such as when department colleagues present in symposia, speak as part of a panel, or otherwise engage in some public activity on campus. Moreover, faculty report that the course schedules are made with an eye toward making sure there is a relatively even spread of students among the courses. One faculty member (B4) observed: "We respect each other, and we try to provide opportunities for each other's areas."

Collaboration: Focus on students. Perhaps a more ongoing form of collaboration involves the shared work that is built into the curriculum. A significant element of the department curriculum involves a senior capstone research project. Every student participates, and each is assigned a faculty research advisor. One faculty member (B1) explained: "Often, the student's research is not in our field or central comfort zone. We share who gets difficult students, who has brilliant students. It becomes clear that we know our students. . . . We are collaboratively committed to having students succeed." Another professor (B4) explained: "This is a teaching college. . . . [We have] a common interest in student advising, helping them understand their strengths and weaknesses."

Though advisors are assigned for the research project, other faculty members support the student and the adviser. A faculty member (B1) explained, "We have collective conversations about students. . . . The adviser makes the call, but there is also a lot of collaborative conversation." The professor (B1) concluded this shared work,

> naturally leads to an ongoing discussion around the curriculum, about what are our deficits, where we should begin sooner…This leads back to shared learning goals and then back to our own work. . . . We look at it in a particular way. These are nice things; sometimes we don't agree. We play off each other well. That's where we collaborate best.

The senior students are required to do public presentations, and department faculty members support the students in preparing for and presenting in several possible venues, including regional and national conferences or at the Senior Scholarship Day.

Collaboration and expertise. Within the Humanities department, the faculty members basically do not collaborate on research and publication and they are not involved in team teaching efforts with department colleagues. A common explanation was that the separate faculty specializations made it essentially impossible to find places to connect as experts. One of the faculty members (B4) explained: “We don’t interfere with each other’s disciplines or principles. We have people specializing with areas. This has benefits and barriers. So you can be seen as the expert in your field.”

Research. The conversations indicated that the faculty members of the department took research seriously, though there was no evidence that faculty members worked together on their research. Teaching and students were clearly a priority, yet there was also some suggestion of tension or concern about the impact of these responsibilities on research and publication. An experienced faculty member (B5) said: “People who do well here want to be at this kind of school. Here, we want to be teachers, but we also want to connect with the researcher [in us].”

Another professor (B4) explained: “Not much research interests are in common. So we need to look for other scholars in other regions and schools.” A colleague (B2) confirmed: “We necessarily teach in different areas, so [shared] research is rare.” The faculty member added, “at a research level, I guess I prefer being in the library, in the carrel, reading and thinking on my own.”

Finally, an experienced professor (B5) said, “Our department is fairly research oriented versus the rest of the campus, but it doesn’t translate here in the department. We respect the heck out of each other, but we don’t sit around and talk much.”

Service. In terms of service work, a faculty member (B2) noted: “I feel like I can say ‘no.’ I don’t have the hesitation of junior faculty to let someone determine or influence my path… It’s an unspoken norm of the department.” Interestingly, one of the newer faculty members (B3) reported: “Senior people tell me that service does not get tenure, and I need to focus on teaching and scholarship. They said focus on tenure and do service later. Knowing that has been helpful."

Interdisciplinarity. The new "Core Curriculum" requires that all students participate in a cross-cultural or study abroad program. Faculty and/or staff with varied expertise are expected to create and implement the cross-cultural programs.

Northeast Liberal Arts College has over a dozen interdisciplinary programs, most providing a curricular path to achieve a minor. The Humanities Department has five of its seven faculty members associated with several of these minor programs, such as Women's Studies or Diversity Studies. Three of the faculty members, as directors of one or more of these interdisciplinary programs, are responsible for basic coordination duties associated with the programs. In addition, several of the faculty members in the department have also engaged in creative, highly visible collaborative projects outside the boundaries of the department and their regular duties.

Suggestions for more collaboration. When asked how collaboration might be increased within the department, an Associate Professor (B2) suggested: "The university has a cross-cultural requirement. I would like to see us model collaboration in that setting, not just program specific. We could get out of our (specialization) focus." The faculty member (B2) noted that a colleague in the department was presently overseas on one of the cross-cultural trips. The faculty member (B2) suggested that in the future, two faculty members could be involved, adding, "They would not necessarily be experts in that particular area. So it is a conversation with each other in the department."

Another faculty member (B4) suggested: "We could get more interdisciplinary. People could be invited to each other's classes more often, like guest speakers." Then, the faculty member (B4) definitively stated, “Whatever form…, this would help me better understand my colleagues and create new approaches to students.” The faculty member (B4) added that working completely independently “can be a waste of talent, and so we can always put resources to better use.”

Relationship of collaboration and autonomy. The ways in which faculty members conceive of both autonomy and collaboration have interesting parallels, illustrating how easily the two ideas can seem to be conceptually in opposition and to be related—at the same time. For instance, every interview indicated that faculty members value their autonomy. One of the more experienced faculty members (B5) remarked,

> I wish I had more of it. I want more time for research, so my resentment is that I want more autonomy. But more generally, I have a great deal of autonomy. I don’t feel pushed. I can focus on any topic in class, and it would be well received or at least allowed. There is a lot of space to explore in teaching.

The faculty member (B5) concluded: “It’s important to collaborate, but also to have a lot of autonomy to do what needs to be done.”

A similar point was made by a colleague, but in this case, to find more space for collaboration. The faculty member (B4) explained that there were barriers to collaboration, and “more is needed, more time, support for collaborative research. I don’t have enough time, really. It’s difficult to concentrate when you need to teach three classes, read more student papers, do advising. . . . It’s important, and I want more time.”

Perhaps with these sometimes competing priorities in mind, in considering both autonomy and collaboration, a faculty member (B1) remarked: “They are two different concepts, but they are quite related.” The faculty member added:

> I do not see them as mutually exclusive. We could never get to 10 on any one of them. They are not mutually exclusive but they are mutually constraining. I think

> we are at a pretty healthy place. When we bump up to where we disagree, I want some of that creative tension.

But the faculty member (B1) noted that both collaboration and autonomy can be in play at the same time, saying there is “a way in which one’s research agenda is always a part of one’s autonomy.” There is both sufficient space and support for sharing one’s research with colleagues and incorporating it into courses. The faculty member (B1) continued: “To me, that’s a crossroads between autonomy and collaboration. We collectively recognize that if we want (a particular specialization) and other perspectives [in the department], we have to support it.”

Through comments from the interviews, department faculty expressed appreciation for both the state of their professional autonomy and collaboration with colleagues. They didn’t indicate a desire to experience more autonomy, though there were comments indicating that some additional collaboration would be welcomed. The values of the numeric ratings reflect a similar sentiment, suggesting a slight leaning toward more collaboration (or less autonomy). Table 4.2 outlines the ratings given by each faculty member regarding collaboration and autonomy in the department.

Table 4.2

Faculty Ratings: Northeast Liberal Arts Humanities

Interview Code	Collab 1 (current)	Collab 2 (prefer)	Auton 1 (current)	Auton 2 (prefer)
20E	7.5	7.5	6.5	6.5
20D	5	**6**	9	9
20C	8	8	9	9
20B	8	**9.5**	8	8
20A	6	6	7	**6**
Mean	6.9	**7.4**	7.9	**7.7**

Note. Prefer change from current experience: **bold** = prefer more; **underline** = prefer less.

The ratings found in Table 4.2, when plotted on Figure 4.2 show both the current and preferred experiences of collaboration and autonomy for each faculty member.

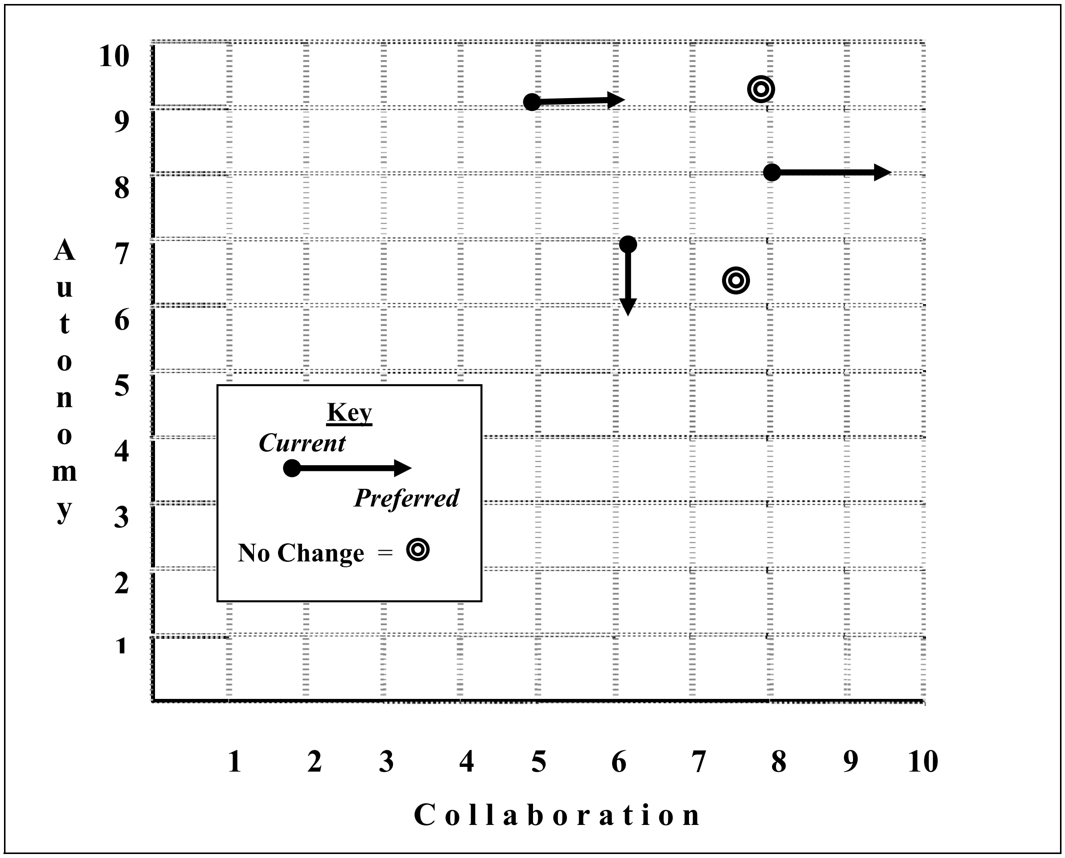


Figure 4.2. Collaboration and Autonomy: NE Liberal Arts Humanities.
Symbols on the graph represent responses from each faculty member interviewed in the department. Arrows indicate responses that involved a change from a current (base of arrow) to a preferred level (tip of arrow) of collaboration and/or professional autonomy. The arrow points in the direction of the preferred change. An "◎" represents responses in which both phenomena remained unchanged at current and preferred levels.

As with the previous case, the faculty members whose responses are represented by the "no change" symbol in Figure 4.2 were especially collaborative. The two such faculty members in this case had a demonstrated record of collaborative work with department colleagues and throughout the institution.

Possibility of community. Another theme seemed to emerge from the interviews in the Humanities department, perhaps related to the overall sense of satisfaction suggested in the interviews. Several faculty members expressed an interest in knowing more about each other's research—and also about each other beyond the role of scholar and educator. A number of suggestions were offered, including a regular faculty gathering outside of the department to encourage socializing and conversations about research interests. The suggestions were made with a mind toward keeping the effort and time commitment to a minimum, while maximizing the opportunity to connect with each other meaningfully.

Case Study 3: Northeast Liberal Arts Natural Sciences

Overview of institution and department. Two departments were studied at Northeast Liberal Arts. The Humanities department was discussed in the previous section. The institution was introduced briefly in Case Study 2. This present case study covers the Natural Sciences department, which was somewhat larger than the other department studied at Northeast Liberal Arts.

The Natural Sciences department at Northeast Liberal Arts is relatively small, with ten full-time faculty members, along with a few adjuncts and a visiting faculty member. I conducted formal interviews of five of the full-time faculty members. One of the department members was unavailable. Additional interactions, conversations and interviews at the school supported me in developing a picture of the department.

The Natural Science offices were located in two sections of a brand new Science Building. The department offices are divided into two wings, with each wing comprising faculty from a sub-unit of the department. Each section had labs and other shared meeting and work areas closely connected in physical space to the specific sub-unit. On display all along the large, main hallways were numerous, prominent posters representing the work of department faculty members and students. The offices were relatively uniform in size, and appearance, and they had a functional yet personalized feel.

Overview of interviews. The faculty members with whom I met uniformly spoke of each other in respectful terms. They called each other by first names, and several noted that they had a colleague in the department with whom they interacted regularly. Conversations with faculty members indicated a notable, broad understanding of what colleagues were up to, from work patterns with colleagues, to student research projects, to service and other responsibilities outside of the department. The department has experienced steady growth over the years, and has added new faculty members periodically. The strategy has been to expand the expertise of the faculty with each new hire so that more breadth can be offered even in a small department.

It is important to keep in mind the relatively small size of the department makes telling the story and keeping faculty conversations confidential somewhat challenging. As with the other department studied at Northeast, to shield the identity of faculty members in this case study, gender and the exact faculty rank are not connected directly to specific comments or faculty members. This mirrors the department's own practice, as members tended to refer to each other by first name and to avoid mention of rank.

Autonomy. Faculty members in the Natural Sciences department, including both sub-units, clearly felt the department supported their professional autonomy. When asked to describe the experience of autonomy within the department, one professor (B10) said:

> I know I have to be involved in school, in teaching, and service, but I have a lot of autonomy. I'm the (specialization faculty), so I'll teach that, but I get to decide

> what I will teach. On any given day, I am quite satisfied in terms of the amount of autonomy. In research, I get to decide how and what students do. With service, I have a lot of autonomy. I get to choose.

An experienced colleague (B9) declared:

> In terms of research, I have never heard anyone say, "You should do 'x.'" I make all decisions for my research. One limit is always funding. I feel very empowered. I do pay attention to research funding and costs, but as long as I am creative and flexible, I find ways [to make it work].

A faculty member (B7) from the sub-discipline on the other side of the building noted, "We are on the very autonomous end of the spectrum. . . . I design courses as I want—as long as they meet department learning goals. I am free to pursue my research, as long as it is ethical."

An experienced faculty member (B6) from the other sub-discipline took this idea a bit farther, responding: "I guess the question is do I want to be autonomous? I don't like the idea of being holed up in a lab and only talking in a conference. There is a range of how I see this." The faculty member (B6) continued: "It's not a bad level of autonomy. No one is messing in my stuff." The faculty member (B6) was "happy the way things are," but also noted that if the level of autonomy were reduced slightly, "people would be more tuned in to the group."

In a real sense, the practice of professional autonomy extended even into areas that involve collaboration. A faculty member (B6) explained: "Here, we are expected to work with students doing research. We don't necessarily share students or research with each other, but all faculty do [research with students]." The faculty member smiled and continued: "That is autonomy. These are my students—mine (smile)—doing work I choose, or that I let them choose. Each faculty decides on this."

Collaboration. During the interviews, faculty seemed to be involved in and aware of each other's work. They reported that most collaboration involved curriculum design and course development, support of student learning and sharing of routine administrative tasks. Research and co-teaching among faculty members was reported to be unusual to rare.

During the interviews, at least seven faculty members were named for their efforts to support a colleague or colleagues. Faculty members said it was common to work with colleagues to coordinate the curriculum and discuss course design. In courses with sections, learning goals and learning activities were discussed and equipment shared. Faculty members also regularly confer with each other about students and their learning edges and achievements. Informal partnerships often develop around linked courses or sections, and the resulting collaboration involves sharing handouts, ordering class materials and supplies jointly, lab prep, and similar cooperative activities. Given this close work on courses and with students, it is interesting to note that actual team or co-teaching is apparently quite rare.

