

POLITICS, POLICY, AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC IMPACT ON CONTINUING HIGHER EDUCATION

by

SANDRIA SHAWN STEPHENSON

(Under the Direction of Ronald M. Cervero)

ABSTRACT

Serving as corroborator and catalyst, linking needs to stakeholders and programs, yet doing so within their traditional setting, is the crucial “story” of continuing higher education. Hence, inquiries related to the reevaluation of the historical mission and value of continuing higher education, in the changing political-economic climate of higher education, are necessary. The purpose of this study was to examine continuing education’s strategic responses to the political-economic context of higher education. The research questions guiding the study were: 1) what do university administrators see as the current political, social, and economic challenges facing continuing higher education 2) what is the role of continuing education in responding strategically to the current challenges facing their institutions and 3) what do university administrators see as the return on investment of those strategic responses? The study used a qualitative methodology to examine seventeen respondents’ experiences and perceptions of continuing education within eight traditional universities. These respondents were higher education administrators who had direct responsibilities or connections to continuing education. Interviews and documents provided the data that were analyzed using constant comparative analysis; while the theory of academic capitalism served as the theoretical framework for the

study. The results of this study show that: First, continuing education is an academic capital advantage, providing greater returns to higher education than the investment made in supporting its strategic position. Second, entrepreneurialism, as a strategy within continuing education, is limited in classical applicability and scope relative to higher education's traditional cultural-context. Third, continuing education units are disenfranchised with respect to shared governance. These governance constraints are meant to "protect" the parent institutions' cultural values, and branding. Fourth, continuing education's organizational processes identify several political, social and economic challenges that must be addressed strategically, if they are to achieve their mission.

INDEX WORDS: Continuing education, Continuing higher education, Higher education Academic Capitalism, Capital Advantage, Governance, Entrepreneurialism, Majority Response Category Process (MRCP).

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DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my family: Richard, Kymber, and Kai who have waited patiently for me to pursue and complete an additional four and one-half years of graduate work. Their prayers, thoughts, and love are what supported me to completion of this goal.

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The first day I entered the classroom at Rivers' Crossing, at the University of Georgia, I had envisioned "that day" when I would defend this dissertation and the day I would graduate, and *this* moment when I would be writing this acknowledgement. As I reflect on the past four plus years, I think about the many evenings and days I had been rushing from work, driving from Atlanta or Kennesaw to Athens and worrying if my two young children were OK. I was always comforted whenever I called and they would be safe at the neighbor's house or when a friend would come over to help with them. After two years of this juggling and stress, my mom came to live in Georgia and so my worries diminished as she stepped in to help. So I pause to express my gratitude to all my neighbors, friends, and my mom who helped in this manner.

During the four and one-half years as I continued with the process, my children were growing up and by the time I got to the dissertation research stage they became more cognizant of the process, although still not fully understanding why each evening I was sitting at my computer barely having time to check their homework and to give them dinner. Yet they constantly asked, "Mommy, when are you going to be finished?" This question was borne out of empathy for me because they felt my anxiety. So to Kymber and Kai, "I love you both and thanks for being so understanding." I also appreciate and love my husband Richard for supporting me all through these years when it seemed that I would never be out of school. He would often joke to his friends, "Since we met, she has always been in school" and that is technically true.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The historical mission of the university has been to respond to social and civic purposes, undertake research, and disseminate knowledge. Later on with the birth of adult and continuing education and as a result of new and demanding circumstances, the university was challenged to add “services to the community” as a part of their mission. Yet, since its inception and throughout the last three centuries, the university maintained much of its “elitist” status and at times was even considered monopolistic (Bok, 1982) in the business of education. Beginning with the nine colleges of the English Colonies, to the greater than 4,000 institutions of higher education today (Carnegie Foundation, 2006), government policies, politics, as well as major economic and societal factors coupled with the sacrifices and struggles of notable men and women have provided opportunities for Americans to become highly educated. Today the university still struggles with its identity, purpose, and mission.

Background of the Study

The desire for literate college trained clergy was probably the greatest single influence leading to the founding of the colonial colleges. Harvard, the first of such colleges began in 1636 (Rhodes, 2001b). Shortly after the Civil War, institutions of higher learning began to embrace the ideas of utility particularly in the form of professional schools. Since that time a trend developed for universities to offer programs that responded to societies’ needs for technically trained individuals. Additionally, Benjamin Franklin and other political advocates provided a powerful voice in support of adult and continuing higher education (Grattan, 1955; Hellyer, 1990; Knowles, 1977). They believed that education is essentially a continuing process of self-

renewal, and therefore, access to continuing education should to be made available to anyone who wanted to participate.

The Morrill Act (1862), which established the land-grant institutions, was a major economic and societal contribution to the evolution of higher education in the United States. The new, public land-grant colleges and universities were to provide for the “liberal and practical education of the industrial classes in the several pursuits and professions of life” (The Morrill Act). Until this time universities had little impact upon the professions and only modest impact upon the broader concept of knowledge or the society at large (Rhodes, 2001b). Consequently, the university was challenged to provide education to a wider audience including the uneducated, freed slaves, and the lower classes in society. Accordingly, continuing higher education was borne out of these challenges.

In addition, during the early part of the 1900s, The Wisconsin Idea (1902), often referred to as the birth of continuing higher education, was instituted and is regarded as one of the most notable contributions to higher education (Rhodes, 2001b). Many states adopted *The Wisconsin Idea*. Consequently, the unique mission of continuing higher education began its development as the arm of university community service and outreach. As a result of the Morrill Acts and The Wisconsin Idea, the wall of elitism that enveloped the universities came crashing down.

Throughout the decades that followed, other public policies provided opportunities to achieve national and state goals for higher education. Most notable examples are the GI Bill (1944) which offered a means for veterans to readjust to postwar factors (Greenberg, 2004); the response to Sputnik by development of curricula geared toward strengthening science education; the Carnegie Foundation for assisting minorities to enter mainstream American life; the Higher Education Act of 1965, and the development of community colleges in the 1960s. Today,

universities provide opportunities for pursuing credit and noncredit programs, enabling students to achieve various degrees, and certifications.

Thus, the evolution and development of continuing *higher* education began and grew exponentially as a response to the demands placed on universities to serve various constituents. In addition, demographics and global economic workforce development became two major issues of concern to higher education leaders, administrators, and policymakers. These sentiments are still being expressed today. At a meeting entitled *A National Dialogue: Commission on the Future of Higher Education*, Education Secretary Spelling remarked that:

In today's global economy, the best jobs will go to the most skilled and most motivated workers. Around 80 percent of the fastest growing jobs require at least some post secondary (higher) education. That means a college education is more important than ever and now is the time to have a national conversation on our goals for higher education....As we look to the future, it is imperative that we maintain a system of higher education that meets the needs of our diverse population, and in particular the needs of traditionally underserved communities; provides enhanced opportunities for lifelong learning and addresses the economic and workforce needs of the country. (Spellings, 2005. *A National Dialogue: The future of education. Speeches*. September 19, 2005, p. 1)

In addition to the workforce development agenda (Davis, 1994; Hudson, Bhandari, Peter & Billis, 2005) as expressed by Secretary Spelling, higher education is also facing startling demographic changes. These changes are projected to continue into the unforeseeable future and will subsequently have a profound impact on continuing higher education. Demographics is a major issue affecting U. S. higher education as the population is living longer and is pursuing

higher education at older ages (University Continuing education Association [UCEA], 2006). Traditionally, universities and colleges have focused almost exclusively on the education of the younger 18-22 years old students who live on campus, but this tradition is no longer the status quo (Berg & American Council on Education, 2005; National Center on Education Statistics [NCES], 1998). Current trends reveal that 18-22 years-old, full time (on campus) undergraduates account for only sixteen percent enrollment (Stokes, 2006) and that greater than forty percent of undergraduates are non-traditional in some way (Richardson & King, 1998). A 32 percent increase in enrollment among 25-34 year olds is expected during the years between 2002-2014 (UCEA, 2006). Of the nation's nearly 14 million undergraduates, more than four in ten attend two-year community colleges; nearly one-third are older than 24 years, and forty percent are enrolled part-time (The Spelling Commission on Higher Education Report, 2006).

These demographic changes are quite dramatic; people in the 21st Century are expected to live longer, and will need training and retraining as they will remain in the workforce longer. We will also see an influx of immigrants from Latin America needing access to higher education and the challenge for colleges and universities to serve this growing populace is one of great concern to leaders and policy makers (Yankelovich, 2005). Therefore, the need for, provision and access through continuing higher education and lifelong learning is likely to continue in the future. Consequently, in a nation that is undergoing a critical crisis of unemployment and underemployment, the challenge for continuing education in the context of higher education is to provide for lifelong learning that will foster the need for human capital and workforce development.

Since its inception and during the long history of the American university which spans more than three centuries, trends and issues have emerged to shape the culture of American

higher education. The American university has been responsive to and in turn been shaped by societal, political, and economic factors. Therefore, throughout the decades, political, social, economic, and cultural transformations have led to the formation of various models of higher education and higher educational institutions. Consequently, the current discourse in higher education reflects the growing challenges, stress, and a future of uncertainty that is facing higher education. Politics, policies, and socio-economic factors, along with market competition, are challenging universities to fulfill what has become a mission of fostering lifelong education (Lovett, et al., 2004; Newman, Couturier, & Scurry, 2004a, 2004b).

There is also a stark dichotomy in the current discourse: Public universities are being labeled by society, the media, and higher education researchers as “entrepreneurial” implying they are no longer providing for public need, but are only interested in the bottom line, meeting the budget (“Connecting higher,” 2005; “How can,” 2004; Mautner, 2005). It is also thought that educating is secondary or that universities are “doing nothing.” That is, they no longer have a historical social mission (Shapiro, 2005). Yet, there is widespread agreement in the higher education literature that universities around the world are experiencing substantial changes, challenges, and trends that result in uncertainty (Bok, 2003; Shapiro). Nevertheless, Bok and Shapiro agree that American universities are still regarded as institutions of distinction characterized by and regardless of the great challenges they face.

Bleiklie (2005) acknowledges that the changing social or service function of the university should not be confused with the changes in their scientific-research function or mission as it sometimes is. Because, although there is little evidence to support the notion of deteriorating quality in students and faculty, it is obvious that both are enjoying *less* of an elite status than historically, and yet the research function or focus should not be the only

consequential priority of universities. The question is how are universities to respond to these challenges and trends and at the same time remain true to their democratic social mission and values? Some higher education researchers and administrators believe that to answer this question, universities must be willing to adopt various strategies. Strategies like mergers or amalgamations, especially in European and Australian universities, are being employed in an effort to preserve the *elite* status of the university, but this strategy is not necessarily the answer to the current challenges facing higher education. Bleiklie also noted that:

The idea that one can establish and preserve an effective formal division between institutions that are focused on pure research and institutions that are more utility-oriented in their approach to knowledge production, in order to protect the former against “external influences,” has so far been unsuccessful. (p. 49)

Consequently, while non-university higher education institutions have attempted to become research universities, research universities have never given up their utility-oriented, applied research, or their pragmatic, vocational-oriented education programs (Bleiklie, 2005) or their purview of service and outreach mission. This notion supports my premise that continuing higher education is still a vital sector of higher education discourse and is becoming more so as continuing higher education is being called on to address many social challenges (“Biggest Challenge,” 2004).

Proponents of innovative strategies in higher education believe that a vital strategy for higher education is to focus on the current entrepreneurial paradigm shift—a business-market model that is sweeping higher education. Academia and business, once two separate social domains have recently been converging, moving closer together, and are intersecting at various points of contact (Lovell & Gill, 1997). This process of convergence is being supported by the

United States and other governments around the world. They initiate support and sustain change in higher education sectors through creating regulations, allocating budgets, as well as through promulgating a pro-market, entrepreneurial, educational agenda (Mautner, 2005).

The Entrepreneurial Paradigm

According to Long (1990) education is not only a social and cultural element but is also political and economic; its objectives and purposes are debated and influenced by existing social, economic, and political forces. Changes in the distribution of power, economic conditions, and social policies lead to policy appropriation and changes in education at the federal and state levels. Conversely, education impacts policies, politics, socio-economic, and market factors. Currently, the most influential of all the social, economic, and political forces impacting higher education and that is resulting in increasing scenarios of uncertainty, is the incursion of market commercialism into higher education. This influence is referred to by Slaughter and Leslie (1997) and Slaughter and Rhoades (2004) as the theory of *Academic Capitalism*. Academic Capitalism, together with entrepreneurialism, forms the theoretical framework for this study, and points out this seemingly growing trend of public universities towards a more corporate business orientation. This orientation has had a significant impact on higher education's governance, leadership, management, and discourse. This theory also focuses on universities [attempting] to make a purposeful transition to *entrepreneurialism* in an effort to reinvent and build new foundations for collegiality and autonomy. Entrepreneurialism is often used as an alternative term to academic capitalism (Clarke, 1998, 2000, 2001; Deem, 2001; Mautner, 2005; Slaughter & Rhoades, 2004).

Of all the major discursive trends, challenges, and issues in education today, the most important is the increasing attention being given to issues of entrepreneurial activities in higher

education (Agbo, 2000; Berg & American Council on Education, 2005). Recently, there has been increasing pressure for various sectors of higher education to adopt industry, commercial-market, and entrepreneurial models of governance, financing, and services (Breneman, 2005; Pusser, 2005). The higher education literature supports the view that entrepreneurialism can be for profit or not-for-profit and occurs when organizations are innovative, progressive, pursue various opportunities, and assume risks in generating resources beyond those that are subsidized (Clark, 2001).

However, the debate surrounding entrepreneurialism has intensified since the early 1990s as the term entrepreneurialism sometimes conjures a negative perception to some traditionalists. For example, as early as in 1991, Jack Mezirow in a report entitled, *Faded visions and fresh commitments: Adult education's social goals* noted that “deans of continuing education look disoriented if questioned if and how their programs reflect their social goals....[and] that the market dictates the value of educational offerings” (Mezirow, 1991, p. 5). More recently other proponents of higher education’s social purposes have expressed concerns about the increasing influences of entrepreneurialism and market prerogatives in education (Bok, 2003; Geiger, 2004; Hartley, 2003; Rhodes, 2001a; Shapiro, 2005). Conversely, proponents of entrepreneurialism posit that it is good for the university, an innovative effort; especially for those divisions like CHE that receive little funding from governments (Clark, 1998, 2001; Offerman, 2002; Whitaker, 2001).

