**As We Reshape Management Education for Students: Who is Training the Trainers?**

**Symposium Submission to the 2018 MOBTC**

Introduction:

The nature of the Academy is changing in terms of who is actually doing the teaching in our classes. While traditionally instruction was handled by professional tenured or tenure-track professors (Rhoades, 2012), now more than two-thirds of teachers are contingent, meaning either part-time (in greater numbers than those who are full-time) or in some sort of contingent position (Schuster, 2011). And, looking into the future, it will not be getting any better, as only fifteen percent of the tenure or tenure-track faculty in four-year higher education institutions are 44 years of age or younger, with the median age in the mid-fifties – 10 years from retirement (King, 2008). What does this mean for the quality of higher education?

Contingent faculty, especially those that are part-time, get little or no training or development in how to teach (Rhoades, 2012). While this has long been a criticism that has also been leveled at the tenured and tenure-track faculty (Arum & Roksa, 2011; Chory and Offstein, 2017), there have been efforts to address this deficiency (Brint, 2011), and most tenure processes include teaching effectiveness as an incentive for these instructors to learn. Meanwhile, most part-time lecturers are engaged on the basis of a masters’ degree that focused on generalized material (especially in business – the MBA) and quite frankly, a critical need to cover an upcoming course. The result of the growing dependence upon these part-timers? - a study noted by Rhoades (2012) reported a negative correlation to the number of contingent faculty on student outcomes, including graduation.

This is not simply an abstract outcome generalized across the Academy, the presenters in this symposium have seen a dramatic drop in actual learning outcomes that correlates with a huge rise in the percentage of part-time lecturers in their school. As recently as 2010, the vast majority of organizational behavior survey classes in the business administration degree (BSBA) core at this school were taught by tenured or faculty (6 out of 7 sections, most typically). During this period, the program exit exam reported average success on management topics in the 80th percentage range. However, in the last seven years, an increase in student enrollment of nearly 40% and a drop in the number of tenured faculty available for these courses has resulted in none of these organizational behavior survey courses being taught by tenured or tenure-track faculty during a recent term. At the same time, the student performance on the BSBA for management topics has dropped to the mid-fifties in percent of answers correct.

In response to this type of outcome, this symposium seeks to identify and discuss options and best practices that are needed to address the issue of optimizing student outcomes in classes taught by part-timers. While the hiring of more tenure-track faculty is clearly an optimal solution, the budget realities of most institutions in higher education are that hiring our way out of this problem is not likely to happen (Nemetz & Cameron, 2006). Alternatively, we must find better ways of selecting, scaffolding, mentoring, and professionalizing our part-time faculty.

Theoretical Foundation:

As noted above, the likelihood of a quick fix in hiring more tenure-track faculty is not high, both for the budget reasons noted and due to the fact that there is actually a shortage of

PhD-educated business faculty (Clinebell & Clinebell, 2008). Therefore, business schools need to figure out how to utilize their part-time faculty in the most efficacious manner. As Clinebell and Clinebell noted in 2008, there can actually be an advantage in putting practitioners in the classroom in order to address the concerns about the relevancy of our instruction. There is also the continuing need to address the “research/practice” gap (e.g., Bell & Kravitz, 2008), a situation that having practicing managers in classroom can also address. Therefore, embracing the use of working part-time faculty has a practical dimension.

On the theoretical-side, we know that students are assessing the creditability of their instructors (Hare, 2007), so having instructors who are actually working in the fields of the topic can support positive student connections. We also know from the Learning Pyramid (National Training Laboratories) that actually “doing” is the next best thing to teaching material, further enhancing the work of the practitioners (who are now teaching). Thus, it can be expected that part-time instructors, who are working professionals in a relevant occupation, can be a valuable resource to our students.

The problem, of course, is that they have to be directed, something that they tend to get very little of (Rhoades, 2012). Again, the practical reality is that often these instructors are hired just-in-time (Rhoades, 2012) to meet enrollment needs for a coming term, so there is very little time to build in the direction, training, and development that is called for. As a result, there is a need for the development of pedagogical systems and mentoring to facilitate the work of these valuable additions to our faculty,

Symposium Overview:

Given this widespread need, the idea is to bring together knowledgeable academic leaders to talk about approaches to hiring, preparing, and mentoring part-time faculty. The individuals involved have utilized common course statements (big idea papers) to synchronize expectations in core course; they have developed general “adjunct” guidebooks to help understand program and bureaucratic systems, “course handbooks” to provide lecture outlines, sample exercises, central concept research papers, etc. in order to ensure basic coverage of the material; they have developed formal feedback systems for the part-timers (feedback forms, class observation feedback, etc.); and they have worked to create lecturer “pools” of qualified individuals and formal evaluation systems to ensure that the “right” people (those that really can convey the theory and connect it to the real world) are the ones in front of our students. From this base of information, the intent is then to involve the audience in small break out groups for the various areas to discuss and seek improvements in these systems.

Session Description:

This session will be fit into the 60-minute time frame. The idea will be to provide a brief overview of the environment that sets the stage for working more with part-time faculty (about 5 minutes); then each of the presenters will discuss an element of the above approaches to enhancing the work of the part-time faculty (20 minutes); this will be followed by breakout groups for the audience around the themes above (e.g., a clear statement of the course intent, supporting pedagogical material, hiring, and evaluation/management) (25 minutes), and the session will conclude with a brief summary of what was learned (10 minutes).

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