Research was also characterized as an area where collaboration was not taking place between faculty members. One of the faculty members (B7) explained: "The research areas don't lend themselves to collaborative research. Teaching has more space. We come together nearly every week about the curriculum. So we collaborate on the curriculum, on learning goals."

A colleague (B8) agreed, emphasizing the overall collaborative nature of the department culture, reporting: "We are not always working together on research. That's not that common. We have a culture of discussing research, and teaching, and making the department better. So, it is very collaborative."

Several faculty members have worked together effectively on developing student learning outcomes. One faculty member (B8) observed: "assessment, is something we have to do, we need to take it seriously. We do a nice job at this kind of thing."

Collaboration and students. The department has a requirement for a senior capstone project. "There is a big emphasis on student and faculty collaboration," explained one faculty member (B7). This collaboration often results in publication, and the student is often the first author. These projects generally do not directly involve more than one faculty member per student. However, there are times when the student's interest brings two or more faculty members together.

As the senior projects are being completed toward the conclusion of the year, the faculty members gather to discuss individual student work and to consider the collective accomplishments of the students and the department. Thus, there is a fairly high degree of knowledge of the work of many of the students and of one's faculty colleagues.

Team teaching. Given the various ways the faculty members interact and work in partnership around students and foundational courses, the lack of co-teaching or team teaching within the department is noteworthy. However, a new course has recently been developed by one of the senior faculty members in collaboration with a colleague in the social sciences. Part of the intention, according to the senior faculty member (B10), was to start developing team taught courses in response to a new campus-wide policy to assign full credit to faculty members who co-teach a course. Such team teaching "is still a relatively uncommon practice here," said the faculty member (B10), adding, "I'll get full credit and so will (the co-teacher). Most of the new major or interdisciplinary courses that were approved are not team taught." After citing another team taught course, the faculty member (B10) admitted, "I am not sure there is a huge interest" in team teaching.

Though there may be a lack of faculty enthusiasm for team teaching in the department and at Northeast, it also seems evident that the new policy around credits and team teaching isn't widely known. Other faculty members in the department and elsewhere on campus were not sure about the change. One faculty member (B8) with a strong record of working collaboratively declared that if co-teaching involved full credit, "I would want to do it."

Another faculty member (B7) reported: "There are conversations people have…, but beyond that, there is no co-teaching." The faculty member (B7) attributed the lack of co-teaching to the department's structure and choices regarding faculty specializations, noting, "There is not enough close expertise. We've tried to get a spread."

Research. An experienced faculty member (B9) said: "From a research point of view, we are pretty separated by design. We hire to fill gaps, so we are not able to work with [similar expertise]. So we almost try not to." While there appears to be little shared, published research happening in the department, the faculty member (B9) noted that there is nevertheless, a collective support for the research of colleagues. The faculty member (B9) explained: "On the research side, we think about how to share equipment… to serve the greater good," adding, "When resources are tight, people share. . . . I've always appreciated [that about the department]." The faculty member (B9) concluded, it's "not to your detriment if anyone else succeeds. . . . Here, everyone is interested in your success."

Ratings. Based on the interviews, the individual faculty and the department as a whole perceive and experience professional autonomy and collaboration as essentially in balance and of equal importance to the department's work. The ratings of levels of collaboration and autonomy seem in keeping with the interview results. Overall, the faculty members interviewed valued their experience of both phenomena—and the relationship between them (see Table 4.3).

Table 4.3

Faculty Ratings: Northeast Liberal Arts Natural Sciences

Interview Code	Collab 1 (current)	Collab 2 (prefer)	Auton 1 (current)	Auton 2 (prefer)
20J	8	8	5	**4**
20I	3.5	**7**	9	9
20H	8	8	8	8
20G	8	8	9	9
20F	9	9	8	8
Mean	7.3	**8**	7.8	**7.6**

Note. Prefer change from current experience: **bold** = prefer more; **underline** = prefer less.

The ratings provided by each faculty member found in Table 4.3, when plotted on Figure 4.3, show the relationship of the current experiences of collaboration and autonomy and then the preferred levels of both collaboration and autonomy for each faculty member.

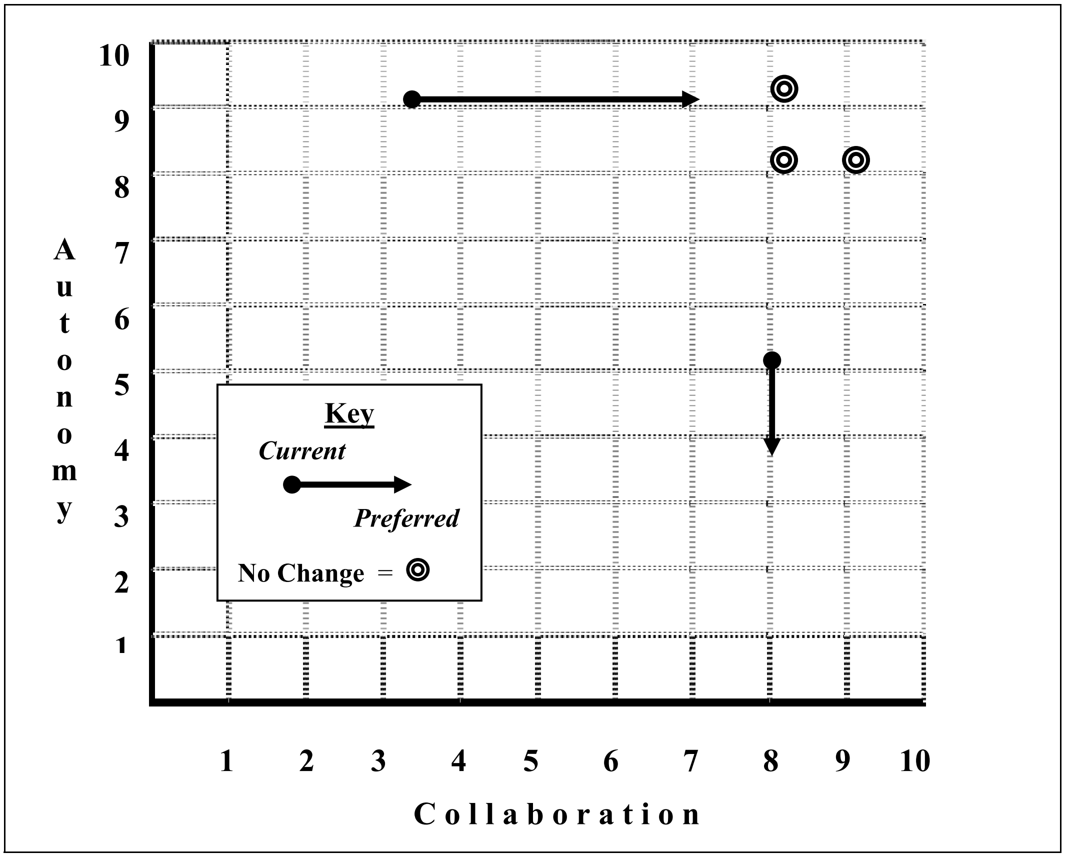


Figure 4*.3.* Collaboration and Autonomy: NE Liberal Arts Natural Sciences. Symbols on the graph represent responses from each faculty member interviewed in the unit. Arrows indicate responses that involved a change from a current (base of arrow) to a preferred level (tip of arrow) of both collaboration and/or professional autonomy. The arrow points in the direction of the preferred change. The symbol "◎" represents responses in which both phenomena remained unchanged at current and preferred levels.

As with the other cases, faculty members whose responses are represented by the "no change" symbol (see Figure 4.3) were especially interested in collaboration, and three faculty members so designated had demonstrated that interest through various collaborative interactions and initiatives with colleagues.

Relationship of collaboration and autonomy. The interviews explored whether and to what degree collaboration and autonomy are interconnected phenomena, and a range of perspectives were shared.

One professor (B6) thought that too much autonomy would be costly in terms of resources and finances but also in terms of relationships and department effectiveness. The faculty member (B6) observed: "It's nice if we completely share stuff and not break it down. We've double bought things so that we don't have to share."

"I fear if I start to collaborate, my autonomy goes away," said another faculty member (B7), continuing, "But having been in a multidisciplinary environment, I know it doesn't happen." The faculty member (B7) then stated of collaboration and autonomy, "They are dependent. 'Ten' would be ideal, but you can't collaborate on everything. We can collaborate more globally [than we currently do], doing research, curriculum development, teaching methods."

Taking the contrary position, an experienced faculty member (B8) argued: "They are not necessarily oppositional. Autonomy can allow more room for collaboration." Along these same lines, a different faculty member (B6) said, "I don't think there is a relationship. It's more about style and personality issues." In reflecting on the two ideas, a more senior faculty member (B9) stated:

> I see them as related. . . . We emphasize research and teaching, though students and faculty collaborate on research. I see we as faculty are collaborative. I see it as a shared goal, so students get experience. But at the same time, people develop their own area of research, so they can engage students in serious research. So you almost have to have autonomy to develop one area – and at the same time, you need to appreciate collaboration. They are not really competing. It is not zero sum.

Elaborating on this idea about balance, the professor (B9) noted that collaboration,

> should be tempered with autonomy. We are not all collaborative. I don't expect collaboration on all things. Collaboration should be on the overall curriculum, space, building. . . . We can do these without full agreement. . . . I appreciate collaboration, and we also have autonomy.

Building space. As noted earlier, the whole department moved to a beautiful, new building less than a year ago, and an unexpected but common topic during the interviews involved the implications of moving into a new building in terms of the impact on faculty relationships and work. The new layout places the department sub-disciplines into two separate clusters of faculty offices, labs, and other related facilities. The clusters are on opposite sides of the building, separated by a big entryway and a couple of hallways. Within each unit, the offices are right next to each other, surrounded by classrooms, labs, lounges, and support areas.

One faculty member (B6) felt that the new layout, with two banks of offices, was a better design for increasing opportunities to interact in comparison to the previous building with "the offices scattered around the floor." The faculty member (B6) noted that the two sections create "a bigger separation." But at the same time, the "”five people in a section see each other a lot. This structure is so much better. . . . Now the offices are next to each other."

In noting the new design's potential impact on the department, a faculty member (B8) from the other sub-discipline approved of the new building, but lamented: "We can go days without seeing people in the other wing." The faculty member (B8) continued:

> We talk less. We go from a place where no one knew if you were there. Now, we're on top of each other, but there are no conversations. I don't think it can be done differently. There would be drawbacks to reorganizing it.

Yet another faculty member (B9) expressed appreciation for the new office configuration over the more scattered approach with the old building. The architects "felt the design would improve faculty collaboration, and I like that," explained the faculty member (B9), adding, however, that the new design does seem to reduce interactions between members of the sub-units. This faculty member (B9) noted that the frequency of faculty meetings had been increased to about every two weeks (and reduced in duration) as a consequence.

Colleagues and friends. In the interviews faculty members described the department relationships in terms like “team,” “friend,” “social,” and “fun.” An experienced faculty member (B10) exclaimed, “I feel so lucky to be in a department where there is a collaborative spirit.” The faculty member (B10) added: “We have disagreements and come to consensus more than we don’t. I don’t get the sense people feel burdened. . . . We have a common vision. Even during the building design, we respect each other’s strong opinions.”

One faculty member (B6) shared: “I appreciate my colleagues. We have the right balance between friendship and distance.” In comparing the relationships and working environment of previous institutions, the faculty member (B6) declared: “Things are much better here. . . . [In the other institution] there was no collaboration, no sense of helping each other, no sense of team. We were just all on a separate treadmill facing the same direction.” Another faculty member (B8) added:

> There is a social aspect to the department. Our teaching benefits from this too. It helps with the quality. We have different backgrounds, we bring different knowledge. For me, the motivation is not so much about what I get intellectually. I get the social aspect more. It’s more fun. I think people work with those they have fun with, that they enjoy.

Collaboration with the campus. Many of the department faculty members seem to be especially involved in projects that cross the boundaries of the discipline and department. For example, one of the department’s senior faculty members chaired the campus curriculum committee that developed the new core curriculum for the entire campus. Another faculty member has developed and submitted a proposal to an interdisciplinary program with a social sciences department. An entirely different member of the department developed the Common Reading Program for the whole institution. These efforts were supported by other faculty members in the department in both direct and indirect ways.

Department faculty members have also been involved in projects in the local area. For instance, several have developed and lead summer workshops for K-12 teachers.

Suggestions expanding collaboration. A few interesting suggestions were made during the interviews about how to increase collaboration among faculty members. For instance, one faculty member (B8) stated that collaboration: "would need to happen naturally, such as merit-based raises, primarily from research. You would probably need to do more at the tenure process level. I don't think you can or should enforce better teaching. You could give incentives perhaps." The faculty member (B8) also reported, with an air of disdain, "There was an incentive for the business school faculty. They got $1000 per article published—automatically."

Another experienced faculty member (B9) saw an opportunity to promote more collaborative research among the department faculty, something that is currently almost non-existent. "We could work on different parts of some project," said the faculty member (B9). The faculty member (B9) added, "We could create real synergy. We've stayed away to maintain the breadth of what we offer. But we could do it, and I think it would be fun." The faculty member (B9) emphasized team or co-teaching, adding:

> There is already a fair amount of working together. It is not team teaching. But the new campus-wide curriculum is across departments, it is interdisciplinary. There is some concern about workload issues. There are mixed signals about

> getting credit for courses. Now, it is clear that both faculty members get full credit.

One faculty member (B7) noted: “We could use more collaboration on teaching methods.” The periodic Science Lunches served as inspiration for a suggestion by another faculty member (B8), who recommended, “They have a Science Lunch. . . . Maybe we could have a Journal Club, where we discuss a research paper of interest. We could have food. Food brings people together. Food, Community, and Science!”

Case Study 4: Midwest Regional Professional Studies

Overview of institution. Midwest Regional University is a comprehensive state university with a mostly undergraduate student population of about 3000. The institution is located in a town of about 25, 000. It is the most important community in a large area, and the university is nestled right in the middle of town, with a compact campus dotted with impressive buildings, both new and old. Midwest Regional University is experiencing a number of difficult challenges, including significant budget constraints, caused and exacerbated by the declining population base of the entire region.

These ongoing financial challenges are perhaps magnified in the “School of Professional Studies” which has seen enrollments decline in recent years and has had a revolving door at the school’s dean position. Over a half dozen different people have held the position in the past four years. A new, experienced dean has been hired, and for the first time in years, the school seems to have stability at this key leadership position.

To address the enrollment and financial challenges, the university and school have begun to develop new program initiatives and income streams. The university has begun a vigorous effort to create an online presence in all departments, and online enrollment is said to have reached nearly a third of the overall enrollment. The School of Professional

Studies has participated in this initiative, and it has also begun an aggressive student recruiting campaign overseas to bring students to the campus for specially designed programs. Finally, the Professional Studies School has begun to seek a specialized accreditation to enhance its marketing appeal and emphasize the quality of the degrees.

Overview of interviews. The case focus is on three small, closely related departments of the undergraduate “School of Professional Studies,” involving 14 full-time faculty members and a few adjuncts and other part-time faculty. Eleven of the full-time faculty members were formally interviewed. Background information was also gathered through interviews of key academic staff and administrators, as well as through informal interactions with full-time faculty members not included in the formal interviews.

The school is facing a number of challenges, and the interviews indicated that many of the participants were feeling some stress about the future. The interviews were, nevertheless, informative and the participants forthright. I enjoyed meeting and talking with each and every one of the interviewees, and I found their individual and collective stories to be compelling and at times poignantly so. I also had the opportunity to have dinner or coffee with a few of the faculty members and to get to know them in an informal manner. I enjoyed these conversation and interactions, and they provided me with additional understanding of the institution and the community context.

***Fit* with area.** A recurring theme involved the nature of life in a small, rural community in the Midwest, with long winters. These topics often lead to a conversation about the importance of faculty *fit*—both with the institution and the community. One faculty member noted that most of the students were from rural areas and small towns.