Entrepreneurialism often denotes a negative undertone while innovation denotes positive connotations of change, growth, and success. Yet, according to Slaughter and Leslie (1997) the encroachment of the profit motive into the academy is decidedly negative and opposed to the partnership discourse that pro-entrepreneurialism activists like to convey when describing the

inclusion of corporate privileges into academia (Offerman, 2002). Innovation and entrepreneurialism (Clark, 1998, 2001) can be used to characterize the “21st Century University” as portrayed by proponents of the entrepreneurial university as a whole. Hence, many universities are proposing varying models of entrepreneurialism in their strategic plans.

An example of this model is the one currently being proposed by the University of Illinois. In a recent commentary related to this newly proposed University of Illinois’ Global Campus, Peter Stokes, Executive Vice President of Eduventures, an education research firm, said: “The motivation to go for-profit [to be entrepreneurial] today isn’t to raise capital, but [for universities] to free themselves from constraints of traditional university governance. With traditional governance, it’s hard to make the kinds of quick decisions you need” (as cited in Jaschik, 2006, p. 3). The Global Campus is expected to be innovative in its approach to education; it will have a continuing education model in its program offerings, that is, it will be non-traditional. The new campus will offer short-term courses that have a workforce development focus, and is expected to attract non-traditional students.

This idea of the entrepreneurial university is a global phenomenon, and is isomorphic in its quest towards development. Clark in his concluding address delivered during the opening session of the 2000 Institute of Higher Education Management (IHEM) General Conference in Paris argued that, “Progressive, self-reliant universities—the type this conference focuses on will play a central role in competent national systems of higher education” (Clark, 2001, p. 23). Studies describing the future of the “utopian” entrepreneurial university are prevalent in the higher education literature today (Clark, 1998, 2001; Deem, 2001; Etzkowitz, Webster, Gebhardt, & Terra, 2000; Mautner, 2005). In addition to entrepreneurialism, contemporary research and literature in higher education effectively covers the current issues, challenges, and

trends in higher education. Lifelong learning as a discourse and its correlation to the changing student demographics, accountability, and equitable access to higher education, fiscal policy and crisis, social and economic capital, and issues of leadership are among the challenges and issues most frequently studied. Furthermore, the literature focuses on the incursion of market and industry prerogatives into the academy (Clark, 2001; Hirsch & Weber, 1999; Knapper & Cropley, 2000; Lerner & King, 1992; Leslie & Fretwell, 1996; Rhodes, 2001a; Shapiro, 2005; Simerly, 1997).

However, with the exception of a few studies, for example, the *Futures Project* (Newman et al., 2004a, 2004b) and the *Fiscal Crisis in Higher Education* (Rand, 1997) most of the research and literature is historic, prescriptive, conceptual, and anecdotal. Pusser, Gansneder, Gallaway, and Pope (2005) purport that the areas of particular concern that will benefit from further research in higher education are (1) an understanding of the “key to the success of market models in delivery of education by entrepreneurial, secondary education arenas, and (2) the role of entrepreneurial higher education programs in providing public and private benefits to students and the wider society” (p. 40). This study addresses the role of continuing higher education, as they are often portrayed as “entrepreneurial” divisions, within the milieu of higher education.

Continuing Higher Education’s Mission

Historically, continuing *higher* education began as a response to the pressures that were placed on universities to educate diverse populations. It was to be the public service arm of the university, established to support the community. Today, continuing higher education (CHE) divisions are considered entrepreneurial within the university and are the higher education sectors “closest” to the market and as a result bridge the gap between the university, the market, and society at large. Continuing higher education describes the extension of knowledge through

faculty and staff resources by colleges and universities (Gessner, 1987). For the purpose of this study, CHE specifically refers to the broader concept of lifelong learning opportunities and programs sought by nontraditional students in formal settings within the context of higher education (Schèutze & Slowey, 2000). Nontraditional refer to those students who are pursuing credit as well as noncredit programs on a university campus and who are older than the typical 18-22 year-old students, living on campus, while seeking a degree (UCEA, 2006). Nontraditional also refers to those who attend college for half-time or less; 22 years or older, usually having families; are enrolled in continuing education; professional education, training or, workforce development courses; enrolled in on-line courses, distance learning courses, adult education courses (Stokes, 2006). For the purpose of this study, nontraditional also refers to students who are younger than 18 years old who are pursuing various non-degree or noncredit programs on a university campus, and who use the resources of the university in their endeavors. These programs include credit and non-credit, professional, executive, adult, and vocational, summer initiatives, and training and retraining courses (Cervero, 2001; Harris, 2003).

Although the concept of continuing higher education is gaining a foothold in the higher education arena, this sector of higher education is not widely researched. The few empirical studies specifically related to continuing higher education focus on continuing education as a profession, leadership, student concerns, demographics, and enrollment issues. For example, in 1992 a study by Pearce entitled *Survival of Continuing Higher Education*, highlighted the concerns of Deans' perceptions of external threats related to funding, competition, and lack of professionalization in continuing higher education. Likewise, English (1992) focused on the ways that continuing educators should clarify and define their practice. Shannon (2003) looked at how continuing higher education can adopt the Value Creation Index (VCI) and how VCI can be

used to [quantitatively] measure the value of continuing education. Pusser, et al. (2005) focused on the entrepreneurial nature of CHE and the student and enrollment activities and the nature of course offerings in CHE.

Once considered marginal or peripheral to other areas of the university (Donaldson, 1991; English, 1992; “Panel Says,” 1990) CHE has been gaining attention and is increasingly becoming an arena of focus. Since the early 1990s, CHE has been more visible partially because there are new political pressures to promote the ideology of lifelong learning and resulting economic development (Gose, 1999; Haworth, 1996; Pappas & Eckert, 1997), and partially because CHE *has been* considered the *cash-cow* for many universities (Nicklin, 1991). Gose further notes that it is not a bad position for adult and continuing higher education to be in as the issues of human capital and workforce development continue to be at the forefront of policy makers’ decisions.

Governments around the world—U.S., Canada, Europe, Asia, and Australia—are basing economic policies on lifelong learning and human capital theories (Foth, 2002; Yorke, 2003). The mandates being posed by federal governments worldwide are for continuing higher education to become a catalyst and integrative force on university campuses in an effort to promote a more comprehensive approach to economic development (Greasley, 2005). The United States Government has historically acknowledged that the nation’s main resource is its human capital. Therefore the need to focus on lifelong learning is increasingly being emphasized in today’s educational climate, although more than 20 years ago, the economic link to adult and continuing education began to be articulated by the U. S. Government. In 1984, *The Commission on Higher Education and the Adult Learner* noted that the United States is in an “increasingly competitive economic struggle” and that:

For reasons of national interest embedded in the economic, political, and social determinants of the quality of life, the fostering of learning by adults is an immediate and compelling national need, a need requiring a lucid and forthright statement of national policy and immediate attention by the nation's colleges and universities. (p. 3)

But these sentiments are being expressed more fervently today. An excerpt from the 2006 report of The Commission on Higher Education echoes that of the 1984 Commission's in stating the following:

To reach its objective, we believe that U.S. Higher education must recommit itself to its core public purposes. Today [our] world is becoming tougher, more competitive less forgiving of wasted resources and squandered opportunities. In tomorrow's world a nation's wealth will derive from its capacity to educate, attract, and retain citizens who are able to work smarter and learn faster—making educational achievement ever more important both for individuals and for society [at] large. (The Spelling Commission Report, 2006, p. 3)

The issues surrounding lifelong learning and human capital development will remain dominant in the current socio-political climate, and will have a profound impact on continuing higher education. Therefore, continuing education has the opportunity to be a “beacon” in defining the American universities' and colleges' social and economic mission. This economic mission coupled with the startling demographic changes facing our nation, shows how continuing education is likely to remain an important sector and to lead the way in higher education.

Richardson (2002) observed that “lifelong learning and continuing education have been central to the rhetoric of government in recent years” (p. 115). Regardless of the semantics, the rhetoric, and the discourse enveloping the various expressions of the 21st Century University, the focus is for continuing higher education to look beyond the ivory tower, the discourse and the rhetoric. Demographic, technological, and economic trends will continue to shape and reshape the future of continuing higher education (Gwynn, 2000) because the future has no shelf life and institutions of higher education are strongly challenged to be accountable and responsive to changing societal expectations (Kasworm, Sandmann, & Sissel, 2000). Speaking at the University of North Carolina in Charlotte in 2005, the Secretary of Education, Margaret Spelling, said:

It is time to examine how we can get the most out of our national investment in higher education. We have a responsibility to make sure our higher education system continues to meet our nation's needs for an educated and competitive workforce in the 21st century. (Spellings, 2005. A National Dialogue: The future of education. Speeches. September 19, 2005, p. 1)

Statement of the Problem

The historical mission of the university and higher education has been to serve important civic purposes (Shapiro, 2005). Today, several interlocking factors are contributing to universities’ increasing challenges to their historic mission and consequent responsiveness to the market commercialism (Bok, 2003; Geiger, 2004; Zemsky, Wegner, & Massy, 2005). First, the notion of increased access and the mass movement to higher education without the matching increase in government funding result in budget shortfalls or deficits. Second, due to a continuous decrease in state funding, commercial funding streams, generated by spin-off

companies, for profit divisions, consulting contracts, entrepreneurial but not-for-profit divisions, and other institutional activities characteristic of market commercialism, are becoming more significant in higher education (Bleak, 2005; Slaughter & Rhoades, 2004). This incursion of commercial activities in higher education is opposed to the traditionalist view of higher education serving the needs of society and is referred to as the theory of *Academic Capitalism* (Slaughter & Leslie, 1997; Slaughter & Rhoades, 2004). Conversely, proponents of entrepreneurialism see the concept as the umbrella under which the university is self-steering, self-reliant, progressive, and which stresses a forward-looking orientation in its willingness to seek out new frontiers of knowledge, collegiality, and autonomy (Clark, 2001).

Finally, political developments as reflected in federal policies have established the fundamental and direct relationship among higher education, human capital development, workforce development, and employment. The federal government is challenging universities to maintain a system of higher education that meets the needs of a diverse population and in particular, the needs of traditionally underserved communities, while promoting the ideologies of lifelong learning as the answer to an educated workforce (Dienel, 1999). It is little wonder that continuing higher education is being admonished to educate diverse audiences and to solve new problems in a society that is being shaped and reshaped by technological, economic, and social changes that are both global and local. The question, however, is how will continuing education keep abreast of all these challenges yet remain economically sound and true to its historical social mission?

Continuing education is *entrepreneurial* by nature (Pusser, Gansneder, Gallaway & Pope, 2005) and although not-for-profit within public and most private not-for-profit universities, is closest to the market due to its innovative and diverse offerings. It is also the fastest growing

division within higher education today (Newman, 2002; UCEA, 2006) yet receives the least attention of higher education researchers. The role of [entrepreneurial] continuing higher education (CHE) divisions within the current political and socio-economic context of higher education is one area of concern yet to be explored and understood (Pusser, 2005).

With fewer state subsidies and a greater reliance on tuition and fees, *entrepreneurial* divisions, like continuing education, will need strong leadership and strategies which address firm commitment to CHE's historical mission and value in providing effective benefits to students and society. Inquiries related to the reevaluation of the historical mission and values of continuing higher education in the changing political-economic climate of higher education are necessary. Although there are several studies that focus on entrepreneurialism as a universal strategic response to the current educational climate, the few studies specifically related to continuing higher education address, among other issues, leadership, student concerns, demographics, and enrollment (English, 1992; Pearce, 1992; Pusser, et al., 2005; Shannon, 2003). In particular, there are no studies that address the specific strategies and responses of continuing education leaders to the current political-economic context of higher education.

Purpose and Research Questions

The purpose of this study was to identify continuing higher education's (CHE) strategic response to the political-economic context of higher education. The three questions guiding the study were:

1. What do university administrators see as the current political, social, and economic challenges facing continuing higher education?

2. What is the role of continuing education in responding strategically to the current challenges facing their institutions?
3. What do university administrators see as the return on investment of those strategic responses?

Significance of the Study

This study has significant implications for *contemporary* higher education. Its findings make both theoretical and practical contributions to the field in general and to continuing education in particular. There are few studies relating to the understanding of leaders' perceptions, attitudes, and processes within continuing education settings and the understanding of the challenges they face and the strategies they use to sustain, reinvent, and redefine continuing education within a larger university setting. Changes in society are moving continuing education into the mainstream of universities, and it is one of the fastest growing segments of education in the United States, yet receives the least attention of higher education researchers. Accordingly, this study adds theoretically to the limited number of empirical inquiries specifically related to continuing higher education.

Further, the study contributes to the ongoing debate concerning the challenges in higher education and to the role of entrepreneurial entities within traditional, non-entrepreneurial, university settings. This study also contributes to a better understanding of the theory of *Academic Capitalism* (Slaughter & Leslie, 1997; Slaughter & Rhodes, 2004) as it relates to continuing higher education. Moreover, the increasing attention being given to issues of entrepreneurial activities in higher education, to the concept of lifelong learning, and to social mission versus fiscal resources is explored.

In this era of great societal change, global economy, changing workforce demands, and global citizenry, continuing educators and leaders must keep abreast with the need to create opportunities, build futures, and change lives. As a result, the study offers practical knowledge to policy makers, administrators, and all stakeholders of higher education. Further, the study has further practical implications for leaders and administrators of continuing education, in that the results offer examples of model strategies that leaders must constantly pursue. These strategies offer ideas for improving efficiency and effectiveness in continuing higher education while doing so within the political and socio-economic context of higher education.

Explanation of Key Terms

The following definitions of key terms used are taken from the handbook of continuing and higher education (Gessner, 1987) and other sources.

Continuing higher education: is used to describe the extension of knowledge through faculty and staff resources by colleges and universities.

Continuing education: is used to describe a process of continuous learning to connote organized instruction for adult learners.

Lifelong learning: refers to a process during a person's lifetime in which he or she continues to develop knowledge, skills, and attitude.

Academic capitalism: Refers to market and market like behaviors on the part of universities and faculty. "By using *Academic Capitalism*...we define the reality of the nascent environment of public research universities...in which faculty and professional staff expend their human capital stock increasingly in competitive situations" (Slaughter and Leslie, 1997, p. 9).

Human capital development: An economic theory focusing on major resources in the macro sense of an economic democracy.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Higher education, federal and state governments provide one of the most important services to the nation in contributing to the welfare of its citizens; giving them opportunities to advance their socio-economic standards by means of higher education. The forces of globalization, exponential growth, changes in demographics, advances in technology, decrease in financial support, and increased competition are all forces working together to pressure institutions of higher education to take a critical look at their organizational structures and policies (Newman, 2002). This study examined continuing higher education's strategic responses to the current context of higher education. In particular, the study examined issues relative to the major challenges facing continuing higher education as leaders and administrators grapple with the negative and positive nuances of academic capitalism and entrepreneurialism within a traditional university setting.