He (C6) marveled, “One student is from a 10 person class!” Another professor (C4) noted that there comes a time when a faculty member must decide to make a life and career in the area, “either from necessity or because you like the area. . . . Or, you’ll want to leave.”

For some, of course, this is precisely the kind of community and school they find appealing. “I taught at various schools,” said one professor (C11). He continued: “Teaching 300-500 students is not teaching in my opinion. This is small. . . . The appeal is the personal contact. You get to know the students.” Another senior faculty member (C1) remarked,

> I like the small school atmosphere. I went to a small high school, with about 200 students total. You get to know the professors, other students well. It is the same here, you can get to know all of the faculty.

Challenges of demographics and resources. A senior faculty member (C7) recalled the greater resources available years ago. Faculty were encouraged and paid to take summer workshops to increase their expertise; research and participation in conferences were fully funded. The professor (C7) declared: “That has entirely changed.”

Amidst the general concern about financial viability, several faculty members expressed misgivings about the new initiatives. One of the senior faculty (C2), observed:

> We aren’t looking at the ramifications for our heavy push to go online. We are losing control of our product. We may never see the students, but we sign off on the student being a ______ major here. We are outsourcing our profession. We lack strategic vision of what this implies.

Several faculty members expressed concerns about monitoring the quality of online courses. However, other faculty members saw opportunity in the new online initiatives. One faculty member (C8) offered: “There has been a huge increase in online courses. I don't think it's necessarily better, but there are people who can't get a degree otherwise. If we don't offer it, they will do the degree with another school."

The recent introduction of numerous foreign students helped bring much needed revenue to the campus and the School of Professional Studies. This initiative raised some faculty concerns as well. However, there were also proponents who welcomed both the additional revenue and the new students. One faculty member (C6) declared: "They tend to be the better students I teach. . . . It's nice to be taken seriously in the classroom."

Professional autonomy. During the interviews, several faculty members volunteered that autonomy was an important element in their decision to enter and/or remain in the academy. "Autonomy is probably the one thing that keeps me here," declared one faculty member (C10). A professor (C1) with about 15 years experience in the school said autonomy, "is part of why I came to the profession."

While autonomy was broadly interpreted to cover anything that involved faculty work, most of the responses tended to focus on autonomy in the classroom. A senior faculty member (C7) explained that the institution has a, "Teaching focus, mostly not a lot of research. . . . There is a lot of autonomy with the position. For me, that is a major attraction. . . . My entire career I've been a teaching faculty."

One of the newer members of the school (C10) explained: "In class, within reason, I can teach on a broad range of topics. I try to keep it to what is needed for a [licensing] exam. I have broad discretion. I feel the same is true for research." Another faculty member (C8), previously in a for-profit institution with a "cookie cutter" approach to teaching noted: "I'm pretty free. I develop my classes, I choose the books. I am free to cover [what I want]. . . . I don't feel I need people watching over me. It's nice to have that freedom."

When asked about the nature of professional autonomy, a relatively new professor (C9) said, "You can choose what you teach, what you research, and all the rest. . . . But the department has requirements in them, so [autonomy] is somewhat constrained."

Faculty generally expressed appreciation for a high degree of autonomy in their work. A couple felt constrained by the emphasis on teaching (the typical teaching load is four courses per semester) and on the need to fill certain required courses. But as a rule, the faculty indicated satisfaction in the freedom they have within their own courses.

Little collaboration as norm. Several faculty members declared unequivocally that collaboration does not happen between faculty members within and among the departments. Other colleagues said collaboration does occur with at least some regularity. Nevertheless, the overall impression from the interviews, supported in the ratings, is that collaboration is not a regular feature of faculty work in the departments.

When asked to characterize faculty collaboration within the departments, one senior faculty member (C2) replied: "It's limited to non-existent. . . . There is no team teaching, no seminar lectures, no mixed research interests." He (C2) continued: "It's tough to collaborate with someone who thinks the only value is in their class." Another senior faculty member (C3) reported: "There is not much joint research here. Collaboration is next to zero!" He (C3) added: "I don't do any."

"We have no collaboration here whatsoever," declared a colleague (C4). He (C4) lamented: "We lack a research atmosphere." Stating a similar sentiment, another faculty member (C10) said, “If by collaboration you mean doing research, I look around, and I don’t see any collaboration. Or I’m not yet party to it.”

Several faculty members said a few colleagues were on campus only the bare minimum. These faculty members were said to teach classes and to hold only the required office hours, thus limiting opportunities to engage in collaboration with colleagues. “They teach their classes and go,” said one professor (C9) in frustration.

Possibility of collaboration. A few of the faculty members who reported that collaboration was essentially missing in the departments nevertheless expressed support for collaborative work. One faculty member (C4) said when doing research,

> You cannot be an expert in all things. At (a previous institution), I was told you can’t be an expert on everything. It’s part of why I went there. It’s fun too! (A previous institution) was interdisciplinary, we had fun together.

A relatively new faculty member (C4) added, “Collaboration probably comes more from happy faculty.” The professor (C4) noted the school’s effort to achieve discipline-specific accreditation, and added, “We probably need to collaborate to do that.” This point was reinforced by another faculty member (C5) who felt that faculty collaboration is important generally, and particularly in the school’s effort to achieve accreditation. He (C5) predicted: “we won’t get accreditation if we don’t have it.”

A few faculty members, however, gave examples of collaboration within the departments, often involving relatively mundane matters. A couple of faculty members reported that they had asked colleagues to join them as guest speakers in a class. Others said they had solicited or given suggestions for structuring a particular assignment.

Collaborative research came up in a few of the interviews as well. For instance, a faculty member with a history of doing research and publication on his own had recently began his first collaborative project—with a colleague in the school. The professor (C6) explained that the project came about as a conscious effort to combine their two academic strengths, with consideration for their personal styles.

One of the senior professors has an extensive record of collaborative research and publications. The faculty member has engaged in collaborative work with colleagues in the academic unit and has had a long, productive partnership with a particular colleague. "I like to add my skills to others," he observed. He said this involves bringing expertise and knowledge to bear on an issue, but also being willing to engage in spirited conversation with one's collaborative partner.

The faculty member noted that collaboration can be personally satisfying, and the quality of the research and dialogue with colleagues can be improved as well. In explaining his approach, he added: "It could be a lack of fear." He (C11) explained:

> I know my strengths and weaknesses. When I work with others, it is to improve both of what we would otherwise do alone. We exchange ideas. We can go to conferences, give our evidence. I want to stimulate conversation.

Uncomfortable collaboration. The comments from a few of the interviews revealed just how unsatisfying collaboration can be as well. Several faculty members reported unsuccessful, even unpleasant experiences of collaboration which had an impact on their future interest in or even willingness to engage in collaboration. These professors tended to express a sense of ambivalence—at best—about the prospect of working with colleagues. For example, one faculty member (C10) recalled an early collaborative effort with a senior faculty member, saying:

> The time I did "collaborate" I did all of the work. It was research. I was new at this stuff. I was learning to move to the next level. . . . Because I was a new faculty, I felt I should collaborate. We did a little work [together], but … I did most of it.

A senior faculty member (C3) attempted to engage in a research collaboration, recalled:

> A few years ago, I got research funding for collaboration across the state system. I tried to find a partner elsewhere. I made a little effort, but there was no result. I couldn't find anyone interested in my area. The program is not happening now. It lasted a year, I think.

Teaching. As a general rule, faculty members in the School for Professional Studies are largely left to structure and teach their classes as they please. Some faculty members report that they coordinate their efforts when courses have separate sections. Faculty members also support each other as chance and shared interests emerge. One of the newer faculty members (C8) expressed appreciation for the ongoing coaching and conversation from a more experienced colleague. This support has been invaluable to the new faculty member (C8) who noted: "It helps to discuss a class, or have someone come into class. We've had three to four department meetings. Otherwise, it's ad hoc." In turn, this faculty member (C8) has helped some of the adjuncts in similar ways.

Team teaching was apparently more common years ago, and several faculty interviewees noted that a policy change ended the practice. "After that," a senior faculty member (C1) explained, "you got a percentage of credit for teaching, so you had to go get more load. So, there was no more team teaching. We are missing lots of opportunities to benefit students—and with colleagues too." The faculty member (C1) was involved in team teaching with a colleague in a different department, but said with a sigh: "Now, I might do a guest lecture, but students don't build a relationship with me in that way."

Service. Community or campus service was not cited as an example of faculty collaboration. Nevertheless, most faculty members reported some committee work or other forms of service.

Levels of autonomy and collaboration. The faculty members interviewed in the three departments of the School for Professional Studies generally have a high sense of professional autonomy. However, as noted in their self-reported ratings, they would also welcome a modest increase in that autonomy. The faculty ratings for the current and optimal levels of collaboration are somewhat variable, perhaps representing the ambivalence and even frustration many expressed about the leadership, university and even each other. Nevertheless, faculty members generally report in their ratings and in conversation that they wanted more collaboration with colleagues, whether involving research, publication, course design, community outreach and more. Only one faculty member of eleven said less collaboration would be preferable. Table 4.4 represents these self-reported ratings.

Table 4.4

Faculty Ratings: Midwest Regional Professional Studies

Interview Code	Collab 1 (current)	Collab 2 (prefer)	Auton 1 (current)	Auton 2 (prefer)
30K	2	**5**	9.5	**8.5**
30J	2.5	**8.5**	8	**8.5**
30I	3.5	**4.5**	8.5	8.5
30H	2	**10**	5	**10**
30G	6	**8**	8	8
30F	8.5	8.5	9	9
30E	6.5	**1**	3.5	**10**
30D	5	**9.5**	9.5	9.5
30C	4	**7**	7.5	7.5
30B	2	**4**	9.5	9.5
30A	6.5	6.5	9	9
Mean	4.41	**6.59**	7.91	**8.91**

Note. Prefer change from current experience: **bold** = prefer more; **underline** = prefer less.

The ratings provided by each faculty member found in Table 4.4, when plotted on Figure 4.4 show the relationship of the current experiences of collaboration and autonomy and then the preferred levels of both for each faculty member interviewed.

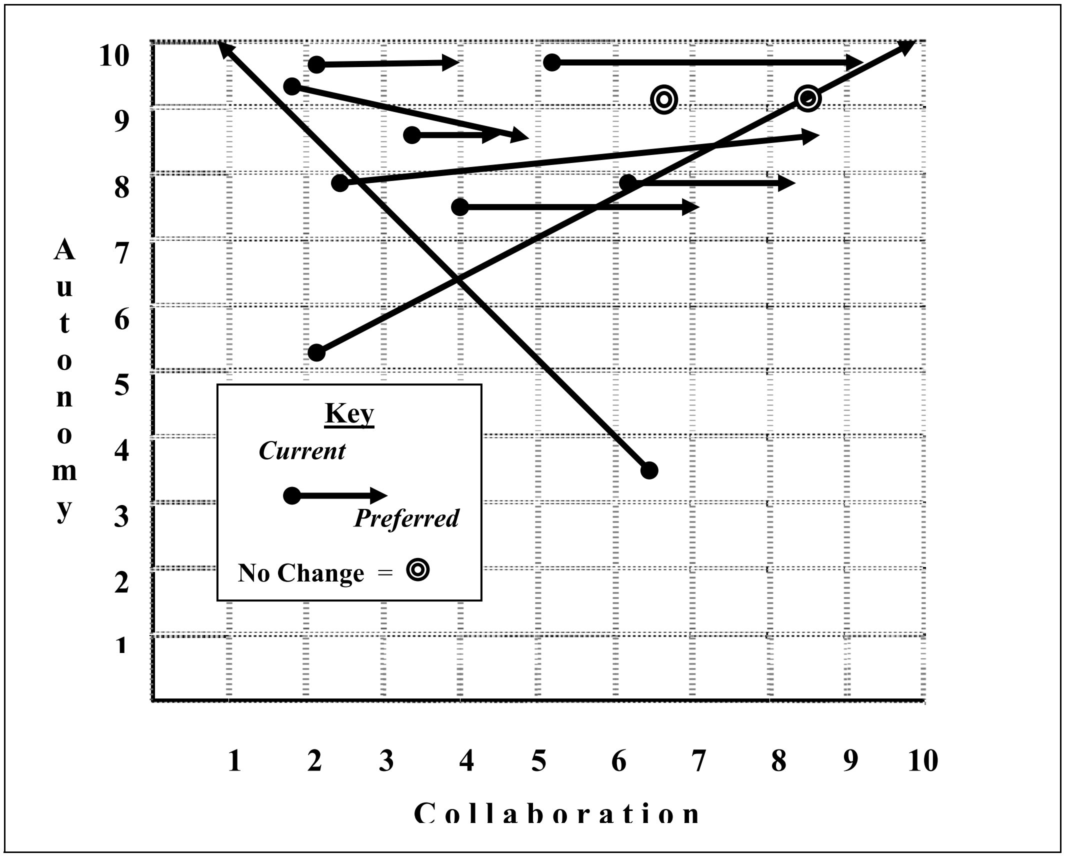


Figure 4.4. Collaboration and Autonomy: Midwest Professional Studies.
Symbols on the graph represent responses from each faculty member interviewed in the department. Arrows indicate responses that involved a change from a current (base of arrow) to a preferred level (tip of arrow) of collaboration and/or professional autonomy. The arrow points in the direction of the preferred change. An "◎" represents responses in which both phenomena remained unchanged at current and preferred levels.

Role of leadership. The experience of ever-changing, sometimes uneven leadership, combined with decreasing resources, has clearly been a source of confusion and demoralization for the school faculty as a whole. For instance, a senior faculty member (C5) noted: "When we had a dean here, we had meetings, and last year, not any. It would be good if we had one way to get everyone aware what is happening." Amidst a series of acting deans, moreover, one dean was hired to a permanent position. "He was here only six or seven months," reported one of the newer faculty members (C10), adding, "He started the idea of collaboration with senior faculty. But he left. It was a great idea, but it never really happened. I could have really benefited by the mentoring."

The resulting sense of disempowerment and disengagement came up in several interviews, in both small and large ways. One professor (C10) described the disappointment of receiving an award at a conference without being recognized for the achievement by the school or institution. Another experienced professor (C1) reported:

> I have seen us go through changes since I have been here. We have been nearly five years without leadership. We had lots of interims as deans. I think this effected how we think about and work together. When I was first here, there was a lot of collaboration, in terms of research, planning, and even team teaching.

The lack of steady, permanent leadership, said one of the senior faculty (C1), has had a negative impact. He (C1) noted that inconsistent leadership meant that faculty came to school only as necessary. This meant the creative and community-building activities of "BS sessions over coffee" ended, and the faculty no longer took time to "kick around ideas." He (C1) concluded: "It was cohesive, and now things are very loose."

Another tenured faculty member (C2) recalled: "For about eight to ten years, we were a very collegial group. . . . About five years ago, that dropped off." The faculty member (C2) spoke pensively of that earlier time when faculty of the school enjoyed summer cook outs, and even included faculty from other schools and departments.

While the past few years without formal leadership have been difficult, faculty members did endeavor to move forward as best they could. Each department includes a coordinator, similar to a chair, and these helped by setting up the course schedules, and ensured that reports and assessments were completed. Many of the interim dean placeholders came from the school faculty ranks. One of the school's own faculty is now the permanent dean and has already helped bring a sense of stability and direction.

Though many of the faculty members expressed frustration at this history, there was also a sense of commitment that came through in the interviews. After all, faculty members stepped up, in turns, to try to help their departments and the School of Professional Studies. Yet it is also clear from the interviews that those who took on an interim role, did not really feel empowered to address the critical issues. A senior faculty member (C6) concluded: "I think it damages us. There is no consistency, and people don't think it's important."

Relationship of autonomy and collaboration. Faculty members varied in their conceptions of how and to what degree professional autonomy and collaboration were interconnected. One participant (C6) said the questions implied: "You seem to think collaboration lowers professional autonomy. I haven't found that." On the other hand, a colleague (C9) said that autonomy and collaboration, "almost seem to be on different ends of the spectrum. If you collaborate on research, it decreases the autonomy. You are going in the direction of your partner. More faculty collaboration is probably better."

In making the point that both collaboration and autonomy can and must coexist, tenured faculty member (C1) observed:

> I have obligations, but I can pick and choose what I want to do. I can pick courses. Even junior faculty can do that pretty much. I can set up my schedule, to have time for research, and I choose topics to focus on.

This faculty member (C1) argued that professional autonomy should not preclude responsibility, saying: “But most faculty need to show up to student activities, show up to school events.” Autonomy, the professor (C1) believed, is “the point of the deal, part of getting the PhD. But some abuse it.”

These comments suggest that faculty ideas about autonomy and collaboration varied, and practice did as well. However, the relative lack of collaboration shaped both how faculty thought about and acted on the two phenomena in relationship. A senior faculty member (C2) asserted: “We have autonomy, but it is more a lack of collaboration.” Making a related point, another veteran faculty member (C3) observed: “The principle emphasis is on teaching. As long as you do teaching, the rest of the hours, they don’t care. If that is autonomy, okay.”

One of the faculty members (C11) who expressed keen interest in collaboration nevertheless guarded his professional autonomy. He (C11) asserted: “I choose what I collaborate about. . . . Freedom is part of the payment for this job. I don’t want anyone to tell me what to teach.”

The faculty member (C11) nevertheless expressed frustration at the way some colleagues held their responsibilities. “What is wrong with autonomy is, too many faculty don’t treat this as a job,” lamented the faculty member (C11), adding, “You only have to be here for 18 hours a week.” This was the total course teaching load and office hours expected of each faculty member.

Chapter V: Analysis and Discussion

Overview

A coherent picture of faculty perspectives on collaboration and autonomy may seem improbable given the disparate institutional types and academic units examined in this study. However, through analysis of the interviews from each unit, important patterns and intersections emerge, as well as significant differences.

The interviews overwhelmingly reveal that faculty members value professional autonomy, generally more than they value collaboration. At the same time, the interviews suggest that in each unit, there is a sincere interest in collaborative work and perhaps a desire to engage in more of it.

Collaborative efforts were apparent in each of the academic units studied, and each unit had a few, even many faculty members who would like to engage in more collaborative work. As might be expected, however, the academic units weren't fundamentally organized for and therefore didn't fully support collaboration. Faculty members generally focused on their individual responsibilities, and they did not seem to be intentionally socialized toward collaboration.

Overview: Autonomy as professional essence. The interviews with faculty members strongly suggest the primacy of professional autonomy as a value. Professional autonomy would seem to be foundational not only to the work of faculty, but to their very identity. Autonomy was noted as an expression of freedom, independence, and even of power. Based on the interviews, professional autonomy was often understood to apply to essentially anything involving an individual faculty member, and any encroachment on a faculty member's sense of autonomy might be regarded as an unacceptable infringement. In short, professional autonomy was described as a necessary condition of being a member of the academy.

In response to questions regarding their experience of autonomy, faculty members tended to be brief and unequivocal. One faculty member (C2) simply said of professional autonomy: “It’s there. We have it.” In the main, passion for professional autonomy was especially evident when the conversation turned to the possibility that it might be constrained. One senior professor (C11) asserted: “I’m born to not take orders.”

Other faculty members noted, however, that while autonomy was critical, certain responsibilities or conditions might require compromise for a greater good. “For a coherent curriculum, you need some learning goals,” observed one professor (A13), adding, “I also try to be a good citizen, to meet the goals.”

Overview: Collaboration. The interviews generally suggest that faculty members felt a desire for greater levels of collaboration in their work. Collaboration was regularly referred to in positive terms during the interviews, at times with notable animation. For some faculty members interviewed, collaboration was believed a superior means of conducting research or of writing articles—as compared to more isolated and individualistic academic traditions. “Collaborative publication is a better product,” declared a senior faculty member (A15).

A senior faculty member (A10) observed, “My reading of Social Sciences, since the 50’s, our major advances have involved teams—if not publically, they are talking together. The really important work out of research centers or research programs is interdisciplinary.” Others noted that grant funders increasingly expected faculty to emphasize collaborative work. One senior faculty member (A8) described a survey research project with a colleague from the department, explaining:

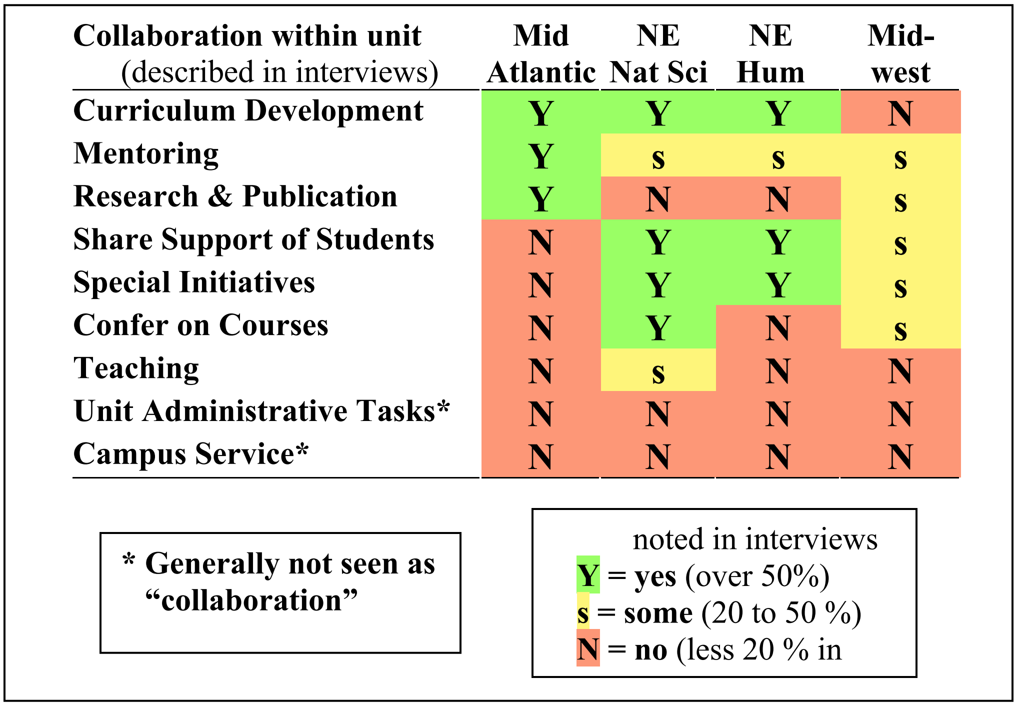
> I probably could have written a proposal that was 90% as good [as what we wrote]. But things are so competitive now, that extra 10% is the difference. . . . The benefits are at the margins. It makes something that is good into very good.

However, collaboration wasn't universally seen as a vital element of faculty work. Collaboration could be a style of work; it could be chosen—or not. For many, it was a means to an end, and for some, even a preferred means. But collaboration wasn't generally seen as essential to the work of the academic units. Every unit had some collaborative practices, but collaboration was not understood to be the primary means of organizing the work.

Some faculty members simply preferred to work alone, saying it was less complicated and afforded them more control. Stated concerns about collaborative work included: the time it could require, the potential impact on tenure, and the need for being clear about individual intellectual contributions.

In all cases, the range of collaborative practices was not as widespread or deeply embedded in the routines of the faculty members or academic units as might be. Areas of collaborative or cooperative work were clearly evident, and yet all of the academic units had broad areas of faculty work and responsibility where collaboration wasn't readily apparent. The range of self-reported collaborative practices is outlined in Figure 5.1.

The elusive nature of collaboration. The overall impression from the conversations was that collaboration in some form was happening in each academic unit studied. At the same time, it probably wasn't a concept that had received much intentional focus up to that point. Perhaps a telling sign included the fact that several professors asked me for my definition of collaboration, though none sought a definition of professional autonomy.



Collaboration within unit (described in interviews)	**Mid Atlantic**	**NE Nat Sci**	**NE Hum**	**Mid-west**
Curriculum Development	**Y**	**Y**	**Y**	**N**
Mentoring	**Y**	**s**	**s**	**s**
Research & Publication	**Y**	**N**	**N**	**s**
Share Support of Students	**N**	**Y**	**Y**	**s**
Special Initiatives	**N**	**Y**	**Y**	**s**
Confer on Courses	**N**	**Y**	**N**	**s**
Teaching	**N**	**s**	**N**	**N**
Unit Administrative Tasks*	**N**	**N**	**N**	**N**
Campus Service*	**N**	**N**	**N**	**N**

*** Generally not seen as “collaboration”**

noted in interviews
Y = **yes** (over 50%)
s = **some** (20 to 50 %)
N = **no** (less 20 % in

Figure 5.1. Practices of Collaboration

Some faculty responses indicated that collaboration simply entailed any interaction or activity involving another person, no matter how intentional, mutual, or productive. Research was by far the dominant form of collaboration cited within the unit at Mid Atlantic. In the other units, research was identified as a possible collaborative activity, though it was an uncommon in practice. Nevertheless, faculty from the three other units expressed a wider range of activities included under the term collaboration. One faculty member (B8) at Northeast said of the department: “We are not always working together on research. That’s not that common. We have a culture of discussing research, and teaching, and making the department better. So, it is very collaborative.”

A few faculty members suggested a definition of collaboration that fit closely with the basic definition provided at the beginning of this dissertation: to co-labor. One senior faculty member (A11) said, “Collaboration is work toward a common goal.” In another institution, an Associate Professor (B8) offered: “When I hear collaboration, I think of working together for a common goal, not necessarily research. It could be talking about teaching, scholarship, almost entirely positive experiences.”

At other times the examples of collaboration sounded decidedly one-sided, even coercive and abusive. Faculty members who had experienced or heard of such negative experiences often cited them as reasons to avoid further attempts at working with others.

Faculty members conceived of a range of relationships involving professional autonomy and collaboration. At times, the two phenomena were said to exist in opposition, and thus emphasis on one would tend to negate the other. But more often, the relationship was understood in a more complex dynamic. One senior faculty member (B1) observed: “They are not mutually exclusive but they are mutually constraining.” A few faculty members noted that collaboration need not take away individual choices, or limit one’s ability to state an opinion. For these faculty members, acting in collaboration need not negate one’s expertise and judgment. Moreover, some faculty members pointed out that collaboration might even amplify options of inquiry.

Nevertheless, the interactions of two concepts were often described in decidedly zero-sum terms, especially if collaboration might be conceived as inhibiting autonomy in some way. One faculty member (B2) exclaimed: “I would not be comfortable in a department where collaboration was expected.” In a different institution, another faculty member reacted strongly to the idea of an initiative designed to encourage collaborative work. The faculty member (A13) said, “That to me is a little worrisome. I mean, I’m a collaborator. It worries me to incentivize exclusively. It’s a weird place to put resources—incentivize collaborative work.” This faculty member had a solid history of working with others, and at the same time, the idea of providing explicit institutional support for collaboration seemed to step over a boundary of some kind.

Thus, faculty members tended to think of the success of a collaborative relationship as being closely tied to professional autonomy. In other words, a faculty member was likely to determine the success of a collaborative endeavor, at least in part, based on how much he or she was able to retain a sense of independence and autonomy.

A collaborative experience of one of the interviewed faculty members may serve as an example. The faculty member joined a group of colleagues from another part of the institution in a community research project. Though the project had the appearance of collaboration, the faculty member (B2) explained:

> It became overt to me and others that this was [fundamentally the other unit’s] project, and our contributions were devalued and in a secondary position. It looked good for the university, and it was helpful to students who went on to graduate school, but it left a bad taste. . . . It felt like there was no real collaboration. It was collaboration in name only. It was really a reporting and compiling function, and it was not about generating conversation, new ideas, and the like. So I saw the limitations of collaboration.

Perhaps because of experiences like this, balancing autonomy within a collaborative relationship, declared some faculty members, requires clear guidelines and explicit agreements. One faculty member (A6) working with students on research said: “I drew up rules on authorship, and other issues, so that everyone knows them. . . . I think they are very healthy.” In speaking about collaborative work with colleagues, another professor (A13) advised: “It is important to have explicit conversations about collaboration." Such conversations, the faculty member advised, should cover the responsibilities taken on by each person, guidelines about who gets credit, and so forth.

Other faculty members also considered the quality of the experience, or *how* collaboration might be experienced. One faculty member (A2) explained: "Collaboration conjures up research, but also community building." For some faculty members, a sense of community could balances individual needs and those of the collective organically.

Nevertheless, a few faculty members shared stories about unsuccessful and unpleasant experiences of working with colleagues, sometimes involving relationships gone very wrong. Though the specifics vary greatly, the point of breakdown clearly involved a loss of autonomy—at the very least. In more than one instance, the experience took place in the early stages of the faculty member's career. One new faculty member had begun a collaborative research project with a senior colleague. The junior faculty member (C10) reported doing all of the work, and concluded: "After that experience, I felt if this is collaboration, with a senior member, I'd rather be alone."

The interviews suggest that the onus tended to be on the individual faculty member to figure out how collaboration might work. In some cases, this entailed a troubling journey, costly to both individual professors and the academy. One faculty member (B7) with an especially challenging, even traumatizing early experience of collaboration said, "I fear if I start to collaborate, my autonomy goes away. But having been in a multidisciplinary environment, I know it doesn't happen."

Other faculty members told a very similar story, yet the experience did not keep them from collaborating in the future. In fact, some of the most collaborative faculty members could point to an early bad experience. They persevered, however, and learned how to find and nurture good working relationships with others who could reciprocate.

Leaning toward collaboration. While faculty ratings of collaboration and autonomy provide a sense of how each faculty member thought about the phenomena, each rating was made within the context of a conversation. Collectively, the ratings provide an overall unit perspective of present reality, as well as a sense of the direction of preferred change. Of course, the size of the sample means that the ratings must be understood as no more than a window into what is a richer, more nuanced narrative. Table 5.1 presents these aggregate ratings.

Table 5.1

Autonomy and Collaboration in Four Academic Units

Academic Unit	**Primary form**	**Collab 1** (current)	**Collab 2** (prefer)	**Auton 1** (current)	**Auton 2** (prefer)	**Change** in **Collab**	**Change** in **Auton**
Mid Atl R1 Soc Sciences	Research/ publication	6.68	7.64	8.82	8.86	+ **0.96**	+ **0.04**
NE Lib Humanities	Senior projects	6.9	7.4	7.9	7.7	+ **0.5**	**- 0.2**
NE Lib Nat Sciences	Senior Research	7.3	8	7.8	7.6	+ **0.5**	**- 0.2**
Mid-W Reg Prof Studies	Student support	4.41	6.59	7.91	8.91	+ **2.18**	+ **1.0**
Total (35)		6.09	7.33	8.26	8.53	+ **1.24**	+ **0.37**

Note. Prefer change from current experience: **+ bold** = prefer more; **- underline** = prefer less.

The data, whether from interviews or ratings, point to a general agreement among faculty that their experience of professional autonomy is presently at just about the right level for those participating in the study. Every academic unit studied—as a unit—expressed some preference for more collaboration among faculty colleagues. The interviews often captured a sense of curiosity and even enthusiasm for the notion of collaboration, and a few interviews even suggested a yearning for it. Collectively, faculty members would seem to indicate support for greater expressions of collaboration. Figure 5.2 represents the total ratings of all interviewed faculty members in each unit.