In order to provide the background for this study, I have reviewed four major areas of literature as follows: (1) History and development of higher education, (2) Continuing higher education, (3) Entrepreneurialism as a major discourse within higher education, and (4) Slaughter and Rhoades' theory of *academic capitalism*. Agbo (2000) observed that issues shaping current policy agendas in higher education concern lifelong learning, the current role of education in workforce development, the competitive global economy and equality of educational access, which parallel the literature I have reviewed. Literature related to the historical perspectives, current trends and future perspectives of higher education and continuing higher education are the four major umbrellas that address the sub-sections addressed above. The review is expansive and involved searching various educational and library data bases, academic

journals, books, reliable electronic resources, and websites using various descriptors and key words: Higher education, continuing education, power, politics, and socio-economic contexts of higher education. This review is organized thematically or grouped by subject areas.

Higher Education Development

The university is the most significant creation of the second millennium (Rhodes, 2001a). From modest beginnings over nine hundred years ago, it has become the quiet but decisive catalyst in modern society—the factor essential to society’s effective functioning and well-being. The university provides the knowledge and data to develop political actions and government policies, while informing public understanding and tastes. It trains professionals, creates ideologies, and is the key to the overall course and success of public life. For nine long centuries and counting, the university has cherished the independence and autonomy that society has afforded it, while balancing this portfolio of responsibilities. According to Rhodes, American universities are currently enjoying a period of unprecedented success “as students the world over clamor for admission to their programs” (p. xi). The importance of higher education and the university will increase as knowledge becomes and continues to be the dominant economic capital—a force in this millennium.

Nevertheless, with success often come great challenges. The university, and higher education will for the foreseeable future, be faced with the challenge of sustaining society’s most important values, demonstrating sufficient adaptability to fill new and or modified roles, while doing so with effective leadership, valor, and opportunities they must seize. The colonial colleges, early land grant universities, private colleges and universities, and modern forms of higher education have evolved and expanded. They have redefined undergraduate education, monopolized a good deal of advanced professional education, and became key components of

the nation's research. Nevertheless, the future of the university and higher education will depend on "having a well-understood and socially compelling sense of [social] purpose" (Shapiro, 2005 p. xvi).

Higher Education Historical Perspective

The university, with its humble beginnings, is one of the few institutions that span almost the whole millennium itself and yet it is one of the most durable and distinctive with a nature, membership, responsibility, and autonomy that make it unique. Until the 19th century, universities had little impact upon the professions and only modest impact upon the corpus of knowledge or the society at large. Its original purpose was to conserve and transmit the knowledge and skills posit by the church, and by which most were founded and accredited (Rhodes, 2001b). In this review, the history and evolutionary factors of higher education are organized by topics and periods of events rather than by chronological dates. It covers the early colonial beginnings to the end of the 19th century, higher education and the *modern* universities during the early 20th century, the 1920s to the 1960s, and the 1960s to the end of the 20th century.

Colonial beginnings to the end of the 19th century. The history of higher education parallels the history of the United States as a developing nation. Its mission was, and still is, to respond to social determinants, undertake research, disseminate knowledge, advance learning, and professional practice, and provide services to the community (Stubblefield & Keane, 1994). During the early colonial period the church played a major role in the development of education. Stubblefield and Keane noted that "Harvard, (1640) the first institution of higher education established in the colonies, exemplified the Puritan commitment to a liberal classical education and about half of its graduates entered the ministry" (p. 23). Jarvis (2001) in his study of the universities noted that during the evolutionary-colonial period, the United States and the Western

societies took on a capitalist political system. This system became the central force of society, with the state being the central governing mechanism. During this pluralistic society education became one of the means by which the state managed society, and thus “higher education retained its high status providing entry to those elites who governed and the upper class who worked with and advised them” (p. 5). However, the industrialization of the American labor market, gave rise to the need for workers trained in the practical arts (Cohen & Brawer, 2003) and as independence (1776) approached, there was a growing interest in promoting agricultural education. Agents representing The Society of Arts were sent to England to study technological problems in agriculture and manufacturing (Stubblefield & Keane, 1994).

Knowles (1997) in his study and reflection on the historical development of higher education in the United States remarked that, “the year 1862 represents a *land mark* [italics added] in the steady forward march of agricultural education with the occurrence of two [economic] events of enormous consequences” (p. 24). The first event was the establishment of the Federal Department of Agriculture with responsibility for promoting the welfare of the rural population and the second significant event that really propelled education was the Morrill Act of 1862 and its amendment in 1890.

Many researchers and higher education scholars, for example, Rhodes (2001a) agree that the American university became truly American during the Civil War, when in 1862 Abraham Lincoln signed the Morrill Act into law—“it is a success story that begs to be told—and extended” (p. 195). This Act initiated by Justin Morrill, a legislator from Vermont, and signed into law by President Abraham Lincoln, “is the starting point of discussion in higher education and democracy in America” (Geiger, 1963 p. 3). It had a major impact on the evolution of higher education in the United States (Geiger, 1963; Knowles, 1977; Robertson, 1987). This legislation

provided assistance for the states to receive gifts of land from the Federal Government “on which to establish colleges later known as land-grant colleges that would teach the practical disciplines of agriculture and mechanical arts in addition to the already established scientific and classical studies” (Stubblefield & Keane, 1994, p. 85).

The Morrill Act is credited with the establishment of state land grant colleges and universities. “It extended access and widened the reach of colleges and universities to the industrial masses, and has influenced the direction of American higher education, more than any other federal legislation to date” (Robertson, 1987, p. 27). The emphasis on the industrial and mechanical arts promoted by this legislation led to an increase in emphasis on vocational education and training activities related to workforce development. In addition, the second Morrill Act was passed in 1890. This legislation required that states admit Blacks to their land-grant colleges or provide separate but equal colleges to accommodate them.

Modern universities during the early 20th century. The history of the higher education at the latter part of the nineteenth century to the end of the twentieth century is as striking as during the Colonial Revolution and Civil War eras. The Morrill Acts propelled the expansion in the number of colleges and universities between 1865 and 1920. Also, the founding of the first research university, Johns Hopkins University in 1876, increased the emphasis on research (Rhodes, 2001a). Industrial research and economic forces led to the transformation of institutions as the needs of the country evolved; academies and schools became colleges, while colleges expanded and became universities as research became more prominent, and advanced degree offerings increased (Goodchild, 2002). Most profoundly though, was the establishment of specialized institutions with a mission to satisfy special education needs and to broaden the offerings of university extension programs. The Federal Government assisted with the funding of

university cooperative agricultural and non-agricultural extension services with the passing of the Smith-Lever Act (1914), and the Wisconsin Idea also assisted with some of these ideas for extension. This Act was jointly supported by the federal, state, and local governments. Also, in 1917, the Smith-Hughes Act was passed providing funds for vocational education.

1920s to the 1960s. The decades of the 1920s to the 1960s were chaotic and revolutionary. World Wars I (1920s) and II (1940s) and the great depression changed the social and economic landscape of the United States. Knowles (1977) recalls this period as having “changing patterns and rising tempos in population, economics, technology and philosophical ideas...more than any other nation had experience” (p. 76). However, the level of education in the population of Americans arose most significantly by the passing of the Servicemen’s Readjustment Act (GI Bill of Rights) in 1944. This Act is the most notable and evolutionary in the recent history of American higher education, and was born out of politicians’ concern that the chaos and crises of the 1920s and 1930s would return (Greenberg, 2004). The GI Bill provided three extraordinary benefits: (1) loan guarantees for the purchase of a home, farm or business, (2) educational opportunities for the collegiate, (3) vocational or on-the-job training. Under the education provision, millions of veterans attended college and universities, vocational schools, and on-the-job-training Greenberg noted. This influx of students was a great challenge to higher education campuses as institutional leaders scrambled to accommodate this new *sudden wave*.

1960s to the end of the 20th century. The 1960s through to the end of the 20th century is often characterized as the age of the junior and community colleges (Diener, 1986). Cohen and Brawer (1996, 2003) in their study of community colleges concluded that the philosophy behind the rise in community colleges was the need for the separation of research and teaching, the

demand by industry for workers trained in technical skills, as well as the perception that education was the foundation of upward mobility in American Society.

The community colleges were challenged to focus on unmet needs in their communities and to design responsive programs and services to meet those needs (Cohen & Brawer, 2003). Hartley (2003) summarized that “perhaps the simplest overarching reason for the growth of community colleges was that an increasing number of demands were being placed on schools at all levels to solve Americans’ social problems” (p. 2). The historical development of higher education continues today. We are currently creating and shaping the history of higher education each day with the development of new laws, new challenges, and new commissions regarding higher education.

Current Trends in Higher Education

Agbo, (2000) observed that issues and trends shaping current policy agendas in higher education today include: demographics, lifelong learning, the current role of education in workforce development, the competitive global economy, equality of educational access, and issues of technology among others. This review outlines five major trends and issues that are challenging higher education, and that currently prevails in the literature on higher education (Hirsch & Weber, 1999). The following is a summary of the current issues and trends challenging higher education and continuing higher education’s new life in the fast lane of politics, policy, and socio-economic environment.

- (1) Access, accessibility, and accountability (Simerly, 1977) are currently among the most prevalent.
- (2) Fiscal policy and crisis is also of major concern to policy makers and leaders (Leslie & Fretwell, 1996; Rand, 1977).

- (3) Entrepreneurial activities and competition is a major economic trend (Berg & American Council on Education, 2005; Couturier 2005; Levin, 2001; Newman, Couturier, & Scurry, 2004; Pearce, 1992; Pusser, 2005; Jarvis, 2001).
- (4) Lifelong learning discourse (Agbo, 2000) and its correlation to challenges in the changing student demographics Knapper & Cropley, 2000) issues of technology related to distance education (Newman, 2002).
- (5) Socio-economic capital and workforce development (Brockett, 1987).

3A's of Higher Education.

The September 3rd 2004 issue of *The Chronicle of Higher Education* reiterated that “accountability was one of the flashpoint words in the battles over higher education in the most recent legislative session in Congress” (p. 1). Concerns of affordability, accessibility, and performance measures [accountability] were raised as lawmakers tried and failed to reauthorize The Higher Education Act of 1965. According to Simerly (1997) the issues of access, accountability, and affordability are currently the most prevalent among challenges facing higher education.

Access. The greatest *single* issue facing higher education is the ability for institutions to provide the necessary resources to concurrently support all the needs and activities of lifelong learning while remaining accountable to all stakeholders. Issues of accessibility, affordability and accountability, wrapped up in what I term the 3 A's of higher education's issues, are profound in today's higher educational arenas (Dickeson & USAGroup Foundation, 1999; Russell, 2005). These and other strategic issues were the subjects of the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) International Conference held in Ottawa,

Canada in December 2000 (OECD, 2001). The issue of access to education has been a concern and policy debate for a long time. During the 1800s and 1900s the Federal Government provided access to many with the passing of the Morrill Acts (1862), the GI Bill of Rights (1944) and The Higher Education Act of 1965 among other political moves (Greenberg, 2004; Rohfeld, 1990; Shannon, 1990). However, the issue of access still remains one of debate and analysis for higher education (Ayer, 2005). Analysis of admissions, continued enrollment and completion in an academic program as well as equal access [equity] related to minority students continue to be an issue (Goodchild, Lovell, Hines & Gill, 1997).

Affordability. The idea of accessibility and affordability involves the notion of democratic educational equality (Agbo, 2000). Education should be accessible to all who are interested, but adequate resources must be available so that potential participants can have equal access to postsecondary education. A serious commitment to lifelong learning will involve serious consideration of funding from state and local governments. Students who are unable to pay for their education should be able to get tuition and other financial assistance (OECD, 2001).

Accountability. By the 1990s, there was a growing interest among state political leaders in performance indicators and *report cards* that would provide information for the public and prospective students on both institutional and system performance. Rather than the internal “improvement” focus of many assessment initiatives, the emphasis of performance indicators was primarily to assure external audiences that institutions are committed to performance and productivity with respect to their specific missions, including research and service (McGuinness, 1997). A report released by the University System of Georgia (USG) posits the new “performance-based funding model” unveiled by the Board of Regents as part of the system’s response to Governor Sonny Purdue’s charge to all state agencies to increase accountability

(Perry-Johnson, 2005). At the backdrop of increasing tuition, students, parents, and the greater public are demanding proof that students are getting the benefits they are paying for (Newman, & Scurry, 2004). The focus is on quantity and quality of services provided to higher education's clientele, on government's demand for accountability in the expenditure of public funds, and faculty productivity. Goodchild, et al. (1997) note that while institutions must consider faculty development and resources it is also necessary for them to hold faculty accountable within the framework of the institutions' roles and mission.

Fiscal Issues

The greater part of colleges and universities' budgets are funded by state and federal governments; however, in recent years the decrease in state funding is causing an unprecedented revenue crisis for universities (Reindl, 2004). They are being forced to critically evaluate their fiscal policies, cut costs, and increase tuition revenues. Much of the studies on continuing higher education are focused on the current financial crisis, rising costs, and other fiscal policies (Gessner, 1987; Leslie & Fretwell, 1996; OECD, 2001) because these are currently among the greatest of stresses that face continuing higher education. A major research undertaken by the Rand Organization (1997) in collaboration with the Commission on National Investment in Higher Education(CNIHE) entitled "*Breaking the social contract: Fiscal crisis in higher education*," analyzed the rising costs of tuition and the need to decrease costs, while maintaining quality in American universities. There is a great concern that should the current trend continue, in a few years millions of Americans will be denied higher education because "policies that control resource allocations to universities and colleges have remained unchanged since the last century" (Rand 1997, p. 13).

A similar study also by the Rand (1998) in collaboration with The Foundation for Independent Higher Education (FIHE) and reported by Kaganoff (1998) focused on the academic literature and press releases regarding the lessons learned about collaboration, technology and outsourcing as a means of delimiting cost—cost cutting initiatives—in higher education. The study concluded that as institutions of higher education have come under increasing pressure to cut costs, the need to understand the impact of cost-cutting initiatives already underway has become more important. Another major project, the *Good Work Project* (GWP) in higher education (1995-2003) focused on current challenges like the erosion of financial support and on what it means to provide *good work* in an organization (Gardener, Csikszentmihalyi, & Damon, 2001). The dominant theme in the Good Work Project is the need for higher education to raise revenues independent of the state and federal government.

Institutions have come under increasing pressure to cut costs. The current trend is for higher education to formulate cost cutting initiatives and strategies, for example, employing collaboration, technology, and outsourcing as means of delimiting cost (Rand, 1998). Another dominant theme in this current fiscal climate is the need for higher education to raise revenues independent of the state and federal government (Gardener, et al., 2001). This concept leads to the other major discourse prevailing in education, issues of entrepreneurship and market competition.