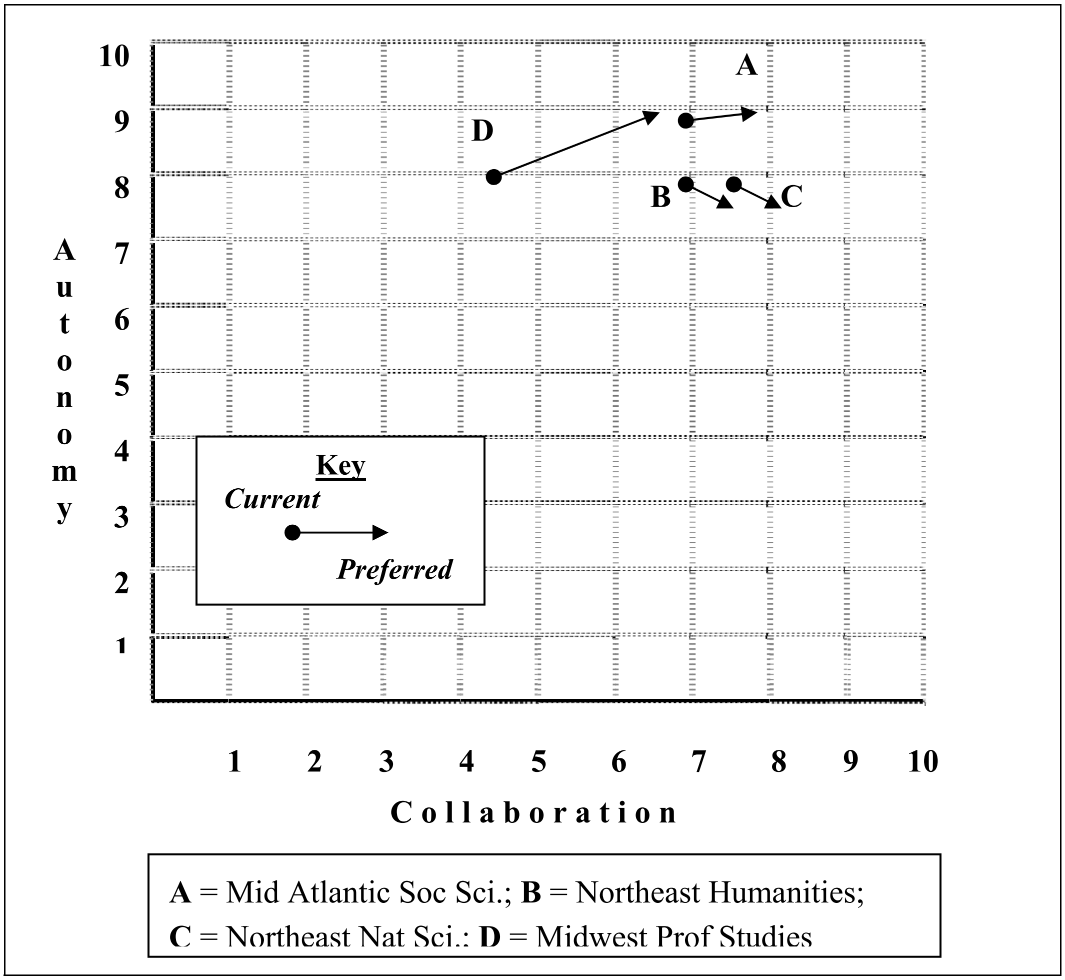


Figure 5.2. Collaboration and Autonomy in Four Academic Units.

A kind of dynamic interplay of information and perspective provided a textured picture when both faculty comments and ratings from the 36 interviews were considered. For instance, through the ratings, 16 faculty members said they wanted to engage in more collaboration, while only five gave ratings indicating a wish for more autonomy. This fits with the interviews which indicated general satisfaction with professional autonomy, along with expressions of a desire for more collaboration.

The conversations also help make meaning of other data. For example, a total of five faculty members preferred to experience less autonomy (for themselves and unit colleagues). Three of these were quite active in a range of collaborative activities, and their comments suggested the potential for greater collaboration when autonomy is not so absolute. Also, 12 faculty members said their current and preferred experiences of both collaboration and autonomy would, ideally, remain unchanged. These responses are represented by a "no change" symbol in Figure 4.1 through Figure 4.4, and in all cases, are found in the upper right corner of the graphs representing faculty responses for each unit. Ten of these "no change" faculty members had extensive records of collaboration and expressed an ongoing interest in working collaboratively with peers. Thus, both the interviews and ratings imply some preference for collaboration, and together, the overall picture suggests a collective leaning toward collaboration within each unit.

Systemic isolation: Structures and incentives. The ratings suggest some collective, preferred leaning toward more collaboration within each unit, and the interviews certainly reflected such a preference, with individual differences, of course. But, it also appears that the rewards and incentives in every unit—as in the academy at large—clearly emphasized the performance and perspective of individual faculty members. Tenure was a prominent element in many of the conversations, of course, but signs of the highly independent, often compartmentalized nature of the academy were plainly evident in many ways. For instance, most of the daily routines of faculty members were accomplished in relative isolation. Co-teaching was practically non-existent and courses were almost an exclusive, private domain. Offices were often empty and doors closed, faculty meetings happened infrequently and even rarely. Fundamental experiences of time and space both reflected and reinforced isolation.

Faculty descriptions of the routines and environments in each unit accentuate this point. One professor noted that faculty members in the department tended to be "Monday-Wednesday Faculty" or "Tuesday-Thursday Faculty" (A10) depending on when they taught or came to campus. The two schedules divided the department faculty into two separate, isolated and yet loosely associated cohorts. Another professor (B5) in a different institution said that he had believed himself to be collaborative, but upon reflection, he now thought his work patterns were more accurately characterized as involving "a lot of interactions." Elsewhere, a junior professor (A13) suggested much of what constitutes collaboration is more akin to "parallel play," a reference to a developmental stage where there is the appearance of playing together because of close proximity while playing separately.

These and other examples hint that the intention to safeguard faculty independence and autonomy can often result in deep isolation. Nevertheless, each of the departments in which the three previously quoted professors worked could be characterized as productive and supportive—of each individual faculty member. The academic units had collaborative elements, but they were not fundamentally collaborative in nature or design.

Perhaps this overall description helps explain why the literature about faculty collaboration often seems to be of two minds. Collaboration among faculty is either characterized as expanding and increasing, or essentially non-existent. The interviews suggest that both are true. This systemic ambiguity about collaboration didn’t necessarily equate with personal ambivalence about collaboration, though the system nevertheless seemed to influence the choices available to faculty members.

Potential Correlates Influencing Collaboration

Over the course of the study, a few themes began to emerge that seemed to be associated with collaboration, suggesting new ways of understanding the relationship between collaboration and professional autonomy. The themes included: (a) Gender Diversity, (b) Professional Enculturation, and (c) Cultural Diversity. Though some intriguing possibilities are suggested, the scope of this study and the size of the interview and numeric data sample mean that a possible window into a much bigger, more complex system may be available, but surely the full picture remains to be fully revealed.

Gender diversity. The interviews revealed “collaboration stars” among both men and women. These faculty members seemed to actively seek out collaborative work and partnerships. Women were more likely to express collaboration—in any form—in highly positive terms. They described collaboration as contributing to their ability to complete a given project, and many also saw it as important in its own right. An experienced female professor (B8) simply noted: “I have the freedom to be as autonomous as I want, but I generally choose to work with others.” Another experienced female faculty member (A2) from another institution said of collaboration: “Working together breaks down the barriers. . . . You have increased choices. I like doing it.”

Though some men were clearly committed to collaborative work and a few constituted some of its most enthusiastic and vocal proponents during the interviews, the men generally expressed more ambivalence about collaboration. The pattern by gender was quite striking in the interviews and is also reflected in the self-reported ratings, shown in Table 5.2.

Table 5.2

Collaboration and Gender

Number Interviews/Ratings	Collab 1 (current)	Collab 2 (prefer)	Auton 1 (current)	Auton 2 (prefer)
Female (15)	**6.97**	**8.07**	**8.37**	8.27
Male (20)	5.43	6.78	8.18	**8.73**
Total (35)	6.09	7.33	8.26	8.53

As a general rule, the ratings show that female faculty members were experiencing much higher levels of collaboration than their male colleagues. Both women and men indicated that they would like to increase their experience of collaboration substantially (by 1.1 and 1.35, respectively), though this would still leave them at some distance (1.29) from each other regarding a preferred level of collaboration. Finally, the ratings by both women and men of their current and preferred experiences of professional autonomy were relatively close. This makes the differences in the interview comments and the ratings for collaboration all the more noteworthy.

Professional enculturation. During the process of professional socialization, PhD students are expected to demonstrate their individual expertise and generate new knowledge associated with them personally. In the interviews, however, a theme began to emerge that perhaps offers some variation on this traditional narrative. At least eight of the faculty members interviewed, from three of the academic units, reported that they had significant collaborative experiences in their formative education prior to earning a doctorate. The examples often involved working closely with faculty mentors on research as doctoral students, and even as undergrads. Four of the interviewees also reported intensive collaborative work with other students during their PhD studies. None of the faculty members indicated that these experiences were specifically designed to teach or to promote collaboration.

The faculty members themselves cited these early collaborative experiences as influencing subsequent patterns of collaboration with colleagues. For example, one faculty member recalled a mentor in graduate school who helped her connect with several other scholars, which in turn resulted in several long-term collaborative relationships. The faculty member (A9) said,

> Collaboration has only done wonderful things for my career. In certain departments, they push for the sole author. I haven't had that. For me, it helps speeds things up—because we are held responsible [to each other] for the results. Only my dissertation and one or two other [articles] are not co-authored.

According to some interviewees, the connections and relationships developed as a graduate student continued into the present. One faculty member (A13) reported ongoing work in projects with peers from graduate school, explaining: "Even if we are not writing together, we are intellectually connected. There is a spirit of collaboration. We are thinking collaboratively and publishing."

Many of these faculty members with early collaborative backgrounds reported that they actively seek out collaborative relationships. The ratings in Table 5.3 are congruent with the conclusion, showing that this group of faculty prefer more collaboration (and perhaps slightly more autonomy) than the overall sample average.

An experienced faculty member (C4) chose his graduate school with collaboration in mind. He (C4) explained that the program was interdisciplinary, and he appreciated that students were told: “You cannot be an expert in all things.” As a result, they were, according to the faculty member, encouraged to work together. He (C4) added: “It’s part of why I went there. It’s fun too!”

Table 5.3

Collaboration and Professional Enculturation

Interviews	Collab 1 (current)	Collab 2 (prefer)	Auton 1 (current)	Auton 2 (prefer)
Collaboration as formative experience (8)	**6.88**	**8.06**	**8.56**	**8.75**
Total Interviewed (35)	6.09	7.33	8.26	8.53

were, according to the faculty member, encouraged to work together. He (C4) added: “It’s part of why I went there. It’s fun too!”

Two of the case study sites have begun to intentionally design faculty-student research and similar relationships into the curriculum. The Mid Atlantic Social Science department has shifted the curriculum to an “apprentice model” for the graduate students to provide intensive mentoring for the students and to increases the likelihood of students graduating with one or more published articles already in hand. At Northeast Liberal Arts College, the new curriculum requires senior research projects, supported by close faculty involvement. These changes would seem to be replicating, in a formal way, the early experiences and relationships that inspired several of the faculty members.

A final source of early exposure to collaboration was cited by a senior faculty member (B10) who explained: “When our younger faculty were in college, they were in Freshman Seminar and Learning Communities.” Thus, more new faculty entering the academy may have participated in a collaborative learning environment of some kind during their earliest formative experiences in higher education.

Culture and diversity. One of the more intriguing themes introduced in the interviews suggests culture may be an important influence in the relationship between autonomy and collaboration. Two potentially important examples of cultural diversity presented themselves through the interviews, and these will be further explored below.

International faculty. In each of the academic units studied, one or more faculty member had grown up in another country and culture. Some were academically trained in that home culture. Faculty with such backgrounds, often termed "international faculty," were a small part (n = 6) of the interviewees. Nevertheless, the interviews suggested intriguing insights. A recently immigrated faculty member (B4) observed:

> As a (Humanities professor), that has been trained in a different culture and uprooted, I think collaboration and autonomy mean really different things in different cultures. . . . In our tradition, we emphasize the collective. . . . We can even sacrifice individual interests for the collective benefit. We accept and value this. We tend not to feel urgent about being different. So autonomy doesn't mean we need to assert our own voice at each time. I don't think it is necessary to emphasize who takes charge. . . . I am flexible, as long as the end result is meaningful. I can feel fulfilled and satisfied if the larger group goal is achieved.

Five of the six international faculty member came from cultures with collective, or communitarian cultural patterns. Cultural scholars such as Michelle LeBaron (2003) note that every culture has certain "starting points" or shared perspectives that serve to inform meaning-making and define reality. One of the most oft-cited such patterns involves the seemingly competing values of individualism and communitarianism. Members of communitarian societies, tend to view the world and all social interactions with a focus on the collective.

The ratings of collaboration and autonomy collected in the interviews of international faculty members suggest that they have a somewhat higher degree of interest in collaboration than the average faculty member interviewed. Interestingly, these faculty members also said they would prefer a substantially higher level of professional autonomy. These ratings are provided in Table 5.4.

Table 5.4

Culture and Diversity as a Lens to Collaboration

Interviews: Cultural Diversity	Collab 1 (current)	Collab 2 (prefer)	Auton 1 (current)	Auton 2 (prefer)
International Fac (6)	**7.17**	**7.58**	**8.83**	**9.17**
Total Interviewed (35)	6.09	7.33	8.26	8.53

From conversations, the international faculty members seem to recognize the need for personal initiative and resilience for their success in the individualistic culture of the American academy, and the high rating for autonomy (both current and preferred) likely reflects that understanding. The professor (B4) quoted previously explained: “I have learned here that maybe you do need to assert your own voice – for respect, so you can contribute.” After demonstrating this cross-cultural understanding, the faculty member (B4) suggested a shared cross-cultural obligation—and opportunity, saying: “We need to explore both the individual and the whole.”

Diverse faculty. Insights from interviews with the international faculty members may apply in some way to a wider range of faculty members. For example, one faculty member with a diverse cultural background observed that colleagues in the academic unit were mutually respectful but didn’t tend to connect with each other outside of work. This was a source of concern to the faculty member since building closer relationships was seen as essential for increasing collaboration within the unit. The faculty member had tried a number of strategies to bring colleagues together and to foster a sense of community, but the efforts had met with limited success thus far.

In later conversations with administrators, increasing faculty diversity was reported as a priority, and administrators sincerely expressed an intention to support international, diverse faculty members. When asked how such professors might be supported, one administrator (D3) said: “It’s largely up to the discipline. . . . There is enculturation of a new person into the department, but with great respect of the individual. So it’s a ‘norming’ experience.” Another administrator (D2) said it was important the new culturally diverse faculty members “feel comfortable,” adding, “I want to help them figure out if this is the right place. So I want them to try out how to be part of a group and feel autonomous to do their own ‘stuff.’” The administrator (D2) added: “I want to help, but I don’t want to intrude.”

These responses genuinely represented an interest in supporting culturally diverse faculty members. Support was equated with giving space and allowing individuals room to think and develop ideas on their own. Again, this approach sounds appropriate from the dominant American culture lens, but it may stand in contrast to what some faculty members actually need by way of support. For the faculty member hoping to create more cohesion in the academic unit, being given more space and autonomy could be experienced as isolating and evidence of being unwelcome—just the opposite of the feelings and the intentions of the administrators and of other faculty members involved.

Collaboration and Leadership

The previous story, among others shared in the interviews, suggests that consistent, supportive leadership is essential for an academic unit to function effectively. This is not surprising, but the work of formal and informal leaders in an academic unit appears to be different from that in most other settings in important ways. For instance, the centrality of professional autonomy and independence in so many areas of responsibility is ever-present.

Formal leaders and collaboration. Faculty members and administrators alike described effective academic unit leaders as those who foster a supportive environment that ensures autonomy, clarity about time and resources for pursuing scholarly work, and space for faculty input into the affairs of the unit. The formal unit leaders seemed to provide a sense of direction and movement toward unit priorities, and they also appeared to take a collaborative approach to their duties. Leaders and administrators were not expected to create a collaborative environment per se, but several faculty members did note their appreciation for working in academic units that were notably collegial or cooperative.

At least two departments studied had a tradition of having rotating chairs, and in these departments, the norm was to have the chair serve two consecutive terms of at least three years. One chair (A8) noted: “You’ve got to realize you don’t have all of the good ideas.” This leader noted that the academic unit had a long history of collegial, even cooperative relationships. Though there were some “strong personalities,” the chair (A8) declared: “I am a lucky chair. People here live and let live. It’s the culture.”

A chair from another unit and institution spoke in similarly appreciative terms. In describing the formal leadership role, the chair (B9) explained:

> It's a lot of administrative things. I certainly run things through the faculty. I organize course schedules, and I coordinate those with the faculty. I balance with what they want. . . . I try to take care of their needs, and to listen.

Three of the units studied had experienced consistent and stable leadership, and the faculty members were, by and large, satisfied, productive and appreciative of their academic unit leaders, whether chairs or deans. The one site where faculty members expressed feelings of stress and dissatisfaction had experienced several years of inconsistent leadership. The tension seems to have eased significantly with the appointment of a full-time dean after a series of temporary and interim appointments. Having leaders and leadership to help provide some collective focus and purpose would seem to be especially important in academic units, since the independent nature of faculty work makes a unified approach challenging and perhaps all the more important.

Informal leadership and mentoring. Examples of faculty members engaging in informal leadership and mentoring relationships came up frequently in the interviews. New faculty members in particular noted the importance of relationships with mentors. Many senior faculty members, in turn, discussed the importance of the mentoring role, and some even recognized the informal leadership that they and colleagues provided to the units.

Previous leadership experience. Several faculty members interviewed had previous experience as academic administrators and formal leaders, serving three years or more in roles ranging from unit chair, to school dean, to the very senior ranks of campus administration. Every unit had at least one such returnee into the faculty ranks from the administrative side of the academic aisle. Current unit leaders cited these faculty members as important unit resources. This suggests that those faculty members with earlier experience as formal leaders and administrators might prove helpful when collaborative work is indicated. One professor (C1) with previous administrative experience summarized: “I think I’m a better faculty member having exposure to what goes on. I can be a better leader, have better insights into decisions. I can see the other side, other views.”

Rank, generation and relationships. Tenure, rank and generational factors related to collaboration and autonomy were sometimes discussed in the interviews. Interest in collaboration was evident in all faculty ranks, though junior faculty members generally seemed to express greater enthusiasm for and engagement in collaboration. Junior professors also appreciated and benefitted from positive interactions with senior faculty members. And in turn, such relationships often proved beneficial for senior faculty members as well. One tenured professor (A8) noted: “A lot of younger people seem to work here now. That’s more energizing.”

Several senior faculty members were conscious of their role as mentors to junior faculty members, and they sought out opportunities to collaborate on research, discuss course design, share teaching philosophies, and the like. Senior faculty also tended to be more likely to articulate the importance of creating a record of one’s own ideas and academic voice—especially for the purposes of achieving tenure. One full professor (A15) observed: “There is always pressure for junior faculty to show their own ideas.” The faculty member (A15) thought a moment and volunteered that compared to previous eras, collaboration “seems more possible and more desirable in the future because of technology. Technology is more likely to recognize the value of networking different values. We are more mobile and fast."

Another senior faculty member (A10) pointed to a generational change by declaring: "We have a generation of faculty who want to do their own thing. That is the compact with what was. But if you want to be a researcher, there are different styles. One size doesn't fit all."

At the same time, junior faculty members were successfully identifying senior mentors in all of the units studied. The conversations with junior faculty members were especially striking, in part because many were so enthusiastic about collaboration with colleagues. The reasons varied from excitement about learning something new, to having a chance to prove oneself and contribute to the unit and profession. An assistant professor (A14) said, "We were trained to be independent, but for me, why do that if you don't need to be? I'm not deflated, and instead inflated when I work with people."

Many of the conversations about collaboration with junior faculty members focused on tenure. Yet, interestingly, they often didn't represent collaboration as creating problems for achieving tenure. One assistant professor (A4) explained:

> I always co-author. . . . My first chair told me I might want to do solo research. I'm new, but I am not so sure. I do know that I want to always collaborate, though not with the same person all the time. I haven't gotten a strong message that I should be doing individual articles.

This seems especially notable since the assistant professors are at a point in their careers when they might normally feel under the greatest pressure to prove themselves as independent thinkers and scholars. They are forming patterns or work and identity, and at least in the units studied, that formative period seems to lean slightly toward collaboration—with the assistance of some senior colleagues who didn't have that same formative experience.

Community building. A kind of informal leadership, was seen in each unit studied, involving faculty members who actively sought greater connection and community with colleagues in the academic unit and larger institution. These faculty members created a variety of initiatives and programs, and it seemed that most that succeeded had found a balance between an academic or intellectual focus and ample opportunities for more informal interactions, for building relationships and a sense of community.

Breaking bread together. At one institution, a faculty member began a collaborative initiative that has brought together students, faculty members, administrators, and their friends and partners to enjoy good food and conversation over a formal dinner. Several units in the study have tried some version of this kind of gathering, with varying degrees of success. The example in this case may have found that right balance between building a sense of community and being able to claim a "legitimate" task on behalf of the students and academic unit—while also being relatively easy to execute repeatedly.

The concept involved "protocol banquets," and has been promoted and implemented by a senior faculty member, with help from colleagues. The event is held frequently enough that there has been a good mixing of different students, professors and administrators from the academic unit, along with participants from outside of the academic unit. The stated rationale for the event was to expose students to other cultures and life experiences than they might otherwise encounter. The hosted dinners provided students with an opportunity to gain self confidence, interact with faculty and administrators, and to learn about and practice how to present themselves as competent professionals. The dinners are ongoing, they have served to connect a variety of people over time, and they are clearly deemed an enjoyable success by participants.

Common reading anthology. Another example of community building involved a common undergraduate reading program. A faculty member wanted to introduce a locally-produced anthology for the reading program rather than the more usual book. The professor (B8) explained that an anthology could be “more interdisciplinary, so it comes at a topic from different perspectives. Everyone can learn.” After gaining support from the institution, the faculty member and a cross-campus team of staff and faculty collaboratively developed an anthology, something they have done for a number of years now. The team chooses a topic of focus and then collects articles, art, photos, and other materials to include in the anthology. Introductions to themes and sections are written by colleagues, including several colleagues from the founding professor’s unit.

The initiative is now supported by the institution and has gained recognition as a formal program. The faculty member was appointed a director for the program and gets a course release for this extra responsibility. The opportunity to work closely with colleagues on a successful, shared endeavor was clearly energizing. The faculty member (B8) concluded: “For me, the motivation is not so much about what I get intellectually. I get the social aspect more. It’s more fun. I think people work with those they have fun with, that they enjoy.”

Valuing community. These and other examples of building community suggest that some faculty have a strong desire to find creative expression in collaborative work and relationships. It seems that the units can serve as launch pads for these creative faculty—and thus for their projects. These faculty help create opportunities for the department faculty to enjoy working collaboratively with each other and with colleagues in other departments. An experienced professor (A2) observed: "How happy people are is dependent on how they feel connected to a larger community here." Another experienced faculty member (B8) from another institution explained: "There is a social aspect to the department. Our teaching benefits from this too. It helps with the quality. We have different backgrounds, we bring different knowledge."

Systemic collaboration: Core curriculum. The interviews revealed a particularly compelling example of collaboration, community building, and shared leadership in a multi-year collaborative initiative to create a new Gen Ed curriculum.

One of the faculty members interviewed chaired an important faculty committee, the Curriculum Committee, and another was the lead administrator who headed the initiative and has since returned to faculty status in one of the departments studied. The former administrator (B1) briefly summarized the experience, saying: "We decided to develop a new Gen Ed curriculum. We did it with faculty consensus building. Every piece was approved by the entire faculty! It was a highly collaborative process."

From the start, the then-administrator (B1) focused on developing the best process for arriving at the best new curriculum. The "right answer" would only come by involving faculty and other stakeholders in meaningful work, on the issues important to them. The former administrator (B1) recalled thinking:

> The best thing I can do is to provide the infrastructure to let the faculty do their best work. For example, I made sure there was staff support. . . . It frees up faculty to do what they do best. It might be small, but it is those little things that get in the way of collaboration.

Recognizing that everyone's plate was already quite full, the former administrator was determined to use systems that were already in place, to create as little new and competing work as possible. The Curriculum Committee took up the cause, working closely with the administrator (B1), who reported, "We talked about the process, not the outcome. We talked about how to make processes that don't control the outcome."

The Curriculum Committee and the administrator worked carefully and strategically. For instance, they looked for small, but visible "wins" to show forward movement. The former administrator (B1) observed, "Administrators often think they need to tell you what you are doing is bad. But this creates resistance. So try saying what you are doing is fabulous. Say it is fabulous and let's make more of that."

The process took two years, and according to the committee chair (B10), over the first summer of the initiative, about 15 faculty and staff were involved. There were no course releases, but faculty received pay as if they were teaching an additional course. The chair (B10) explained: "In the second year, we had work groups." In this way, student learning outcomes were identified, and all courses—whether existing or newly developed—were evaluated with the new outcomes in mind. This allowed faculty to focus on the future they were building together and to let go of past courses that were no longer a fit.

These groups determined the learning goals, and in addition, the chair (B10) reported, "We created a new, interdisciplinary required course," for the junior and senior year. The small learning groups proved effective at both completing their assigned work, but also, as the former administrator (B1) noted, it meant the goals had "natural champions" among the faculty. The goals and courses were designed by, vetted and then approved by the faculty.

The chair (B10) reported that the committee was pleased with the results and felt "affirmed by the campus." The process had also resulted in greater personal and professional connections across the campus. The former administrator (B1) celebrated the unifying effect, and at the same time noted that the initiative required so much effort that many people felt they had had enough. The administrator (B1) recalled, "It was an intensive collaborative period. At the end, people were tired of collaboration. It's like they said, 'No more big projects.'" The administrator (B1) pointed out:

> But there are always big collaborative projects, like the strategic plan. The strategic plan process was part of what created this Gen Ed project. Now, there is a lot of collaboration about sustainability. In two years we will be reaccredited again, which has always been a collaborative process.

Collaboration as systemic imperative. The curriculum initiative just described, along with the comment about ongoing collaboration, serves as a reminder that collaborative work—and the skills and capacities needed for it—may be more important in the future. Of course, faculty has always held responsibility for curriculum development, learning goals and outcomes, assessment, and similar academic matters. However, these traditional responsibilities, according to several interviewees, seem to be expanding in scope and external oversight. As a consequence, traditional faculty responsibilities seemed to be taking up more time and energy than in the past, while also requiring more collaborative deliberations and interactions. Table 5.5 presents examples of the collaboration-intensive initiatives noted in the interviews, along with the number of units where such work was described.

Table 5.5

Initiatives Requiring Faculty Collaboration

Initiatives Identified (in interviews)	**# of Units**
Search committees for new faculty members	3
Design and implementation of new **cross-cultural program**	3
Strategic planning (and budgeting)	3
Institution-wide, **regional accreditation**	3
Senior research & project work	2
Design and implementation of **interdisciplinary programs**	2
Core curriculum design & implementation	2
Specialized, **disciplinary accreditation**	1
Develop & implement **mentoring & apprentice models**	1
Multi-institutional research initiatives	1

Most of these projects and initiatives had a significant, direct impact on the departments, and several also were interconnected with larger institutional priorities. These kinds of activities tended to be seen as anomalies, perhaps unwelcome anomalies, in the normal flow of faculty work. Faculty involvement in such activities might be conceived of as “service,” but the many faculty comments minimizing service suggest that these endeavors might not be recognized as unit priorities, even as they may be becoming the “new normal” for the units.

However, in addition to being important for handling and completing challenging work, collaboration is essential when there is a need to build commitment. In the case of building a new core curriculum, meaningful inclusion of the faculty in the two-year process meant that the key elements of the new curriculum had advocates and “champions” within the faculty itself. Thus the commitment and support for approving the curriculum and for implementing it was built along with the curriculum itself.

Implications for Leadership and Change

Systems scholars Margaret Wheatley and Myron Rogers (2007) remind: “People *only* support what they create” (p. 89). Building commitment is both practical and necessary especially when an initiative or project is big, complex, and it brings together differences that must be addressed over time. Wheatley and Rogers (2007) add useful guidance, declaring:

> Participation is not a choice. We have no choice but to invite people into the process of rethinking, redesigning, restructuring the organization. We ignore people’s need to participate at our own peril. If they’re involved, they will create a future that already has them in it. We won’t have to engage in the impossible and exhausting tasks of "selling" them the solution, getting them "to enroll," or figuring out the incentives that might bribe them into compliant behaviors (pp. 88-89).

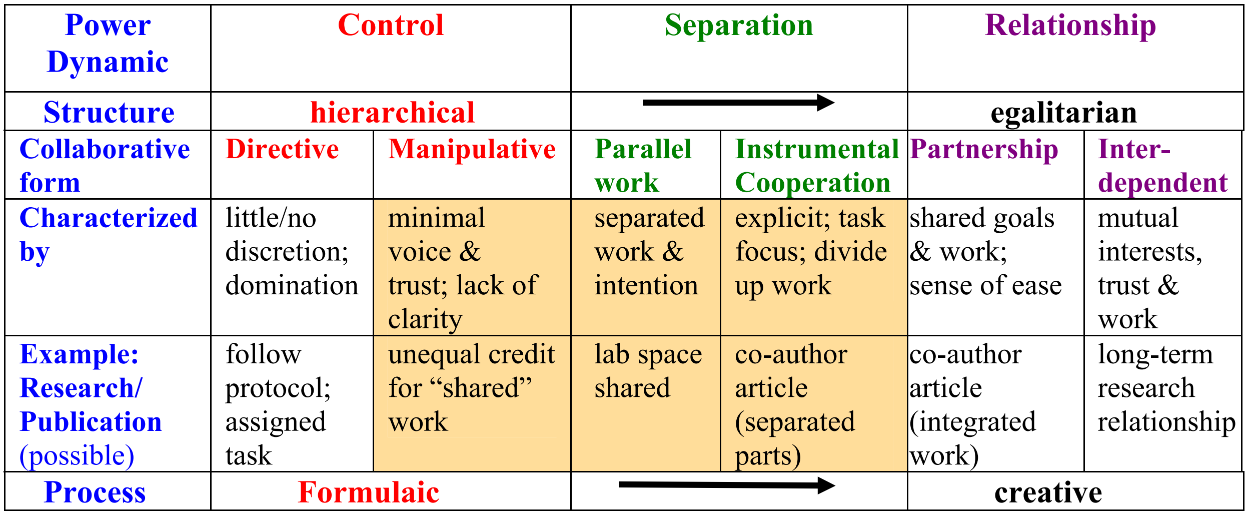
Autonomy at the heart of collaboration. This insight, that we care about and support what we build, would seem important in understanding professional autonomy and collaboration and how they relate in the experience of faculty. The point of professional autonomy for faculty is to be able to freely pursue one’s intellectual interests, literally what one cares about. The interviews reveal that when this freedom is infringed upon, including in instances when shared work is not especially collaborative, faculty may resent—or resist—involvement in that activity. Thus, for collaboration to work for faculty, or anyone, collaboration must retain or even enhance their professional autonomy—or at least not seriously compromise or undermine it. Moreover, the principle requires that faculty members themselves, individually, determine whether that autonomy and independence is sufficiently present and safeguarded.

These considerations fit with faculty traditions about autonomy and intellectual freedom. They also reflect collaboration at its best, which simply assumes collaboration is engaged freely, willingly and for a shared sense of purpose. The excitement faculty expressed in the interviews about both their individual work and also their shared, collaborative work was evocative and seemingly instructive. It suggests that collaboration and autonomy share the drive to create, and the commitment to that creative act binds the two concepts and experiences together.