Entrepreneurship and Market Competition

The increasing attention being given to issues of entrepreneurial activities in higher education has been a result of the increasing pressures for various sectors of higher education to adopt entrepreneurial models of financing and service (Breneman, 2005). This pressure is common in continuing higher education departments because according to the literature they

differ from other sectors of higher education because they are more market driven, and most often than not must sell and relegate themselves entrepreneurially. The educational products they offer are tailored to the needs of their customers (Oberman, Hill, & Curley, 2005). However, there is also a negative connotation and a fear that continuing education will be relegated into a surplus revenue generating operation rather than institutions of educational excellence (Nicklin, 1991). In 1999, a conference held in Baltimore, MD and facilitated by Johns Hopkins University focused on the means whereby continuing higher education institutions could increase their offerings of part-time post-baccalaureate programs in an effort to fill revenue gaps (Gose, 1991). It is an excellent idea for CHE to pursue various means of revenue and entrepreneurial ideals (Newman, 2002), but scholars question whether or not this pursuit will have a profound effect on the quality of teaching (Bok, 1982; Offerman, 2002).

Other studies focus on competitive adaptations, and competitive advantages as well as the competition from corporate universities. Marketing and competition from corporate universities are big challenges for higher education (Couturier 2005; Levin, 2001; Newman, Couturier, & Scurry 2004; Pearce, 2002). Competition and profit pursuits are not mutually exclusive but competitive motivators are different than those arising as a result of for-profit in the sense that competition arises when various actors are vying for the same goals that they cannot all achieve simultaneously. Profit pursuit is only one of those goals. The competition in the new educational market is at its peak with many players entering the market. Continuing higher education is no longer exclusively a *prerogative* of traditional universities and colleges.

The rise of for-profit universities as continuing higher education providers is currently receiving the greatest attention of higher education researchers. These universities, for example, University of Phoenix, market their products (education) specifically to *working* adult learners.

The entire gamut of these institutions is being studied. Their accreditation, their competitive force and their position in the education market, as well as their curriculum and administrative structure, strategies and policy is currently the focus of many higher education scholars (Berg & American Council on Education, 2005; Bok, 1982; ECS, 2000; Offerman, 2002). Scholars for example, Bok (2002) and Offerman believe public higher education leaders can learn from the strategies of these for-profit institutions' accreditation procedures, competitive strategies, position in the educational market place, administrative policies and structure. The *Futures Project* (www.futuresproject.org) designed to examine specific trends in higher education concluded that the above issues and trends are inexorable and irreversible. The question is how are traditional universities to respond to these challenges and the move toward entrepreneurship?

Lifelong Learning Concepts

Agbo (2000) posits that in addition to other issues shaping current policy agendas in higher education today, lifelong learning is of great concern. The focus on lifelong learning, emphasizing the phenomenon of social, economic and cultural change, has become the prevailing core of educational issues globally (Foth, 2002; Jarvis, 2000; Pearman, 2002; Richards, 2002). International organizations, for example the OECD, the World Bank, and UNESCO are using lifelong learning as key organizing concepts underlying public policies in many countries (Schèutze & Slowey, 2000). The declaration made at the 1998 UNESCO conference on higher education held in Paris adopted a set of core principles regarding lifelong learning intended to guide the expansion of postsecondary education in the 21st century. In the past two decades non-traditional [adult] age students have become an important group in higher education institutions. NCES studies show that in 1995 approximately forty percent of the adult population in the U.S. participated in adult education activities (NCES, 1998a). The trends in

higher education today are towards a wider concept of adult education: continuing education, continuing higher education, continuing professional education, and executive education and away from the narrow confines of conventional basic literacy and math skills. This new concept of lifelong learning is being perceived more in the context of accessibility and affordability. These and other strategic issues were the subjects of the Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) International Conference held in Ottawa, Canada in December 2000.

It is observed that a serious commitment to lifelong learning will involve *serious* consideration of funding from state and local government. According to the OECD, students who are unable to pay for their education should be able to get tuition and other financial assistance. The current challenge is for higher education to remain accessible and to serve the larger population (Ayers, 2005). Time and place are no longer critical barriers to continuing education. The greatest barrier is the ability for institutions to provide the necessary resources to concurrently support all the needs and activities of lifelong learning while remaining accountable to all stakeholders.

Demographics. Demographics is a major issue affecting U. S. higher education as the population is living longer and is pursuing higher education at older ages. Traditionally, universities and colleges have focused almost exclusively on the education of the younger traditional, 18-22 years old, students, but this tradition has virtually disappeared in recent years (Berg & American Council on Education, 2005). The old pattern of attending college from 18-22 years is, as they would say, “old news” as current trends reveal that greater than forty percent of undergraduates are “nontraditional” in some way (Richardson & King, 1998) and the nontraditional “adult learners, students age 25 to 34, should see a larger presence on campus, their numbers increasing 33 percent by 2014” (UCEA, 2006, p. 19).

These demographic trends are quite dramatic; people in the 21st century are expected to live much longer than historically, and will need training and retraining as they will remain in the workforce much longer. We will also see an influx of Latin immigrants having access to higher education and the challenge for colleges and universities to serve this growing populace is one of great concern to leaders and policy makers. Therefore, the need for continuing higher education and lifelong learning is likely to continue in the unforeseeable future.

Technology. Information technology has resulted in the greatest paradigm shift in our world, possibly since the onset of the industrial age, while distance education, although not a new concept in higher education, has become an issue of increasing public concern and a major trend for higher education. Simerly (1997) observed that in considering how to provide for increased accessibility, affordability, accountability, and technological literacy, one important political issue concerns the providing for opportunities of distance education.

These are defining moments for higher education and educational technology as new systems of instruction and delivery reshape higher education. The current debate is related to the use of technology in core versus support function and in teaching and learning activities. The questions are whether or not it is appropriate to replace faculty with technology in the classroom; how much and what type of personal contact is required for learning to take place; and whether or not technology increases productivity in educational settings? There is also the concern of cost versus benefits as greater use of technology and alternative delivery systems provide policymakers with additional solutions to addressing needs of access, and cost constraints. Some advocates argue that technology reduces cost over time, but savings are only realized over the long run; therefore, some institutions do not benefit financially from their investment (Kaganoff,

1998). On the other hand, the potential benefits of technology appear limitless. It allows for increased access to education through distance learning and educational initiatives.

Other benefits include economies-of-scale relative to fixed cost versus the potential benefits obtained, reduction of mundane tasks, speed of administrative processes, and increased efficiency in communication across campuses.

Technological innovation and advances are allowing increased access through innovative delivery styles (Katz & Associates, 1999). Technological innovation is a broad term that describes a wide range of advancement from basic computer systems to sophisticated equipment that enables processing of massive amounts of information in a short period of time. With the evolution of the internet, students have the ability to “attend” classes from [virtually] anywhere. Therefore, time and place are no longer critical barriers to continuing education; students can earn degrees that they might not have otherwise been able to earn. Technology has provided a direct link between continuing education and the community. Many institutions now provide long distance credit and non-credit continuing education programs.

Katz and Associates (1999) also noted that convergence is another buzz word related to the combination of various technological medium that institutions use as a competitive edge in hiring faculty, attracting and retaining students, and promoting their distance education programs. Technology brings about new competition; it changes the way we live, work and study and it allows us to access information in real time. This poses a challenge for institutions because the distinction must be made between information and knowledge. Our goal should be to think carefully how we can let the virtual augment the physical and not replace it. Simerly (1997) emphasized that “it is difficult to grasp the enormity of the information technologies revolution,” but notes that “continuing educators can play a major role in helping institutions of higher

education adapt to the information technologies paradigm” shift (p. 30). By providing innovative leadership that understands how to plan and participate in change processes, our institutions can meet these new challenges.

Social and Human Capital Concepts

Much of the existing research on social capital issues is based on the notion that social connections have real value and are productive resources in the same caliber as physical and human capital assets. The focus of the research is on the benefits to the community (Lerner & King, 1992; Newman, & Scurry, 2004; Walpole, 2003). It is widely believed that colleges and universities are responsible for social change and that they should serve as a catalyst for economic development (Quigley, 1991). Ironically, this has been an emerging theme in the set of tensions and challenges hovering over higher education. I cannot help but wonder why this *sudden awakening*, were not these detriments at the core of the historical mission of higher education? (Mezirow, 1991). Other studies have focused on the theory of social movement and its *psychological* relationship to change, knowledge, technology, and learning outcomes (Brown, 2002; Hartley, 2003; Holford, 1995). The social role of the university as a catalyst for change, relationship building and community is evolving with the current challenges. These relational interactions should be a test of the institutions’ ability to promote social capital of which continuing education should be a part. We have been discovering in this review that continuing higher education departments differ from the other sectors of higher education in that is more market driven, and most often than not must “sell themselves” and or relegate themselves entrepreneurially. The educational products they offer are tailored to the needs of their customers (Oberman, Hill, & Curley, 2005).

The role of continuing higher education has become even more critical as the concept of lifelong learning, as a catalyst for workforce and human capital development, becomes a core political and policy determinant. Many national studies sponsored by the U.S. government relate to the role of education in promoting lifelong learning which in turn promotes economic wellness. The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), and the U.S. Department of education's (2001) report, stated "of the many purposes that education serves in society, one of the most important is to prepare people for work" (p. 1). The 2001, 2002- 2003 NCES studies focused on adult participation in continuing education and training (Hudson, et al., 2005). The 2002- 2003 NCES report stated that the "2003 survey shows that nationally, forty percent of adults in the U. S. participated in some type of formal adult education for work-related reasons" (p. 29). Public opinion poles show that most Americans believe that career preparation is the most important role of colleges and universities ("Connecting Higher," 2005).

Education is important not only to help adults enter the labor market but also to help the employed remain competitive in their field. It is not surprising then that during the last twenty years there has been a surge in *adult* baccalaureate degree completion (Harris, 2003) and also a surge in admission to credit, non-credit, professional and executive education programs offered by continuing higher education (Cervero, 2001; Kasworm, Sandmann, & Sissel, 2000)

The current national policy debate reflects a paradigm shift in economic theory from traditional economic models, (theorizing that education, training, knowledge formation and technology as exogenous factors in economic growth) to a new ideology of human capital development models espoused by such economists like Becker (1993). York (2003) suggested that higher education is in a state of flux as governments around the world seek to use it as an instrument to enhance national economies. Adam Smith (1880) in his seminal and classic work

An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations, acknowledged that human capital is a driver in the nature and causes of the wealth of nations, and Becker recalls that throughout history, governments typically based policy on human capital theory.

The human capital institute (<http://www.humancapitalinstitute.org>) noted that in the emerging knowledge economy, value is increasingly driven by talent and other non-tangible capital. The competitive strength of companies, regions and countries are no longer strictly tied to physical assets or resources, but to the intellectual attributes of their knowledge workers. In other words, education in the knowledge economy will not be education as we have known it. The dichotomy between knowledge and resources has shifted towards knowledge (Robertson, 2005). Securing long-term economic growth will be much more dependent on knowledge as education will play a critical role in economic growth. Duderstadt (2001) noted that “as knowledge can be created absorbed and applied only by the educated mind, universities will play increasingly important roles as our societies enter this new age” (p. 3). However, in order for education to play this critical role educational systems and institutions will need to respond in new ways to the demands of the knowledge economy. Robertson (2005) notes:

Technology and knowledge are intrinsic to economic development....some of the key outcomes of the focus on human capital formation in national economies have been a significant increase in the overall levels of participation in higher education, an increase in funding to the education sector more generally around technological and research and development infrastructures, together with a raft of policies that are oriented towards generating a more competitive environment and entrepreneurial individual within the context of lifelong learning. (p. 152)

Issues of lifelong learning, demographics, financing, competition, human capital development and technology are of global interest and remains at the forefront of postsecondary education's policy and political debates, and are included on the Association of Governing Boards' (Agbo) Annual Top Ten Public Issues as well at the State Higher Education Executive Officers (SHEEO) list (Lovell & Gill, 1997). This list changes frequently as new challenges emerge, however, the five I have explored in this essay will remain a concern for the foreseeable future.

Futuristic Views of Higher Education

The future of higher education is one of complexity and perplexity. The challenges highlighted above are expected to continue in the future. In addition the issues of the isomorphic entrepreneurial university has been creeping into the literature and this concept is gaining much attention as scholars and researchers (Clark, 1998, 2001; Deem 2001; Mauter, 2005) have varying notions, thoughts, and gut feelings about the "entrepreneurial university." In addition, the future of the university seems to be one that is [will be] driven by market competition and market prerogatives as the issues of market commercialization may be overriding the historical compact, contract, or covenant. These terminologies refer to the... "accord governing the relationships between higher education and the public" notes (Couturier, 2005, p. 87) in her piece entitled *The unspoken is being undone: The Market's impact on higher education's public purposes*.

Issues of the Entrepreneurial University

It is important to note that recently, many non-profit universities have launched for-profit ventures, often in the area of distance learning. The idea of these ventures is to develop new offerings without risking the core budget of the university, another evidence of *academic*

capitalism, or is it entrepreneurialism, at work. However, the issue of the entrepreneurial university goes far beyond the launching of for-profit ventures. It relates to the influence of a number of developments in higher education that have propelled the university into an academic capitalist regime driven by university-industry alliances, economic interest, and a commercial logic (Bleiklie, 2005). “Academic capitalism” (Slaughter & Leslie, 1997) and the alternative “entrepreneurial university” (Clark, 1998) are terms both used to describe industry funding of university resources. Although in the United States most public universities still rely mainly on state funding and policy, there are fundamental changes that are resulting in this notion of universities taking on a business model—being run like businesses in an effort to promote competition and cost effectiveness. According to Clarke (2001) in his opening address at the 2000 IMHE General Conference in Paris, “the entrepreneurial narrative [university] an affirming, convincing story that depicts to university patrons and the general public what modern progressive universities are like as they combine new and old practices in a revised, up-to-date form of organization” (p. 21).

Clark’s (1998) book *Creating Entrepreneurial Universities* is based on research of five universities in Europe. He concluded that these five universities displayed enterprising and entrepreneurial forms of organization. However, he does not focus overtly on globalization as a critical force driving changes in higher education. Rather basing his conclusion on his research, he focuses on the national aspects of US higher education and the need for change, for universities to become more enterprising, and to take more risk. He believes that universities will be more initiated and independent under the new entrepreneurial paradigm, will be self-steering and will strive to respond to change. It is believed that the university will be innovative (another word often used synonymously) in its collective efforts to carry out its business, strategic, and

operational plans. Entrepreneurial universities will seek to characterize, and organize in a “stand-up” (Clark, 1998, p. 5) fashion, to become actors on their own terms. Etzkowitz, Webster, Gebhardt, and Terra (2000) explain that “the emergence of the entrepreneurial university as a response to the increasing importance of knowledge in...innovation systems and the recognition that the university is a cost effective and creative inventor and transfer agent of both knowledge and technology” (p. 314).