Collaboration Continuum

Faculty practices and thoughts about autonomy and collaboration may be seen in a very new light with these understandings, that: 1) we support what we create, and 2) professional autonomy and collaboration may be united by the imperative to create, and to do so of one's own free will.

With these insights, the often confusing variety of what faculty described and experienced as collaboration began to suggest a range of collaborative expressions, depicted in what I term the Collaboration Continuum in Figure 5.3.



Power Dynamic	**Control**		**Separation**		**Relationship**	
Structure	**hierarchical**		→		**egalitarian**	
Collaborative form	**Directive**	**Manipulative**	**Parallel work**	**Instrumental Cooperation**	**Partnership**	**Inter-dependent**
Characterized by	little/no discretion; domination	minimal voice & trust; lack of clarity	separated work & intention	explicit; task focus; divide up work	shared goals & work; sense of ease	mutual interests, trust & work
Example: Research/ Publication (possible)	follow protocol; assigned task	unequal credit for "shared" work	lab space shared	co-author article (separated parts)	co-author article (integrated work)	long-term research relationship
Process	**Formulaic**		→		**creative**	

Figure 5.3. Collaboration Continuum.

The shaded area in the Collaboration Continuum represents where the interviews revealed most examples of collaboration within the academic units.

The stories and examples of collaboration shared by faculty members tended to cluster around the left – middle of the chart, under the Collaborative Form headings labeled: “Manipulative,” “Parallel Work,” and “Instrumental Cooperation.”

Not surprisingly, examples of collaboration that were unsatisfying, manipulative—or worse—were recalled in regretful, frustrated and even angry tones. Faculty said they did not want to repeat that kind of experience. If autonomy was constrained, the faculty member invariably felt the collaboration was a failure—no matter the outcome produced. Several faculty members claimed they had avoided all further collaboration as a result of a single bad experience.

On the other hand, collaboration was judged to be successful by faculty members when they were able to: contribute their expertise and perspectives, feel heard and respected, enjoy the work relationship, and achieve a productive outcome. Faculty members with such experiences were likely to express an intention to engage in further collaborative work.

Collaboration as relationship. When faculty members described a productive collaborative relationship, it tended to best fit on the right side of the Collaboration Continuum, where collaboration was characterized by commitments beyond a single task and often involved long term relationships. The collaborative relationships described in the interviews sometimes began in graduate school or at a previous institution, but in any case, they were resilient over time and space and often pushed the boundaries of the initial expertise and interests of the faculty members involved. The faculty members in these partnerships or relationships reported that their own identity and sense of autonomy were honored and supported, even when, especially when, tension or conflict emerged.

Thus, collaboration in these circumstances was seen as adding to the individual's capabilities and knowledge, without violating anyone's autonomy. One very accomplished senior scholar (A6) observed: "Collaboration is a social function of being human. We build off of each other. I don't tell them what to do and they don't tell me."

Another senior faculty member (C11) from a different institution explained: "I know my strengths and weaknesses. When I work with others, it is to improve both of what we would otherwise do alone. We exchange ideas. We can go to conferences…. [We} truly stimulate the conversation." This faculty member (C11) noted his enjoyment of learning about a new "world" or field as a means to expanding his own expertise and perspective. Gaining new insights might require challenging each other, noted the senior faculty member. Yet in the context of the conversation, it was clear that this process could be strenuous, and heartfelt, but it was also contained and meant to increase understanding and to improve the final product—and it was not at the expense of the relationship.

This previous example serves as a reminder that the creative process can be intellectually stimulating, sometimes difficult, and often profoundly satisfying. The interviews clearly revealed that faculty members engaged in collaborations found some kind of spark through the experience. Creativity was surely an element of that spark, but for some, the deeper relationships were important as well. One experienced faculty member (A2) credited a new collaborative relationship with a colleague as generating the excitement and focus for renewed interest in writing, publishing and in submitting a research grant proposal.

Envisioning a Collaborative Department

Each of the four academic units engaged in collaborative practices, and all had some individuals who were very enthusiastic about collaborating with one or more colleagues. Yet none of the units—as a unit—was fundamentally collaborative. They might be collegial, cooperative, but not exactly collaborative. Moreover, each unit approached collaboration differently. Stake's (2006) multicase analysis method encourages consideration of differences between the separate cases as these often highlight important distinctions. The differences in each case can be as instructive—or more so, than the similarities.

With this approach in mind, I began to gain a sense of where and how collaboration took place within a given unit. Responses from the interviews also suggested what might better support collaboration within a given department. These insights, in combination with examples of the ways in which collaboration differed in form and kind across the units, began to suggest characteristics of a more fundamentally collaborative department.

At a basic level, a collaborative department would need to be a place where faculty worked together, within a structure and environment meant to create and support collaboration. Good intentions and chemistry go a long way, but without deliberate structures, patterns of behavior, and department commitment, collaboration is likely to be limited to relationships between individuals—not a department function.

Eight Attributes of a Collaborative Department

The interviews and analysis suggested a few potential qualities of a collaborative department, one in which collaboration is a regular part of faculty work and in which the environment of the department purposefully supports collaboration. The study of the four departments suggested that the attributes of a collaborative department include:

- Collective Purpose
- Commitment to Shared Leadership
- Recognition of Interdependence
- Opportunity in Diversity
- Rewards and Recognition for Collaboration
- Learning from Shared Experience
- Consequential Relationships
- Connection in Time and Space

Further description of these attributes of a collaborative department, along with examples from the interviews, are outlined in the following paragraphs.

Collective purpose. Shared purpose provides focus. Without it, a unit is more a collection of individuals pursuing their own interests. Having a collective purpose is important for any work group, and this is true of the academic units studied. Collective focus in a collaborative academic unit isn't about conformity. Shared purpose can provide something around which the entire faculty can coalesce.

Commitment to a shared purpose was evident in the implementation of an apprentice model in one unit studied, and in faculty support for senior projects and research in another unit. When purpose and shared focus hadn't been developed explicitly, a sense of unity was lost and faculty efforts were highly fragmented.

Commitment to shared leadership. Department members provide informal leadership and are actively involved in decision-making and implementation. For collaboration to thrive in an academic department, it naturally follows that the formal leaders will be committed to modeling and promoting collaboration. Such leaders seek to remove barriers to collaboration, to create a sense of shared purpose, and to involve others in setting direction and making decisions. In turn, these efforts provide room for informal leadership and initiative among faculty members in the unit.

Unit leaders were most effective when they actively engaged the faculty members in determining their shared priorities and strategies. Leaders helped to keep a collective focus on the priorities and supported the work of achieving them. In short, leaders provided direction, but weren't directive. A vivid example included the campus-wide effort to develop a Gen Ed curriculum.

Recognition of interdependence. Successful teams are more than a collection of separate individuals; they recognize that individual and collective success is intertwined. A collaborative academic department has faculty who support the professional autonomy of each individual while keeping in mind the larger picture in which all are stakeholders. The choice to collaborate is therefore free and meaningful, and faculty members often choose to support unit goals and priorities.

Faculty members spoke appreciatively of support they received from the department, both leaders and peers. Many faculty members recognized the importance of balancing personal preferences with the needs of the unit. Several noted they had taken a class, adjusted their schedule, or added advisees in deference to unit needs.

Opportunity in diversity. Diversity provides new perspectives and options. Faculty in a collaborative department value diversity and know how to benefit from their differences. Diversity seems to be especially important for a collaborative department.

Diversity need not fall within a specific description or definition involving gender, ethnicity, culture, and so on. It can include a very wide range of forms, concepts, and philosophies. Faculty members understand that diversity provides perspectives, opportunities, and relationships that otherwise could not be part of the department consciousness and experience.

The interviews show a range of responses among faculty when encountering differences. For example, some faculty members saw the different expertise in their departments as essentially troublesome barriers. Other faculty members saw these as especially intriguing places to learn something new, to forge new relationships, and to explore whether and how their own expertise might be usefully applied. For these faculty members, the gaps were compelling invitations.

Rewards and recognition for collaboration. Collaboration is recognized, and rewarded through actions, formal structures and informal patterns within the academic unit. Naturally, a collaborative department must have reward and recognition structures and practices that support collaboration. Rewards and recognition for individuals may continue to provide motivation and mark the contribution of individuals, but in a collaborative department, individual rewards also support—or at least do not undermine—the collective aspirations and functions of the unit.

The formal reward and recognition structures and practices in the units studied emphasized individual accomplishments. However, many faculty members sought to engage in collaborative work, often motivated by a sense of intrinsic rewards, sometimes supported by informal conventions within their departments. One of the departments had begun a one-course experiment with co-teaching and another provided support for faculty members working on a common reading anthology for the whole institution.

Learning from shared experience. The advantage of working with others is best realized when there is regular and intentional reflection on shared experience. This is consistent with a learning environment in that paying attention to and talking about student outcomes is relatively common in an academic setting. Faculty in a collaborative department will also take time to focus on the efficacy of their own work environment and relationships so that they are able to learn from each other about their individual and collective experiences.

Some of the academic units held annual retreats, and reflection on their shared work was an important part of the focus. These departments evidenced greater clarity and unity of purpose and the relationships among each other seemed to be more positive and mutually supportive.

Consequential relationships. Collaboration requires trust and supportive relationships, built over time, with ongoing attention. A collaborative department is comprised of faculty members who are interested in the lives of the other department members, both in their work activities, and also beyond the immediate boundaries of work and work responsibilities.

At least two departments had a practice of encouraging experienced faculty members to serve as mentors to guide new faculty members in learning the department culture, priorities, responsibilities and systems. Also, perhaps the most consistent suggestion for improving faculty collaboration within the departments involved learning more about each other outside of academic expertise or roles. Suggested interactions usually included some kind of social aspect and were not fully or predominantly focused on a specific work outcome.

Connection in time and space. Successful collaboration requires meaningful discourse and interactions to deepen relationships, while fostering creativity and productivity. A collaborative department finds getting together essential. Effective collaboration tends to involve more discussion and greater variety of interactions over time and space than is true of other means of organizing work. This commitment ultimately supports a more effective, productive environment.

The patterns of interactions among faculty varied dramatically across the units studied. Formal meeting schedules, social gatherings, and opportunities for impromptu conversations were significantly different, and these had noticeable effects on interpersonal and group relationships and dynamics. One unit had begun to meet about every other week to maintain more interconnections between faculty members. Another hadn't had a true meeting for about a year. Some units had common areas around which faculty offices were arranged, others were widely dispersed. Teaching schedules served to connect some faculty and to keep others apart. The clear implication: those who shared time, space and informal interactions tended toward more collaboration.

Overview of What Was Learned

It may be helpful at this point to recall my original intention, stated in Chapter I, for undertaking this study. I sought to address the following points:

1) In what ways do faculty members presently experience the relationship of professional autonomy and collaboration within their departments and institutions?

2) What do faculty members perceive to be the optimal expression of this relationship both within their own departments and institutions?

Sub questions included:

1) In what ways do faculty members conceive of and engage in collaborative work with peers?
2) How might collaboration enhance both faculty professional autonomy and experience of a peer community?

To address these questions, the interviews took place in three institutions of different types, in four academic units comprising different disciplines and significantly different internal and institutional factors shaping the environment of the academic unit. The academic units and institutions chosen were not known for being especially collaborative. Nevertheless, collaboration among faculty members was happening in each unit, often confined rather narrowly, but clearly evident.

Faculty members in the units valued their professional autonomy and the ability to pursue their intellectual and academic responsibilities and interests freely. Almost to a person, the faculty reported that they were satisfied with their current experience of that professional autonomy, and indeed, professional autonomy was clearly a central element of faculty identity. Collaboration was also reported as being valued by most faculty members interviewed. Through the interviews, they articulated a regular interest in engaging in more—and better—collaborative work with colleagues. Nevertheless, faculty identities did not seem to be closely linked with collaboration, and collaboration didn’t appear to be a topic or practice receiving much intentional focus at the unit level.

This study hoped to better understand how faculty members experience autonomy and collaboration, and how faculty members make sense of the concepts in relationship. I anticipated that many of the faculty might understand autonomy and collaboration as contradictory in nature. Some faculty essentially stated that very proposition, though more did not, and instead they conveyed a wide range of possible expressions of the two elements in relationship. A few important insights about collaboration, autonomy and the two in relationship came about through the study, including:

1. Each unit exhibited instances and practices of collaboration, and faculty generally expressed an interest in more collaboration with colleagues.
2. Collaboration was both desired and limited in actual practice in each unit studied, and this suggests that there were systemic structures and patterns that had an impact on faculty decisions and actions related to collaboration.
3. Faculty members described a wide range of potential collaborative practices, represented in a Collaboration Continuum developed through analysis of the interviews. The interviews suggest that faculty who collaborate prefer collaboration characterized by egalitarian relationships.
4. Collaboration requires the presence of autonomy to be meaningful and to be engaged willingly and freely. For the faculty interviewed, the efficacy of any collaboration came down to the state of their professional autonomy within that collaborative relationship.
5. The traditional emphasis on individual work within the units can restrict the options—in a sense, the professional autonomy—of faculty interested in or engaged in collaborative work.

6. Collaborative faculty efforts may be increasingly necessary to effectively address and complete both regular work patterns and special initiatives.
7. Faculty members had almost no professional training in collaboration and appeared to have engaged in little reflection on the topic.

Adaptive Challenge

As collaboration becomes increasingly necessary for the routines of running and working in the academy, we may be approaching an important bifurcation point, perhaps a long time in coming. As noted earlier in this dissertation, the focus in *Scholarship Reconsidered* (Boyer, 1990) was largely on faculty members as individuals. Boyer (1990) believed, however, that a "community of scholars" was the ultimate destination of scholarship (p.180). He concluded: "In the end, scholarship at its best should bring faculty together" (p. 80)

Much has changed in society since Boyer's report, but much of the fundamental nature of today's faculty responsibilities, rewards, and traditions remain, developed without collaborative faculty work as a central principle of the design. Over time, the system of higher education may be less and less able to adequately address the internal tensions and paradoxes created when the old patterns are faced with new imperatives.

One important point of tension may have been exposed through the interviews, which revealed a gap between the present and the desired state of collaboration in every unit studied. No such gap existed regarding faculty members' sense of their current and preferred state of professional autonomy. Moreover, there was little evidence of reflection or discussion among faculty about teaching, a fundamental part of faculty work, and co-teaching was almost nonexistent in the units studied.

These observations suggest a systemic paradox, and perhaps what Ronald Heifetz (1994) terms an "adaptive challenge." Adaptive challenges often have an ineffable quality, in part because they are systemic and are, at best, only partially perceived. Heifetz describes an adaptive challenge as either: 1) a challenge that is known but without a known solution, or 2) a challenge that is unknown and therefore no solution is even being sought, making it even more difficult to address.

The academy is a socially constructed system, as are the paradoxes and adaptive challenges associated with it. Like all socially constructed systems, it can and inevitably will change. So what might be done to promote more collaboration or to improve the quality of collaboration in academic units? How might the academic units in the study—and perhaps others like them—choose to more actively and intentionally incorporate collaborative pedagogies, structures, and practices into their work?

To begin, it is necessary to start with a clear understanding of where we presently find ourselves: in a *system* organized to emphasize and recognize the individual.

Four Guiding Principles

Four principles for supporting a collaborative environment, reflecting both themes from the interviews and in the literature on leadership and change, may help address these gaps and challenges.

Honor autonomy. Any strategy to move toward greater collaboration must be mindful of the centrality of professional autonomy in the academy. One unit administrator (A8) said of collaboration: "I have done it in my career. I encourage it, and it's worked for me. I think it makes for better research and better quality work."

Nevertheless, while affirming the value of collaboration, the administrator (A8) added: "I'm not too optimistic it can be managed."

Even faculty members with a history of working collaboratively expressed concern about any mandate to engage in collaborative projects or research. The objection seemed to concern whether autonomy might be compromised and whether the so-called collaboration would be characterized by manipulation or unspoken agendas. This faculty response serves as a reminder that collaboration cannot be required, directed or even managed. Creativity and professional autonomy, both essential to collaboration among faculty, require an approach that is congruent with those values.