Slaughter and Leslie (1997) and Slaughter and Rhoades (2004) focus on globalization as the driving force behind the changes in higher education that is leading to political and economic changes that are resulting in stress on academia. They believe, based on their research of universities in four countries, that universities are engaging in market like behaviors and hence are practicing enterprising activities to acquire sources of funding. In this sense they are also acknowledging the entrepreneurial nature of this knowledge regime. Unlike Clarke’s (1998) enthusiasm about entrepreneurialism, academic capitalism denotes an encroachment of profit motives into academia. It is also offered by proponents of entrepreneurialism that, unlike the notion of academic capitalism, the notion of entrepreneurialism is not only applicable or confined to innovative technologies and research universities, but is also applicable to teaching as well as research universities through undergraduate education as well as continuing education (Etzkowitz, et al., 2000).

Nevertheless, this organizational and policy-making implication of academic enterprise, has some researchers and proponents of higher education’s civic purposes worried about its objectives fearing that an intensive peculiar interest will cause the university to lose its role as an independent critic of society (Bok, 2003; Mezirow, 1991; Rhodes, 2001a; Shapiro, 2005). Others are simply resistant and believe that public higher education should resist entrepreneurialism

(Brooks, 1993). Regardless of the innovative stance that is offered by Clark (1998, 2001) in his research on entrepreneurialism and the university, higher education must be cognizant of its historic mission and social purposes. Shapiro also notes that the dual characteristics of the university—its role as society’s servant and society’s critic—“must be retained whatever the changes that lie ahead” (p. 15). In essence, the role and mission must be maintained regardless of its entrepreneurial stance or lack thereof.

Commercialization and Market Models in Higher Education

Commercialization and market models are gaining much attention and will continue to do so as it is widely believed that the market is encroaching on higher education and there are dire consequences. Logos, naming rights, academic contracts, research contracts, branding and many other promotional and marketing campaigns to increase revenues are now commonplace. Many agree that universities are profiting from research and other profit ventures (Bleak, 2005). Likewise many fear that universities are serving as incubators (Rhodes, 2001a) of non-profit business and in return universities are using these incubators to in turn make profits. It is also feared that state lawmakers are no longer willing to support universities’ research simply for the sake of expanding knowledge and improving reputations of higher education institutions (Bok, 2003; Couturier, 2005; Geiger, 2004). Bok, in his research on higher education, shows how profit ventures are undermining core academic values and that this pursuit must be limited. Bok also remarked sarcastically that during the 1970s and 1980s universities’ funding declined but they “did not respond with a burst of profit seeking ventures” like they are doing today. Bok further notes that “declining appropriations may have played a part, but something more is surely required to explain the rise of entrepreneurial activities on American campuses during the last twenty years” (p. 9). Zemsky, et al. (2005) concluded in their book *Remaking the American*

University that universities “in their pursuit of market advantages have become dispensers of degrees and certificates rather than communities of educators who originate debate and promulgate important ideas” (p. 4).

Geiger’s (2004) analysis of the research university and that resulted in a book entitled *Knowledge and Money: The paradox of the market place* concludes that knowledge and money is paradoxical and assesses how market forces have affected universities in several key spheres of activity including finance, research, and participation in economic development. That market forces profoundly affected the contemporary research university’s fundamental tasks of creating, process, and disseminating knowledge. Courtier (2005) notes *The Futures Project* research reveals that higher education’s social purposes are being threatened by market commercialism and competition. As universities seek greater independence from the state they are likely to pursue autonomous statuses that will require them to get less funding from the state, thus the need to pursue market and competitive attributes. This new competitive force will exacerbate the blurring of lines between the market and higher education as more institutions compete for the same prestige, students, and funding.

A Future of Change

The concept of change symbolizes that the university’s survival will depend on being more responsive to market forces, by a limited resource base, changing societal needs, new technologies, and new competitors. Adaptability to change, it is believed by many higher education researchers, is the most important challenge that will face higher education in the future (Duderstadt, 2001; Zemsky, et al., 2005). In 1998, The *Gilion Declaration* stated “we have entered a period of significant change in higher education as our universities attempt to respond to the challenges, opportunities, and responsibilities before them.” Change is inevitable

in our cultural society and “from this perspective, it is important to understand that the most critical challenge facing most institution will be to develop the capacity for change” Duderstadt (2001, p. 24). Change is often met with resistance and political views; however a concerted effort by communities and constituents to understand the importance of the past traditions, the challenges of the present, and the possibilities of the future can erode the suspicions and uncertainties that are characteristic of change. There is a need to “renew the compact” (Couturier, 2005, p. 93) as we acknowledge that higher education has a public purpose and a public obligation—a larger sense of purpose (Shapiro, 2005).

Continuing Higher Education

The history and evolution of continuing higher education is interwoven with the history and evolution of higher education and the university. This “heritage” is a rich resource that can help us understand our past and see how we fit into the “mosaic” of the field (Merriam & Brockett, 1996, p. 85). In the United States, the heritage and evolution of continuing higher education have been influenced by economic, philosophic, social, and political factors. Today, the field is still being influenced by these factors as leaders in the field continue to refine and define its role and mission within various settings!

Historical Perspectives

The evolution of adult and continuing *higher* education began as a response to the challenges and demands placed on universities to serve various constituents. During the 17 and 1800s, Benjamin Franklin and other political advocates challenged the university to provide education to the marginal population: the uneducated, the freed-slaves, and the lower classes in society. They believed that education is essentially a continuing process of self-renewal, and therefore, access to continuing education must be made available to anyone who wanted to

participate (Knowles, 1977; Robertson, 1987). In this review, the history and evolutionary factors of continuing higher education are organized by significant topics and periods of events rather than by chronological dates. Likewise, adult education and continuing education are used [interchangeably] because these terminologies are often considered parallel and indistinguishable (Gessner, 1987; Stewart, 1987).

Colonial beginnings. Adult education in the colonial period began with an informal emphasis on literacy meant to encourage reading and understanding of the Bible (Robertson, 1987). Later, informal correspondence networks via mail, and various societies, became relevant to the lives of ordinary people. Taverns, public lectures, libraries, voluntary societies, and institutions were established in various parishes of the thirteen colonies. These various “media” provided continuing professional education, general cultural development and or social and cultural endeavors. The establishment of early medical societies and the marine societies presaged continuing professional education for practitioners, while evening schools were established to meet liberal, vocational, and leisure interests.

Benjamin Franklin was the first to launch an apprenticeship society in Philadelphia called the Junto, in 1727. The members of this “tavern society” were eager to learn various trades so they began importing and studying books from England. Apprenticeship was the most fundamental educational institution of this period; it served social, economic, religious and humanitarian roles. “According to Knowles (1977), “the Junto movement is one of the only “uniquely adult education institution founded in this [colonial] period that has survived into the modern times” (p. 10). Benjamin Franklin was awarded for his pioneering efforts in the development of America and for his interest and egalitarian efforts in educating Americans. His model of and attitude towards continuing education (Knowles, 1977) as well as his support for

the spread of knowledge was an important educational evolution that was later implemented in the extension movement of the land-grant colleges and universities (Robertson, 1977).

The Chautauqua teacher education summer program, established by the Reverend John Heyl Vincent and Lewis Miller in New York, in 1874, was very influential in the development of university extension programs. Membership in this “movement” grew considerably allowing the program to expand into a state-approved university promoting various continuing educational interests (Gessner, 1987; Rohfeld, 1990) The lyceum movement of 1826 also had a profound relevance for continuing higher education. This movement was the “brain-child” of Josiah Holbrook, a graduate of Yale University. He called for each town to form an adult learning center, a lyceum where townspeople would go to discuss topics of mutual interest (Knowles, 1977).

During the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the philosophical foundation was laid for continuing higher education. The pioneers who settled New England adapted the European institutions’ ideologies to the demands and needs of the expanding American landscape and population. The early colonists were intent on founding a community committed to the development of piety, civility, and learning. Grattan (1955) noted that “from the stand point of the education of adults the most significant development during the Colonial times was the establishment of the precedent of tax-supported common schools to ensure basic literacy of all” (p.139). This was a major political factor in the *early* evolution of adult and continuing education.

The philosophical belief that everyone could advance his or her position in life, if willing to work hard, was already having an influence on the evolution of adult education (Knowles, 1977), and it was the general political belief that self-governance would require an educated

citizenry. Knowles noted that the first socio-political adult education evolution took place with “the dawn of the age of science” (Knowles, 1977, p. 14) as interest in the arts and sciences peaked and replaced the original mission of “basic literacy for all.” The support for the spread of knowledge was an important educational idea that was implemented in the “extension movement” of the land-grant colleges and universities and in many of the experiments in continuing education (Robertson, 1987) as provided by the Morrill Acts of 1862 and 1890 discussed prior. With respect to continuing higher education, the Morrill Acts allowed all professions to be based on college training, thus overriding the apprenticeship movement. They were also influential in advancing the university “extension” concepts.

During this period there was an emphasis on more mature students and colleges fulfilled many social functions, much like the community colleges and universities of today. This philosophy supported the later developments of lifelong learning. Burke (1982) in his research of higher education history, observed that the education of adults is not a phenomenon of the twentieth century, and that “during the period of the American Revolution, nearly forty percent of students who entered college were over the age of twenty-one” (p. 103).

The early 20th century. During the early 20th century the Smith-Lever Act (1914) was passed. This Act was jointly supported by the federal, state, and local governments (Courtier, 2005). The Act “provided a unique structure and service delivery system connecting cooperative extension to the land-grant concept, thus strengthening continuing education in the university” (Long, 1990, p. 121). In 1917, The Smith-Hughes Act was passed providing funds for vocational education. It was during this period also that The Wisconsin Idea was born. The Wisconsin Idea established in 1907 at the University of Wisconsin, was a major philosophical force in the evolution of continuing higher education in the early 1900s. This *idea* initiated by the University

of Wisconsin's President Charles Van Hise and Governor Robert M. La Follette allowed for increased reciprocal relationship between the state government and the university. The idea of the "Wisconsin Model" was for the university to bring education to the people of Wisconsin. An extensive correspondence program at the University of Wisconsin was established which offered vocational courses for apprentices and artisans. In addition, credit and non-credit programs in home economic education were expanded to meet the needs of housewives. It was during this period that the National University Extension Association was formed (NUCEA). The Wisconsin Idea became a popular model, proliferating higher education, and is often marked as one of the most important modern development of continuing higher education (Robertson, 1987).

Other factors have had an impact on Adult and Continuing Higher Education during this century. For example, the philosophy of electivism, introduced by Charles Eliot of Harvard University, in 1869, helped to address the notions of flexibility in curriculum to better serve students' interest (Goodchild, 2002). The increased emphasis on the German model of research, as a catalyst for universities to become the preservers and disseminators of knowledge, had a negative implication for developing extension services. However, the rise in philanthropy, most notably the Carnegie and Kellogg Foundations, provided support for adult education research. Voluntary organizations, labor unions, federal and state organizations as well as the emergence of mass media, radios, television, and later the computer provided other mechanisms for increasing adults' access to education.

Community colleges. Robertson (1987) noted that philosophically, the institutionalization of many continuing education courses through the community colleges was a progressive step forward in continuing higher education. Cohen and Brawer (2003) noted that the industrialization of the American labor market gave rise to the need for workers trained in the

practical arts. Increased federal legislative support for continuing higher education and the increased state and local support propelled an increase in participation of adults (Robertson, 1987). This allowed for the evolution and proliferation of community (two-year) colleges which expanded the access to secondary education for the masses of the nation's minorities during the 1960s (Rohfeld, 1990). The community colleges were challenged to focus on unmet needs in their communities and to design responsive programs and services to meet those needs. Cohen and Brawer (2003) summarized that "perhaps the simplest overarching reason for the growth of community colleges was that an increasing number of demands were being placed on schools at all levels to solve Americans' social problems" (p. 2).

Legislation. The level of education in the population of Americans arose most significantly by legislation that allowed for the passing of the Servicemen's Readjustment Act (GI Bill of Rights) in 1944. The GI Bill expanded the access of many to adult and continuing higher education. It provided for vocational or on-the-job training under the education provision. Also in 1958, Congress passed the National Defense Act to promote better teaching methods in science, mathematics, and foreign language. In addition, the 1963 Higher Education Facilities Act (HEFA) was enacted providing for increased federal funds, loans, grants etc to students. The Economic Opportunity and Civil Rights Acts of 1964 provided more opportunities for women and minorities to attend colleges and universities (Knowles, 1977). In 1965, the Higher Education Act (HEA) was passed also. This Act was an extension of the HEFA, and provided for student loans, fellowships, and guidance services. The Adult Education Act of 1966 stipulates that programs for adult public education will enable all adults to continue their education at least to completion of secondary school (Long, 1990).

During the last three decades of the 20th century other federal provisions were made. In 1972, the Basic Education Opportunity Grant program changed the pattern of funding; funds were sent directly to the students instead of to the institutions. In 1975 Senator Walter Mondale authored and introduced the Lifelong Learning Act as an amendment to the Title I of the Higher Education Act. During the 1980s and 1990s, there was increased emphasis on the nation's ability to compete in a global economy; therefore, the federal government renewed its focus on workforce development, and in 1998 the Workforce Development Act was passed.

Current Perspective

During the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries, the development of higher education resulted in the creation of distinct educational, institutional types, each with a specific mission (Goodchild, 2002). Land-grant colleges focused on a more pragmatic mission of agricultural, mechanical, and military education while graduate research-oriented universities, focused on value-free scientific inquiry, and the advancement of knowledge. However, as the population grew and the industrial need of the nation expanded, the *historical* mission of the universities became one of social and economic focus.

Continuing higher education's role and mission. In this post industrial period, continuing higher education is described as having one or more missions as follows: (1) to provide for social and educational equity (2) to provide for needed human capital in social and industrial occupations; (3) to socialize and Americanize the population to acceptable citizenry (Long, 1990). The role of continuing higher education has become even more critical as the concept of lifelong learning as a catalyst for workforce and human capital development becomes a core political and policy determinant. Research by The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) and the U. S. Department of education and highlighted in the 2001 report stated “of the

many purposes that education serves in society, one of the most important is to prepare people for work” (p. 1) and to help the employed remain competitive in their field. In addition as early as in 1984, The Commission on Higher Education and Adult Learner pointed out that the United States is in an “increasingly competitive economic struggle” (Commission, 1984). The major resource for the United States in a democratic government and policy is its “human capital.” Therefore, the challenge for adult and continuing education in the context of higher education is to provide for lifelong learning that will “foster the need for human capital and workforce development in a nation that is undergoing a critical crisis of unemployment and or underemployment” (p. 3).

More recently in 2006, the Spelling’s Commission on Higher Education recommended that higher education provide an environment whereby “traditionally underserved” students can leverage education in an effort to improve their lives, skills, and knowledge and that of society’s. Cohen and Brawer (2003) in their research on community colleges concluded that in contrast to universities which provided continuing higher education via university extension or via distinct continuing education centers, departments, or schools, the development of the junior and community colleges during the 1960s was with a unique, distinct but also practical mission: that of workforce development, training, retraining, and vocational education, which altogether and contextually constitutes continuing higher education.

The historical mission of universities and colleges has not changed, it has evolved. I do agree with Koepplin and Wilson’s (1985) observation during their study of the future of state universities that public service was and still is the *purview* of the state universities and continuing higher education within those institutions. Accordingly, institutions must relegate, “renew” and reevaluate their missions within the context of the current educational, economic

and social climate of our nation, but the creation and dissemination of knowledge must remain central to their value system. Nevertheless, many social reformists (Mezirow, 1991) and others argue that adult education is “being left behind” as the current mission of adult and continuing higher education is changing to one of “bottom line.” Nevertheless, in this looming 21st century ideology of globalism, the varying missions of continuing education mentioned above can all survive on a parallel level, but the distinction must be made among various institutional typologies (settings), and program types. As long as human capital theory remains dominant in the current socio-political climate, it will have a profound influence on continuing higher education in all institutional settings. Therefore, the role of continuing education is to be a “beacon” in defining the American universities and colleges’ social and economic mission.

Current status of continuing higher education. Subsequent to the evolution and development of continuing *higher* education with a mission to serve various constituents and established to be the public and community service arm of the university, continuing education (CE) became the academic “stepchild of colleges and universities” (Embree & Cookson, 2002, p. 131). They remarked further that “continuing education students were perceived by administration and faculty as “nontraditional” and that the general belief is that continuing education programs were not as rigorous as the regular academic programs” (p. 131). These CE schools and divisions within the parent university typically focus on older adult students who attend part time, seeking individual courses, certificates or degrees. They may sometimes draw on the university’s own faculty who are teaching for additional salary (Breneman, 2005) though more often than not, they rely on adjunct faculty from the community.

Reporting on the result of a national survey research sponsored by the Lumina Foundation, Pusser, et al. (2005) noted that “eighty-nine percent [89%] of the Carnegie Doctoral-

research universities...offered continuing education....and that public institutions (79 percent) were more likely than private institutions (41 percent) to offer continuing education” (p. 30). In general, these schools or divisions of the university receive little or no institutional—financial—support and thus are forced to earn a surplus of revenue or breakeven in their operations. Many CE programs are not as profitable as they appear and some create political problems within the university or college. Brennan’s (2005) study of entrepreneurship in higher education, lead him to conclude that, paradoxically, leaders and administrators of CE divisions “operate within the tensions of being a profit center, while not embarrassing the university by offering low-quality or low-status courses” (p. 6) even though there might be a demand for such “products” and a financial gain to be made.

Once considered marginal or peripheral to other areas of the university (Donaldson, 1991; English, 1992) “continuing education was seen as a profit center first and as an educational center second” (Embree & Cookson, 2002, p. 131). Since the early 1990s CE has been gaining attention and is increasingly becoming an arena of focus partially because there are new political pressures to promote the ideology of lifelong learning and resulting economic development (Gose, 1999; Haworth, 1996), and partially because continuing higher education is considered the cash cow for many universities (Gose, 1999; Nicklin, 1991). As higher education institutions began feeling the financial and budget crunch, they began to (re)examine the role of continuing education in their overall strategic planning. Brennan (2005) in his study of entrepreneurship in higher education notes that “many public and private universities engage in the equivalent of profit seeking behavior through schools or divisions of continuing education” (p. 5).

By the mid 1990s, many colleges and universities across the United States began a transformation of their continuing education units giving them more sophisticated names like

departments, divisions, or schools of lifelong learning; for professional development; offices of outreach, among other titles (Embree & Cookson 2002). While this more sophisticated concept of continuing higher education is gaining a foothold in the higher education arena, this sector of higher education is still not widely researched.

Today continuing higher education divisions are for the most part entrepreneurial divisions within the university, are the higher education sectors “closest” to the market, and as a result, bridge the gap between the university, the market, and society at large (Brennan, 2005; Embree & Cookson, 2002;). This is not a bad position for adult and continuing higher education to be in as the issues of human capital and workforce development continue to be at the forefront of policy makers’ decisions (Gose, 1999). According to Embree and Cookson “for years continuing education had been finding market niches and responding to public demand—just [what] the expertise need for the new economy” (p. 132).

Futuristic Perspectives of Continuing Higher Education

Based on current trends and future projections continuing higher education will continue to play an active role in the future of our nation. A number of dynamic environmental forces, globalization, demographics, advances in technology, decreased financial support, and increased competition, are acting concurrently to (re)shape the future and function of institutions of higher education in the United States and globally (Newman, 2002) and continuing education in particular. I will focus on the following three key trends that are likely to affect continuing education in the future: (1) Demographic, (2) fiscal/financial, and (3) competitive trends.

Demographic trends. It is believed by higher education scholars and researchers that demographics will play an important role in the life of continuing education. Universities today have a growing number of nontraditional students (customers) enrolled for example, older

returning adults, migrants with varying language barriers and needs as well as younger students who attend part time. Demographics is and will continue to be a major issue affecting U.S. higher education as the population is living longer and is pursuing higher education at older ages (UCEA, 2006; Yankelovich, 2005) while immigration is at its highest peak in the nation's history. The current trends reveal that greater than forty percent of undergraduates are non-traditional in some way and adult learners (Richardson & King 1988) represent greater than fifty percent of the enrollment in higher education (UCEA, 2006). Therefore the need for continuing higher education and lifelong learning is likely to continue in the unforeseeable future. In recent history, the focus on lifelong learning emphasizes the phenomenon of social, economic and cultural change.

Higher education scholars conclude that this focus has become and will continue to be the prevailing core of educational issues globally (Foth, 2002; Jarvis, 2000; Pearman, 2002; Richardson, 2002). This trend is likely to continue and continuing education has an advantage because of its flexibility and programs they are already used to offerings. Whitaker (2001) notes "that we [continuing education] serve as experts in designing curricular for adults" (p. 41). Continuing education therefore has an enormous opportunity to elevate its self to a position of example to its parent institution and to society.

Fiscal/financial. The greater part of colleges and universities' budgets are funded by state and federal governments; however, in recent years the decrease in state funding (Reindl, 2004) is causing an unprecedented revenue crisis for universities. They are being forced to critically evaluate their fiscal policies, cut costs, and increase tuition revenues. A major research undertaken by the Rand (1997) organization in collaboration with the Commission on National Investment in Higher Education (CNIHE) entitled "Breaking the social contract: Fiscal crisis in

higher education” analyzed the rising costs of tuition and the need to decrease costs, while maintaining quality in American universities. The study concluded with the concern that should the current trend continue, in a few years, millions of Americans will be denied access to higher education. (Rand, 1997, p.13).

A similar study also by the Rand (1998) in collaboration with The Foundation for Independent Higher Education (FIHE) concluded that institutions of higher education have come under increasing pressure to cut costs and the need to understand the impact of cost-cutting initiatives will continue to be of utmost importance in the future (Kaganoff, 1998). Newman (2002) observed that campuses are going to find themselves faced with a difficult financial situation in the future; that it will be harder to cross-subsidize. Further continuing higher education at the cutting edge of education will pay the price of these fiscal and financial trends as they are considered entrepreneurial often “forced to earn a surplus (ideally) or at least break even in their operations” (Breneman, 2005, p. 7). The dominant theme is the need for higher education to raise revenues independent of the state and federal government, by competing for research grants, private gifts, and endowments. The theory of *academic capitalism* (Slaughter & Leslie, 1997; Slaughter & Rhoades, 2004) describes these new directions in higher education support. This concept leads to the other major trend that is currently prevailing and will continue to do in continuing higher education. That is, the issue of entrepreneurship and market competition.

Entrepreneurship and market competition. The increasing attention being given to issues of entrepreneurial activities in higher education, has been a result of the increasing pressures for various sectors of higher education to adopt entrepreneurial models of financing and service (Breneman, 2005). This pressure is common in continuing education because it is one segment of higher education that is close to the market and that has portrayed entrepreneurial activities in its

program offerings. This trend is expected to continue; however, there is also a negative connotation and a fear that continuing education will be relegated into a surplus revenue generating operation rather than institutions of educational excellence (Nicklin, 1991). It is a great initiative for CHE to practice entrepreneurialism and to compete for customers, but scholars have an issue with this concept and are concerned that this pursuit will have a philosophical effect on quality of teaching and scholarship (Bok, 1982; Mezirow, 1991; Offerman, 2002).

Continuing higher education is no longer exclusively a *prerogative* of traditional universities and colleges. Private for-profit universities, corporate universities (Jarvis, 2001), and other for-profit trainers are aggressively competing for the adult students' dollars. Community colleges are also offering continuing education, vocational training and credit and non-credit courses as a direct competition to for-profit providers. Market forces and competition are expected to bring about changes in the way continuing education operates. A key factor in the way market competition is affecting the educational environment is the shift in state and national subsidies. Effectively, students are increasingly paying more; a larger percentage of the cost of education. In terms of deliverables the "trump card" for continuing education in the market place is their position of authority as it were to issue time-honored and valued credentials. According to Whitaker (2001) "This is our advantage over boutique consulting firms, training companies, and for-profit companies—not content for we no longer have a monopoly on expertise" (p. 40). A very sobering thought that Whitaker purports here! Newman (2002) argues that "if market forces are coming don't we have to worry a lot about the dangers that market forces might bring?" (p. 38). "Only time will tell whether the new world of competition and entrepreneurship will produce better outcomes for citizens of the state" (Breneman, 2005, p. 9).

The question is whether or not continuing higher education is able to withstand the throng of the market because the dependency on the market will not likely be reversed. Therefore the challenge is for continuing higher education to balance the dichotomy of a market orientation while preserving its mission of public purposes.

Theoretical Framework

Federal government mandates requiring that higher education institutions promote lifelong learning as a necessary ingredient of economic growth and competitive global advantage is a significant feature within the “backdrop” of continuing higher education. This concept of lifelong learning is perceived in the context of individual development, social, and democratic educational equality often referred to as human capital development. Long (1990) reiterates that education is not only a social and cultural element but is also political and economic; hence, its objectives and purposes are debated and influenced by existing social, economic, and political forces. An analysis and interpretation of the power, political, and socio-economic contexts as experienced and perceived by CHE leaders provides a way into understanding this relationship among cultural, social, and democratic educational equality. The socio-economic theory of *Academic Capitalism* (Slaughter & Leslie, 1997; Slaughter & Rhoades, 2004) together with the notions of entrepreneurialism within higher educational context (Clark, 1998, 2000) forms the theoretical framework of this study.

The recent push towards entrepreneurialism and the influential incursion of market commercialism into higher education, is referred to by Slaughter and Leslie (1997) and Slaughter and Rhoades, (2004) as the theory of *Academic capitalism*. Academic Capitalism is the notion of profit enterprises and activities within higher education, which has researchers and critics of higher education concerned about social mission versus bottom line motives—as there are

winners and losers. The theory of Academic Capitalism focuses on this growing trend of public universities towards a more corporate business orientation which has had a significant impact on higher education's governance, leadership, management, and discourse.

Entrepreneurialism—a business market model—is often regarded by university advocates, theorists, and by some critics (Bok, 2003; Clark, 2000; Gould, 2003) as an alternate to academic capitalism. Proponents of entrepreneurialism see all winners in the university's attempt to reinvent and build new foundations for collegiality and autonomy while being self-sustaining, self-steering, and understands the risks in doing so (Clark, 2001; Deem, 2001)

Academic Capitalism and Entrepreneurialism

The most influential of all the social, economic, and political forces impacting higher education and that is resulting in increasing scenarios of uncertainty, is the incursion of market commercialism into higher education. This influence is referred to by Slaughter and Leslie (1997) and Slaughter and Rhoades (2004) as the theory of *Academic Capitalism*. “The theory of academic capitalism focuses on networks...new networks that intermediate between public and private sector...that link institutions as well as faculty, administrators, academic professionals and students to the new economy” (Slaughter & Rhoades, 2004, p. 15). *Academic capitalism*, as the conceptual frame work for this study, supports research in both “public research universities” (Slaughter & Leslie (1997, p. 2) as well as “private nonprofit research universities” in the United States (Slaughter & Rhoades 2004, p. 10).

Academic capitalism is a theory developed by Slaughter and Leslie (1997) and further expanded by Slaughter and Rhoades (2004) after their extensive case-study of various research universities throughout the world and the United States lead them to analyze the changes that blur the customary boundaries between private and public sectors. They studied market

behaviors and entrepreneurial activities within these colleges and universities, and concluded that the “winds” of macro-political, economic change are forcing universities to find alternative sources of funding—external to what is offered by state and federal governments. The term academic capitalism was first met with much criticism as critics believed that it was too strong a term and that it represented higher education as exploiting the academic labor force. However, academic capitalism deals with market and market like behaviors on the part of university and university faculty. In addition, another way to approach academic capitalism is through the notion of human capital development theory. This theory purports that knowledge and skills contribute to a country’s economic growth. This is in fact the role of university academics who contribute directly and indirectly to the economic growth in society.

Because much of the current literature in higher education (Bleiklie, 2005; Bok, 2003; Breneman, 2005; Clark, 1998, 2001; Deem 2001; Etzkowitz, Webster, Gebhardt, & Terra, 2000; Rhoades, 2003; Shapiro, 2005; Washburn, 2005; Yokoyama, 2006) that focuses on entrepreneurialism also rely on the theory of academic capitalism (Slaughter & Leslie, 1997; Slaughter & Rhoades, 2004) to strengthen or refute their notions or conclusions about entrepreneurialism and or institutional governance, I believe it is appropriate to discuss and use both theories within the framework and context of this study.