Make connections. Margaret Wheatley (2007) recognizes that the elements for creating change are usually already present among us and our organizations. She observes:

> Living systems contain their own solutions. Somewhere in the system are people already practicing a solution that others think is impossible. Or they possess information that could help many others. Or, they defy stereotypes and have the very capabilities we need. (p. 106)

There may be significant ambient capacity for a more integrated, collaborative approach to faculty work. Indeed in the units studied there was notable sentiment in favor of increased collaboration, and there were faculty members sincerely and actively engaging in collaborative endeavors. Wheatley (2007) adds: "To find solutions, the system needs to connect to more of itself. This means meeting with those we've excluded or avoided, those we've never imagined could share similar interests (p. 106)."

Spark many small "fires." Olson and Eoyang (2001) argue that a top-down approach to change is usually ineffective. They note, "The impetus for change would have to arise from many different points in the system" (p. 31). The authors explain: "Rather than focusing on the macro 'strategic' level of the organizational system, complexity theory suggest that the most powerful processes of change occur at the micro level, where relationships, interactions, small experiments, and simple rules shape emerging patterns" (Olson & Eoyang, 2001, p. xxxiii). In this study, each department had faculty members working to collaborate with colleagues, and these interactions and relationships could be sparking new, deeper patterns of collective practices.

This strategy reflects Herbert Shepard's (1997) common sense advice to "start many fires" when undertaking change initiatives, so that a few experiments may succeed and develop more fully.

Create collaboration together. As noted already, the tenet that people *only* support what they help create (Wheatley & Rogers, 2007), suggests that integrating more collaboration into the academic unit is only possible through a collaborative approach. In keeping with this maxim, the process can begin with a question: "What shall we create together?"

Any number of answers to this kind of question will be "right," especially if those answers are created by the faculty who will also implement and support that vision. This suggests a focus on encouraging and supporting faculty initiatives rather than directing or controlling them. It places emphasis on asking questions and listening for understanding rather than providing ready answers. In a sense, collaboration is both the response to the fragmentation of the academy, and part of the way forward from that condition.

Building Collaborative Practices into the Academic Unit

Academic leaders and faculty members who wish to encourage collaboration must be highly conscious of the regular practices and daily actions that create the conditions for collaboration and those that might discourage it.

It can be extraordinarily discouraging to attempt an innovation only to have the effort brought up short. For example, a senior faculty member (B9) observed: “As an institution, we talk about interdisciplinarity. But we don’t fund for it. It is just funded within the department. You get cheerleading for the idea, but it is hard to sustain it.”

Many administrative barriers, of course, can stop collaboration almost before it has begun. The barriers may not be intentional, but their existence causes friction for any new idea. Trying something truly different almost inherently pits the new idea against the established organizing structures, patterns and assumptions.

Of course, most policies, structures and procedures exist for a reason. They should not be discarded or altered on a whim. But it is useful and important to consider their impact and intention whenever a new initiative bumps into the existing system. Being a supportive unit leader in this scenario means more than just “cheerleading.” It means actively enlisting support and resources for the initiative, helping to solve problems, and removing key barriers. Moreover, without ongoing, intentional effort to create and support a collaborative environment within academic units, the predominant model of separated, individually-focused faculty work will tend to reassert itself.

Though the specific practices and activities will vary by unit and institution, a few guidelines seem to emerge from the conversations with faculty members about what worked and what seemed missing or problematic in their collaborative efforts. The guidelines may help unit leaders and faculty wishing to support faculty collaboration, and they naturally flow from the Attributes of a Collaborative Department and the four principles described earlier. These guidelines are found in Figure 5.4.

Guidelines for Deepening Department Collaboration

- **Promote** a culture of **shared leadership and responsibility** for unit goals.
- **Develop a shared vision** of the unit, and seek to build it in every moment and interaction.
- Actively **reduce barriers to collaboration**, and integrate of collaborative practices into all important academic tasks and responsibilities.
- **Create professional development** opportunities related to collaboration, including: retreats, workshops, teaching circles, sabbaticals, etc.
- **Develop unit rewards and recognition** processes that support both collaboration and individual initiative.
- Invite and **support scholarship** exploring, documenting, and involving **collaborative practices**.
- Actively seek to **expand** the **diversity** of faculty within the department.
- **Develop hiring criteria** and processes with consideration for previous collaborative experiences, skills and patterns of work.
- **Identify** experienced faculty **mentors** with a record of collaboration to support new faculty members.
- **Reflect** periodically **as a unit** on the systems, processes, and relationships of

Figure 5.4. Guidelines for Collaboration.

A shift to a more collaborative academic culture inevitably suggests new roles for leaders and faculty members alike. At the same time, not everyone is interested in or capable of collaborating well. If the individual feels supported, individuals within collaborative relationships will be supported and feel more able to, in turn, support the group or unit.

The systemic pattern so far has emphasized the individual side of the equation. Paradoxes contain contradictions or tensions that cannot be fully resolved and instead must be transcended or balanced.

Therefore, if more collaboration becomes integrated into the work and life of faculty, it is critical that a shift in normal patterns must seek to create balance, rather than to return to an unbalanced approach only in the new direction. In short, by developing more capacity for and practice of collaboration, the passion and initiative of individuals must not be lost. Professional autonomy and collaboration are, given forethought and supportive conditions, compatible and even mutually reinforcing.

As an administrator, leader or member of an academic department, it may be useful to recognize that building a successful collaborative unit happens over time and over many different interactions It certainly isn't the sole responsibility of the formal leaders to create a collaborative environment. Each member of the academic unit plays a part in animating that vision, and the commitment to the vision and each other is built into every shared moment and interaction.

Recommendations for Further Research

Future research on faculty collaboration could be profitably focused in a number of areas. A study of departments or other academic units identified as being highly collaborative could provide further insights into how such units and institutions (and the work and learning taking place in them) might differ from more traditional units.

The near absence of co-teaching and team teaching suggests that there is something to be learned about the academy there, and of course, about what constitutes and supports successful team teaching.

A focused exploration of the potential correlates (gender, professional enculturation, etc.) suggested through the interviews seems warranted. Would a larger sample and quantitative analysis serve to support or dispel the notion that faculty with certain professional and life experiences and backgrounds may serve as catalysts to collaboration within their academic units? The implications seem especially rich for professional development, enculturation, self-image, leadership preparation, and support for international faculty.

Exploration of faculty understanding and practices associated with Adaptive Leadership could be especially important given the systemic tensions and shifts experienced by institutions of higher learning and inevitably translated into the daily reality of academic units and faculty members.

APPENDIX

Appendix A

Trends Shaping Higher Education

Four studies show remarkable agreement regarding the key trends and challenges faced by higher education, with each study citing: 1) technological, 2) economic, 3) cultural and 4) regulatory pressures as needing concerted attention. These trends in higher education reflect the same overarching themes articulated by Rosen (2007) in describing the four key trends shaping business. Table A1 briefly delineates these trends.

Table A 1

Trends Shaping Higher Education

***Four* Challenges:** Gappa et al. (2007)	***Four* "Megatrends":** Schuster & Finkelstein (2006)	***Five* Trends:** Chen et al. (2001)	***Seven* Challenges:** Eckel et al. (1998)
Trend: Technological:			
Increased reliance on & influence of communication & info technology.	The collection, dissemination, & management of information & knowledge	More flexible delivery systems; new technologies	• The pervasive impact of technology
Trend: Economic:			
Financial constraints and increased competition	Foundations of the economy are shifting structurally	Diminishing state resources	• Pressure to keep down costs • Growth of alternative delivery models
Trend: Cultural:			
Growing enrollments, with increased student diversity	The pace of change is rapid & discontinuous; changes are highly unpredictable.	Workplace changes create new areas of study and new student populations.	• Needs of increasingly diverse society • knowledge produced outside the academy
Trend: Regulatory:			
Public pressure for increased accountability.	Major societal shifts regarding higher ed. as a private rather than a public good.	Increasing call for relevance and connection to community needs.	• Expectations for educational & financial accountability • Demands for educational quality
Trend: Other (not in Rosen):			
		Senior faculty nearing retirement	

Note. The first four trends correspond to trends identified by Rosen (2007) in businesses.

Appendix B

Five Key Elements of Effective Teams

A description of the Five Key Elements of Effective Teams, developed by comparing and combining themes from Hackman (2002), LaFasto and Larsen (1989), Likert (1961), McGregor (1960), Parker (1996), and Wheelan (2005a), includes:

Five Key Elements of Effective Teams:

(a) Clear Purpose, Goal, or Task

Teams are meant for collaborative work, and so a clear (and preferably compelling) purpose that brings the team into being and the team members together is an elemental feature of team life. A task, goal or overall purpose may be given to a team from above, but to be effective, the team must accept and embrace that direction, and claim it as its own.

(b) Clear Identity and Boundaries

Members of a team—whether it is formally or informally constituted—must share a common recognition of their work. In many instances, it may be critical that there be external recognition or support for the team as an entity in its own right. The forces holding a team together must be more than equal to any that might serve to fragment it, or pull at the attention, loyalty, and sense of interconnection of the members.

(c) Clarity Regarding Authority Relationships

Decision-making is necessary for any group to move forward toward its goal. Members of a successful team must be capable of making decisions in a collaborative (or agreed upon) manner, and the team must be provided with sufficient autonomy and authority to make decisions that matter to its purpose.

(d) Committed Members

Members of the team must have sufficient commitment to the team's purpose that they support its work, team development and the growth of each individual member. Becoming a member of a team means making a commitment to the team's purpose and to creating effective working relationship with team members. Committed members also need have a sense of when to subordinate their own immediate interests for the good of the team and its long-term interests.

(e) Process Attention

Team members (and the team as a whole) must have sufficient interpersonal and communication skills, knowledge of group dynamics, and commitment to each other and the team's success to be able to work through the inevitable rough spots, and even to learn from those challenging points. The team's work requires intention to both task and process, and a successful team keeps both in balance.

Appendix C

Summary of Team Characteristics

The work of several important scholars is reviewed in Appendix C. The key elements of teams, identified by Hackman (2002), along with a fifth element, "Process Attention" (discussed in Chapter Two of this dissertation) are compared with the work of other prominent scholars focusing on teams.

It is helpful to start with the work of Larson and LaFasto (1989), as their characteristics of teams are a close match with those of Hackman (2002). Larson and LaFasto (1989) conducted over 6000 interviews of team members from a wide range of industries, identifying eight characteristics of effective teams through the study. Their findings were presented in *Teamwork: What Must Go Right/What Can Go Wrong* (Larson & LaFasto, 1989), and are found in Table C1:

Table C 1

Characteristics of Effective Teams: Larson and LaFasto

Eight Characteristics of Effective Teams, Larson & LaFasto (1989)	**Five Key Elements of Effective Teams** (Hackman plus "process")
A clear, elevating goal	1. Purpose/Goal/Task
External support and recognition	2. Identity & Boundaries
Principled leadership	3. Authority
Unified commitment (includes team spirit)	4. Committed Members
A collaborative climate	5. Process Attention
A results-driven structure	
Competent team members	
Standards of excellence	

Note. The Five Key Elements in the right column are from Hackman's (2002) four elements plus an added "process" element as described in Chapter II.

Susan Wheelan (2005a) has studied teams extensively, including those in academic settings. In *Creating Effective Teams: A Guide for Members and Leaders,* she suggested ten keys to team productivity and high performance, outlined in Table C2.

Table C 2.

Wheelan's Ten Keys of Productive Teams

Wheelan (2005a)	**Five Key Elements of Effective Teams** (Hackman plus "process")
Goals: Members are clear about and agree with team goals	1. Purpose/Goal/Task
Structure: Successful teams contain the smallest number of members necessary to accomplish the goals and tasks; subgroups are valued for their contributions to the team **Norms and Individual Differences:** The team establishes norms that encourage high quality and performance.	2. Identity & Boundaries
Leadership: Leaders adjust to meet emerging group needs	3. Authority
Roles: Members are clear about and accept their roles and have appropriate skills **Interdependence:** Team members work together as a unit and in subgroups **Cooperation and Conflict Management:** Team is highly cohesive and members are cooperative	4. Committed Members
Communication and Feedback: Members communicate openly and provide regular feedback on performance to make improvements in performance **Discussion, Decision Making and Planning:** Members discuss problems, plan and make decisions effectively **Implementation and Evaluation:** Team implements the solutions and decisions they make	5. Process Attention

Note. The Five Key Elements in the right column are from Hackman's (2002) four elements plus an added "process" element as described in Chapter II.

Glenn Parker (1996) conducted research on teams and teamwork in 51 companies across multiple industries. From this study, he identified an even dozen characteristics of effective teams. These elements are noteworthy for their emphasis on the quality of the team's interactive process (see Table C 3).

Table C 3

Parker's Characteristics of Effective Teams

Characteristics of Effective Teams, Parker (1996)	**Five Key Elements of Effective Teams** (Hackman plus "process")
1. **Clear Purpose:** The team vision, mission, goal, or task has been defined and accepted by all members	1. Purpose/Goal/Task
10. **External Relations:** The team spends time developing key outside relationships & constituencies	2. Identity & Boundaries
9. **Shared Leadership:** There is a formal leader; leadership shifts based on member skills and the needs of the group 6. **Consensus Decisions:** Important decisions are made with substantial agreement, though not necessarily unanimity	3. Authority
3. **Participation:** Much discussion and engagement 8. **Clear Roles & Work Assignments:** Expectation about roles are clear; assignments are well-defined	4. Committed Members
2. **Informality:** Climate tends to be informal and relaxed 4. **Listening**: Members listen effectively, asking questions, paraphrasing, summarizing, etc. 5. **Civilized Disagreement:** The team is comfortable with disagreements and works to resolve rather than avoid conflict 7. **Open Communications:** Members feel free to express their feelings and opinions; little is hidden 11.**Style Diversity:** The team has a broad spectrum of team-player types who emphasize attention to task, goal setting, focus on process and self-evaluation 12.**Self-assessment:** The team pauses periodically to reflect on it is functioning and to its goal achievement	5. Process Attention

Note. The Five Key Elements in the right column are from Hackman's (2002) four elements plus an added "process" element as described in Chapter II.

Douglas McGregor (1960), author of *The Human Side of Enterprise,* is probably best known for his work on how managers' assumptions about fundamental human motivations influence management decisions and practices, which in turn have a direct impact on the climate and culture of organizations. In writing this influential text, McGregor (1960, 1985) also described eleven characteristics of effective teams. Given his professional interests, it is not surprising that McGregor's description of effective teams relies heavily on the team's awareness of its own process. The characteristics of an effective team as defined by McGregor (1985) are found in Table C4.

Table C 4

McGregor's Eleven Characteristics of Effective Teams

Eleven Characteristics of Effective Teams, McGregor (1985)	**Five Key Elements of Effective Teams** (Hackman plus "process")
The group's task is well understood & accepted by every member.	1. Purpose/Goal/Task
Discussion is common, and pertinent to the group's task.	2. Identity & Boundaries
Leadership shifts as needed to get the job done; formal leaders do not dominate the group. Decisions are made by consensus and general agreement. Every member supports a decision once made, and any opposition is expressed prior to a final decision.	3. Authority
Disagreements happen; they are seen as genuine expressions of different opinions. The group seeks to resolve differences, but can function without immediate resolution.	4. Committed Members
The group is self-conscious of its own operations and reflects on how well it is doing. Criticism is frank, frequent, but not confrontational. Differences are shared to improve performance. Members feel free to express ideas and feelings. When action is taken, clear assignments are made Atmosphere tends to be informal and relaxed. Members listen to each other, considering each other's views thoughtfully and fully.	5. Process Attention

Note. The Five Key Elements in the right column are from Hackman's (2002) four elements plus an added "process" element as described in Chapter II.

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