Academic capitalism is often used as an alternative to, in lieu of, or as an extended explanation for entrepreneurialism. The basic difference lies in the semantics of the words, as some critics of the theory perceive academic capitalism as a negative connotation “conjuring up stronger images of exploitations of the academic labor force than were warranted by current practice in colleges and universities” (Slaughter & Leslie, 1997, p. 7). The higher education literature and proponents who prefer to use entrepreneurialism as opposed to academic

capitalism supports the view that entrepreneurialism occurs when organizations are innovative, progressive, pursue opportunities, and assume risks in generating resources beyond those that are subsidized, and can be applied in for profit or not-for-profit organizations (Clark, 1998, 2001).

Assumptions and Purchases of Academic Capitalism

Academic capitalism, like entrepreneurialism, highlights the growing trend of public universities towards a more corporate business orientation. This orientation has had a significant impact on higher education's governance, leadership, management, and discourse. Like many proponents of the public good in education, academic capitalism perceives the current changes in all sectors of higher education and the blurring of boundaries among markets, states, and higher education as a shift from a public good knowledge-learning regime to an academic capitalist knowledge-learning regime.

This theory also focuses on universities making a purposeful transition to entrepreneurialism in an attempt to reinvent and build new foundations for collegiality and autonomy. Academic capitalism "explains the process of college and university integration into the new [global] economy" (Slaughter & Rhoades, 2004, p. 1). Academic capitalism assumes that faculty, students, administrators, and academic professionals are groups of actors using a variety of state resources to create new circuits of knowledge that link higher education institutions to the new global economy. The theory assumes that the institution is a marketer of its educational offerings, while it supports the notion that students are consumers in the competitive educational market. The theory also assumes that some members of the professoriate and other academics are capitalist, state-subsidized, entrepreneurial employees. This assumption is based on the notion that they perform market or market-like functions in an effort to generate external (commercial funding) similarly to that of commercial enterprises.

The theory purports that market and market-like “activities are no longer confined to the sciences and engineering; they permeate the higher learning” (Slaughter & Rhoades, 2004 p. 6) and that faculty and institutions are *rhetorical* actors who form boundary-spanning organizations and net works to integrate with the new economy. Also implicit in the theory, is the notion of the state subsidizing this emerging academic capitalist-knowledge-learning regime.

The theory assumes that the new economy for colleges and universities is its global scope, that its treatment of knowledge production is raw material, and that there is an urgent need for educated workers who contribute to economic growth and development. Therefore, one purchase (strength) of the theory is its support for the notion of human capital development theory and the need for knowledgeable consumers, as it helps to explain this importance of human capital. As I have outlined in the social problem above, universities are direct contributors of economic growth, especially via its continuing education (CE) sector because CE sectors within universities are often focused on workforce and job related training.

A big purchase of the theory, and that I am relying on to inform this study, is how well it actually explains the phenomenon I am seeking to understand. As you will recall, the purpose of the study is to identify continuing higher education’s (CHE) strategic response to the political-economic context of higher education. The theory of academic capitalism would probably predict that continuing education is important because it is close to the market, but only if it were a relatively low investment type of continuing education, able to generate a lot of revenue in return for relatively low investments on the part of the parent institution.

This concept is a “value proposition” that merits investigating because recent developments in higher education have implied a trust towards an extended concept of knowledge (lifelong learning) and a stronger utility orientation. The theory of academic

capitalism (Slaughter & Leslie, 1997 and Slaughter & Rhoades, 2004) and its counterpart-alternative, entrepreneurialism (Clarke, 1998, 2001) are strong in supporting this notion because although continuing education *was* historically the service arm of the university, most public and private-not-for-profit universities are now using CE as a catalyst for their profit and market-like behaviors. The theory also expects cost to be transferred to students, and would expect students to pay most of the cost of their education.

Assumptions and Purchases of Entrepreneurialism

Entrepreneurialism occurs when organizations pursue “opportunities beyond means that are currently available, is self-steering, self-reliant, progressive” and understands the risks in doing so (Clark, 2001, p. 23). Both the Webster’s and the American Heritage® Dictionary of the English Language’s definition of entrepreneurialism describes something or someone who undertakes risk. Specifically, the focus is on the word entrepreneur and Webster’s defines this noun as a person who “organizes, manages, and assumes responsibility for a business or other enterprise” while the American Heritage® Dictionary of the English Language defines the word as “a person who organizes, operates, and assumes the risk for a business venture.”

Entrepreneurial is an adjective that describes the noun entrepreneur which is adopted from the French word *entreprendre*, meaning to undertake. The alternate word for entrepreneurialism is enterprise, meaning an undertaking, “especially one of some scope, complication, and risk.” The “with risk” is the part of the definition that brings us to problem solving. Problem solving is a focus of entrepreneurialism while capitalism is the process through which capital and resources are used to foster the best solution or insures that the efforts of entrepreneurs are focused on solutions people need. Yet, ideas are not easily translated to the problems people have. Proponents of higher education’s social purposes have expressed

concerns about the increasing influences of entrepreneurialism and market prerogatives in education (Bok, 2005; Geiger, 2004; Rhodes, 2001; Shapiro, 2005).

Conversely, proponents of entrepreneurialism posit that it is good for the university, an innovative effort, and especially for those divisions like CHE that receive little funding from governments (Clark, 1998, 2001; Offerman, 2002; Whitaker, 2001). Yet, according to Slaughter and Leslie, (1997) the encroachment of the profit motive into the academy is decidedly negative and opposed to the partnership discourse that pro-entrepreneurialism activists like to convey when describing the inclusion of corporate privileges into academia. Regardless of the semantics, both theories, academic capitalism and entrepreneurialism, describe the incursion of market or market-like activities, and the blurring of lines between the university and the market.

Innovative or entrepreneurial (Clark, 1998, 2001) these terminologies can be used to portray the foreseen characteristics of the 21st Century university as a whole, and many universities are proposing varying models of entrepreneurialism in their strategic plans. This idea of the entrepreneurial university is a global phenomenon—“a convincing story that depicts to university patrons and the general public what progressive universities are like as they combine the new and the old in a revised form of organization” (Clark, 2001, p. 10). Clark in his concluding remarks delivered during the opening session of the 2000 Institute of Higher Education Management (IMHE) General Conference in Paris speculates that:

as the twenty-first century unfolds, the entrepreneurial university will increasingly fit the temper of the times...as it seeks opportunities beyond means currently available, it brings in new forms of knowledge, new types of students, new labor force connections, new problem-solving skills for government and the economy.... They will add to the diversity of the [higher education] system, its

competitiveness, its openness, and its adaptiveness [sic] ...They will provide a way to simultaneously expand choice and enlarge merit...Progressive, self-reliant universities will play a central role in competent national systems of higher education. (p. 23)

How the Theories Intersect

The [*new*] theory of academic capitalism (Slaughter & Rhoades, 2004) agrees with the notions of entrepreneurialism as offered by Clark (1998, 2001) whereby it supports the new and extended managerial emphasis to academia and the benefits of economic growth through non-traditional knowledge creation methods. Slaughter and Rhoades (2004) acknowledges that “academic capitalism has an unacknowledged side....treating knowledge as a private good may make much of it inaccessible, perhaps constraining discovery and innovation” (p. 29). Discovery and innovation are at the heart of entrepreneurialism as purported by Clark (1998, 2001).

Academic capitalism also purports that the academic capitalist regime and the public good coexists and that the public good knowledge regime has not been replaced by the academic capitalist regime nor have entrepreneurial revenue streams replaced the prestige of research associated with the public good, but conversely, they intersect at the point where money in exchange for research, becomes entrepreneurial sources of funding. One major difference between the notions of entrepreneurialism and academic capitalism is the fact that entrepreneurialism sees a win-win situation for all in higher education while academic capitalism sees some winners and some losers. For example, in continuing education students who presumably gain less [less education] and pay more would be losers. Likewise, skilled-permanent faculty who earn little would also be losers.

In exploring the various questions, the theory of academic capitalism supports this research because it is useful for analyzing this notion of human capital development. Moreover, like entrepreneurialism, academic capitalism deals with market and market-like activities in academia. In addition, academic capitalism analyzes the notion of the new economy and its relationship to managerial forms of administration and governance in higher education. Academic capitalism also perceives the university as a complex institution with many interrelated and interconnected sub-units for example, my study of CE units. The theory also perceives leaders, administrators, and faculty as actors within this complex network. Most importantly and which is vital to this study, is the analytical scope of academic capitalism with regards to the notions of entrepreneurialism, money, and the profit motives in higher education, versus the notion of the public good knowledge regime.

The changing social function of the university is sometimes confused with their scientific function. Bleiklie (2005) noted that:

The idea that one can establish and preserve an effective formal division between institutions that are focused on pure research and institutions that are more utility-oriented in their approach to knowledge production, in order to protect the former against “external influences,” has so far been unsuccessful. (p. 49)

Consequently, while non-university higher education institutions have attempted to become research universities, research universities have never given up their utility-oriented, applied research or their pragmatic, vocational-oriented education programs (Bleiklie, 2005). This notion supports my premise that CHE is still a vital sector of higher education discourse and is becoming even more so as the notion of lifelong learning becomes a catalyst for workforce, human capital, and economic development in the United States. My study will focus on mission

versus money and the means by which continuing higher education is supported by the university as a strategic response to the challenges facing higher education. In addition, the study will highlight the support for the concept of lifelong learning in light of this current discourse in higher education. Consequently, both academic capitalism and entrepreneurialism fits well together as a conceptual framework for this study.

Conclusion

This literature review reveals that the issues surrounding lifelong learning and human capital development will remain dominant in the current socio-political climate and will have a profound impact on continuing higher education. Therefore, continuing education has the opportunity to be a “beacon” in defining the American universities’ and colleges’ social and economic mission. This economic mission coupled with the startling demographics facing our nation, shows how continuing education is likely to remain an important sector and to lead the way in higher education.

Richardson (2002) observed that “lifelong learning and continuing education have been central to the rhetoric of government in recent years” (p. 115). Regardless of the semantics, the rhetoric, and the discourse enveloping the various expressions of the 21st century university, as highlighted above, the focus is for continuing higher education to look beyond the ivory tower, the discourse, and the rhetoric. Demographic, technological, and economic trends will continue to shape and reshape the future of continuing higher education because the future has no shelf-life. Institutions of higher education are strongly challenged to be accountable and responsive to changing societal expectations while remaining true to their historical mission and social purpose. As Offerman (2002, p. 88) states “This is [indeed] an exciting time to be in continuing higher education.”

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this study was to identify and understand continuing higher education's (CHE) strategic response to the political-economic context of higher education. With fewer state subsidies and a greater reliance on tuition and fees, entrepreneurial divisions, like continuing education, need strong leadership strategies which address firm commitment to its historical mission and values in providing effective benefits to students and society. Therefore, inquiries related to the reevaluation of the historical mission and values of continuing higher education in the changing political-economic climate of higher education are necessary. Accordingly, this study is of great value to policy makers, administrators, and all stakeholders of adult and continuing higher education.

The objective of this chapter is to describe the design and methods used in this study to answer the following questions:

1. What do higher education leaders see as the current political, social and economic challenges facing higher education?
2. What do higher education leaders see as the role of continuing education in responding strategically to current challenges facing their institutions?
3. What do university administrators see as the return on investment of those strategic responses?

In reviewing the current state of higher education it became obvious that continuing higher education is becoming one of the fastest growing segments of higher education globally and that this arena is being called upon to solve many issues in our society (UCEA, 2006). It is apparent then that leadership and administration in continuing higher education must be

understood and interpreted from the leaders' perspective in corroboration with the current context of higher education. The role of "entrepreneurial" continuing higher education divisions within the current political and socio-economic context of higher education is one area of concern yet to be explored and understood. Continuing higher education is considered an entrepreneurial division within higher education and is closely related to the educational market. For this reason, it must be understood how continuing higher education is positioning itself for reinvention and renewal in this higher education climate while adhering to its historical mission.

Design of the Study

There are three fundamental disciplines and resulting disciplinary questions that inform this study: these are sociology, economics, and political science. According to Long (1990) in addition to education being a social and cultural element it is also political and economic; hence, its objectives and purposes are debated and influenced by existing social, economic and political forces. This study is an attempt to contribute to the knowledge base within the socio-political-economic context of higher education. Therefore, a qualitative paradigm based on a social constructionist epistemology informs this study (Crotty, 2003).

Social constructionism refers to the construction of knowledge about *social* constructs and reality, not about constructing the reality itself; and qualitative research is the concept that seeks to interpret peoples' construction of reality and to identify patterns in their perspectives. (Glesne, 2006). These perspectives were captured through open-ended interviews and other data collection methods discussed below. Hence, I conducted an interpretive, comparative study design within a social constructionist epistemology. The decision to conduct an interpretive qualitative study stems from the fact that I am interested in understanding leaders' perception of continuing educations' role within the current context of higher education.

The philosophical root of qualitative inquiry is steeped in phenomenology. I am referring to the philosophy (not the methodology) that considers the conscious experience of ideas and objects, that is, understanding the lived experiences or identifying the essence of human experiences (Creswell 2003; Merriam & Simpson, 2000). Interpretive research helps researchers understand how the world operates from the perspective of those living a particular phenomenon, such as the experience of being a leader in continuing higher education. The phenomenon itself becomes the focal point for analysis. The basic qualitative researchers' purpose is to explain and understand the nature of reality with regard to that phenomenon (Patton, 2002).

Patton (2002) also noted that “decisions about design, measurement, analysis, and reporting all flow from the purpose” (p. 213). This study which attempts to describe, understand, and interpret the participants' experiences contextually and holistically within a specific social-historical context, is well suited to a qualitative approach. A qualitative design is suitable for the purpose of conducting this particular study because I am evoking a perception of the current climate of continuing higher education from the leaders of such divisions. Comparing their perception of their CHE unit's strategic response within their particular institutional context and across educational institutions, allowed me to answer my research questions and provide an understanding and interpretation of the effects of the current climate on leaders' strategic response. Thus, a qualitative approach to research is informed by purposeful sampling, data collection, an inductive approach to data analysis, and representation of the study in the form of a report (Creswell, 2003).

Sample Strategies and Selection

A particular strength of qualitative analysis is the ability to look at program, units, or participants holistically, which involves observation, analysis, and description of the units as

well as understanding the participants within those units. However, the researcher's purpose in selecting a sample unit for study is not to study everything about that unit but to focus on specific issues, problems, or programs related to the unit. Sampling, therefore, in qualitative research is a strategy that seeks out those units or participants best able to provide rich data on the phenomenon under study (Creswell, 2003; Patton, 2002). This is referred to as purposeful or criterion-based sampling. According to Patton qualitative purposeful sampling "typically focuses on relatively small samples, even single cases, selected *purposefully* to permit inquiry into and understanding of a phenomenon *in depth*" (p. 46). The "phenomenon" in this study is the current impact of politics, policy, and socio-economic factors on continuing higher education, which has a worldview perspective. In this study, the logic of purposeful sampling involved selecting information-rich continuing education units which illuminated the questions enveloping the study. I use the words "units" and "sites" interchangeably to refer to continuing education divisions within university settings.

Criterion and Maximum Variations Sampling Strategies

The purpose of the study necessarily guides sampling decisions. Gaining continuing higher education leaders' perspectives from a diversity of institutional contexts was of primary importance in this study. Therefore, maximum variation sampling was used alongside criterion sampling to seek out a mix of public and private non-profit universities. This method, I believed, resulted in a richer and different understanding and interpretation of academic capitalism (Slaughter & Leslie, 1997; Slaughter & Rhoades, 2004) and entrepreneurialism (Breneman, 2005; Clark, 1998, 2001; Pusser, 2005) within this context and proved useful to my analysis and conclusions.

The first strategy, criterion sampling, involves setting the criterion for selecting the sample. According to Patton (2002) criterion sampling is the idea of “picking cases that meet some predetermined criterion of importance” (p. 238). The second strategy, maximum variation sampling, is a strategy that seeks to explore themes that are common to the various units being studied, but whose manifestation might differ due to differences in location, institutional structures, sizes, and funding sources. The research resulted in an understanding of the uniqueness of each site, but it also highlighted common themes across the eight sites. It was important however that the geographical or other variation criterion be represented, as each educational institution is unique and relative to its geographical locations, and demographics. The data collection and analysis, which for this study is under the umbrella of constant comparative analysis, revealed highly detailed descriptions of uniqueness as well as important shared patterns that exist across the various units and they “derive their significance from having emerged out of heterogeneity; both are important findings in qualitative inquiry” (Patton, p. 235).

Sample Size

Sample size is always a concern in qualitative study; however, it is more important to identify groups of people, events, and or programs that meet the criterion of representation for a particular study than to be anxious about sample size. Although there are no rules related to sample size in qualitative inquiry the most important factor in making the decision is to select the number of cases, participants, sites, or activities needed to answer the research question(s) and to effectively address the purpose of the research (Patton, 2002). The sample size—number of units—adequately represented the purpose of the study, usefulness of the data, and allowed for credibility and validity of the findings. These sites included public, land-grant, and research universities as well as private not-for profit universities.

Eligibility for inclusion in the sample was determined using the following criteria: (1) Study sites are continuing education units, divisions, or schools within land-grant or other major research intensive or extensive university settings as defined by the Carnegie Foundation for higher education classification. (2) These units were “stand-alone” divisions or schools of continuing education (not programs of studies enveloped within another department) under the auspices or control of land-grant-public research universities or private not-for-profit research universities, and these units are under the directions of an administrator holding the following title: Dean, Assistant Dean, Vice President, or Provost. (3) These units offer credit as well as non-credit programs. The credit was important for me to fully analyze the ideas of true academic capitalism or entrepreneurialism versus traditional types of settings or utility orientation within continuing education. (4) In addition to the above criteria, the units are institutional members of the University Continuing Higher Education Association (UCEA). This criterion is necessary to ascertain that the sample CE units had representation in an academic-practice oriented organization.

Leaders of the continuing higher education units served as informants representing the institutions. However, in addition to the criteria set forth for their units, these interviewees also met the following criteria: (1) With the exception of one informant, they held titles of Dean, Assistant Dean, Vice Presidents, or Provosts, of the CE unit, (2) they were in this position of leadership for at least three years, and (3) their CE units offer credit programs in addition to non-credit programs. I also interviewed Provosts, Vice Presidents, and Vice Chancellors who served as informants representing the parent universities and under whose auspices the CE units above fall. Both sets of participants served as a rich resource for comparative data for the analysis.

The Units

The CHE units were purposefully identified and selected as research sites because they met the criteria listed above. These units were derived from a listing of UCEA's *Who's who in college and university continuing and professional education membership directory, 2006-2007*. Since the early 1990s, some of these units are increasingly considered as the innovative heart of their respective universities and are regarded as being on the cutting edge of continuing education (Gose, 1999; Nicklin, 1999). Some have won awards for innovative programs from the UCEA, and other organizations; they serve as benchmarks of quality and transferability for other continuing higher education programs. The UCEA categorizes its institutional members into six geographical groupings, and the study was conducted within four of the six UCEA regional categories as follows: Mid-Atlantic (M-AT), Southern region (S), Great-Plains (GP), and Mid-America (MA). The study was conducted at eight sites, four public research extensive universities, and four private not-for-profit universities.

Chapter four gives details about each institution, the informants, and the structure of the continuing education units. The following outlines the continuing education units selected for the study but pseudonyms that are based on the regions in which the universities are located are used to replace the true identify of each institution's name in an effort to retain anonymity.

Public Institutions

1. Division of Outreach & Continuing Education - Mid-Atlantic Public
2. Centre for Extension & Continuing Education - South Public
3. Division of Continuing Education & Professional Studies - Great Plains Public
4. Division of Continuing Education and Extension - Mid-America Public.

Private Institutions

1. School of Continuing Studies - Mid-Atlantic Private
2. School of Continuing Education - South Private
3. School of Professional Studies - Great Plains Private
4. Metro Programs after Sun-Down - Mid-America Private

Data Collection Methods

Before the researcher can begin to collect data, access to the sites must be gained via the gate keepers. Gaining access is itself a process, it refers to acquisition of consent to enter the site, observe what the researcher is interested in, read documents, and talk to participants. In an effort to gain access, I made contact by telephone and email with the administrator (deans, directors, vice presidents, or vice chancellors) whose names were listed as the “contact person” for the continuing education unit in the UCEA directory. Once I gained their interest, I sent a letter of invitation (see appendix A) outlining the purpose of the study, my research objective, the proposed logistics of the site visits, and the data collection methods. I also attached the approved IRB letter of consent (see appendix B). These administrators subsequently arranged for me to meet with the person who they believed would be the best to represent the parent university based on my criteria outlined in the invitation letter. I conducted these site visits over a three-month period flying to various cities on one-day and over night trips. My visits were very pleasant and for the most part I was given a tour of the continuing education unit and had lunch with the administrator and the staff. Prior to my official campus visit, I met some of the participants at the UCEA’s annual meeting in Vancouver in March of 2007.

The technique, procedure, steps, and activities for collecting data are derived from the particular research design and are determined by the problem and purpose of the study. A

qualitative study design allows for a variety of data collection procedures and flexibility in regards to sequence, frequency and purpose (Patton, 2002). Interviewing, document review, observation, and survey are the data collection methods most often used in a qualitative design (Creswell, 2003; Patton, 2002).

The practice of relying on multiple methods is referred to as triangulation, and generally increases the trustworthiness of the data collected. The researcher attempts to (inter)relate these methods in an effort to remove any doubt of validity that might become an issue by paying attention to the contributions each data source makes to the overall interpretation (Glesne, 2006). In an effort to triangulate and analyze the data, a combination of methods including semi-structured interviews (deMarris & Lapan, 2004) and document review were the primary data collection methods used in this study.

Interviewing

Interviewing is probably the most common form of data collection method in qualitative inquiry. An interview is a process where the researcher asks questions of, or engages in conversation with participants about specific research questions that are related to the study. It is a unique form of speech event, the objective being the social construction of meaning. Through the use of 17 semi-structured, face-to-face interviews (deMarrais & Lapan, 2004), with leaders and administrators of continuing education divisions as well as provosts, vice presidents, and vice chancellors representing the parent university, I was able to gain an understanding of the role of politics and economic factors on continuing higher education from the leaders' perspectives and was able to explore each individual leader's understanding and experiences of the role of continuing education within the current climate of higher education. These interviews

were conducted at the research sites and were based on a pre-written interview protocol (appendix C); were tape recorded, and subsequently transcribed.

Documents

Documents as data constitute a particularly rich source of information about many organizations and programs (Patton, 2002). Documents analysis was the second major method of data collection used in the study (Creswell, 2003; Merriam & Simpson, 2000). Documents “are a natural source of information and usually exist within the context of the study” (Merriam & Simpson, 2000, p. 100). According to Creswell, documents “can often be accessed at a time convenient to the researcher—an unobtrusive source of information” (p. 187). Documents are usually considered to be already existing sources, of information that participants have already given much thought to compiling. The disadvantage to using documents is that gathering all relevant documents and analysis of documents is often problematic. The continuing education administrators provided me with various documents including: mission-vision-value statements, annual financial reports, policy documents, and strategic plans. Some were full strategic planning documents spanning 5 or more years. These documents were analyzed to provide information about the units’ purposes, goals, strategies, financial position, and budgets and also allowed for inductive as well as interpretative analysis of the data. The additional information obtained from these documents served as supporting evidential data.

Field Notes

Field notes are useful and are an integral part of qualitative fieldwork strategy; they serve as data collection management tools. Field notes are recording tools and are filled with descriptions of people, places, events, and activities. Field notes are also used as a great resource for researchers to record ideas, reflections, and can be used to guide data analysis as researchers

note hunches, patterns, and emerging themes during site visits (Glesne, 2006). Finally, I recorded field notes as I listened to different conversations and observed the various surroundings during my visits. My field notes also served as a management and reflective tool for my study.

Data Analysis Methods

My goal was to gain an understanding of leaders' perceptions, attitudes, and processes within continuing education settings, while gaining an understanding of the challenges that face leaders within continuing higher education and the strategies they use to sustain themselves within a larger university setting. Data analysis is the complex process of gathering and interpreting meaning from the words, actions, and contents of documents framed by the researcher's focus of inquiry. Essentially it is finding *the story*; organizing what the researcher has seen, heard, read so that he or she can make sense of what was learned. The researcher works with the data to create explanations, pose hypotheses, develop theories, and link story with story (Glesne, 2006). Essentially, data analysis is a process that transforms raw data into new knowledge. "Data analysis is also a continual process of reflection about the data, asking analytical questions, writing memos throughout the study....preparing the data for analysis" (Creswell, 2003, p. 190). According to Ezzy (2002) data analysis should occur concurrently with data collection. It is a strength of qualitative research that allows the data to be examined for cues that lead to expanded themes and codes. The process continues with conducting the analyses, moving deeper and deeper into the understanding of the data, representing the data, and making an interpretation of the larger meaning of the data. There are many types of data analysis and several can be combined and used in the same study. However, the type of analysis used should be tailored towards the type of study being conducted.

Constant Comparative Analysis

Constant comparative analysis is a general approach to qualitative analysis. This approach was developed originally by Glaser and Strauss (1967) for use in grounded theory methodology. Constant comparative analysis involves taking one piece of data, for example, one interview, one statement, one theme and comparing it with all others that may be similar or different in an effort to conceptualize possible relations between various pieces of data. This process will continue until all data have been compared with each other. Naturalistic inquiry, thematic analysis, and interpretative description are methods that depend on constant comparative analysis processes to develop ways of understanding human experiences contextually.

Inductive Analysis

The primary purpose of an inductive approach to data analysis is to allow research findings to emerge from the data. It is intended to aid an understanding of meaning in complex data through the development of summary themes or categories from the raw data. The assumptions of inductive analysis are that data analysis and findings are determined by both the research objectives (deductive) and multiple readings and interpretations of the raw data (inductive). The primary mode of analysis is the development of categories from the raw data by the researchers who code the data. Inductive analysis is an appropriate method for this study for several reasons: It can be used to “generalize,” extrapolate; or for transferability of findings to other contexts (Guba & Lincoln, 1981; Cronbach & Associates, 1980), rather than hypothesize all instances prior to research. Generalization in this context refers to assertions made by the researcher (Stakes, 1995) that is, a summary of interpretations and claims as the researcher develops themes and categories into patterns. It is also acceptable to make findings and to

eventually build theories from the data. The inductive approach also allows for data gathering and analysis to occur concurrently (Ezzy, 2002). I used inductive analysis for interpreting interview data as well as for analyzing extended field notes and observations. In addition to creating codes and themes, extracting and inducing meaning from the data are important modes of analysis.

Content Analysis

Content analysis is also appropriate in the study because it is the systematic searching of text for recurring themes (Patton, 2002). For example, analyzing documents like those obtained and used in this study. Qualitative content analysis is inductive and is used to make inferences by identifying specific characteristics of messages that are in printed form. “The core meanings found through content analysis are often called patterns or themes” (Patton, 2002, p. 453). In qualitative inquiry, the document source is used as the data base from which categories are inductively derived (Merriam & Simpson, 2000). Being able to focus on the content of these documents and analyzing them using a content analysis approach allows for richness of findings from the data. I looked at themes and patterns within sentences in the documents that highlight information for the purpose of comparison of meaning of various messages within these documents.

The data for this study was analyzed using two types of analyses: first an inductive analysis and second content analysis; both were used to analyze different data sets. Accordingly, the overall strategy of data analysis was enveloped in the overarching constant comparative method which is inductive. Patton (2002) suggests that “comparative analysis constitutes a central feature of grounded theory development” (Strauss & Corbin, 1998, p. 490). I constantly reviewed and compared the data, line by line, for codes, themes, similarities, and differences of

interpretation. This method was appropriate for this study because I was comparing the accounts of various higher education leaders to gain their interpretations of continuing education. I first transcribed all 17 interviews and then searched for codes and themes that were emerging. I subsequently compared the responses for similarities and differences among the transcriptions that were relative to the same questions. I subsequently used this *open coding* process to identify the concepts and to develop the patterns and themes. According to Strauss and Corbin (1998), open coding is “the analytical process through which concepts are identified and their properties and dimensions are discovered in data” (p. 101).

Afterward, I used an axial coding process for creating the summaries for all the subcategories and the major categories. This axial coding process is a concept based on grounded theory that “strives to provide researchers with analytical tools for handling masses of data” (Strauss & Corbin, 1998, p. 7). During the axial coding process the objective is to create density in the data by focusing on the relationships that exists. Strauss and Corbin (1989) view Axial Coding as building “a dense texture of relationships around the ‘axis’ focus of a category” (p. 64). After the open coding process, axial coding follows the development of the majority category as one sorts, synthesizes, and organizes large amounts of data. Hence, axial coding relates categories to sub categories, specifies properties and dimensions of categories, and reassembles data as factored during the initial coding to give coherence to emerging analysis (Charmaz, 2006).

Based on this concept of axial coding, I finally coined a method for extrapolating majority categories namely the “*Majority Response Category Process*” (MRCP). Using this method a finding became a major category or theme when greater than 60% or [in this study] nine of the 17 informants responded similarly to a particular question or topic. For this MRCP

method a sub-category is developed when greater than 50% of the informants—five or more of the eight—responded similarly to a question or topic within the same population sample, from a particular institutional type. For example, whenever five or more of the eight participants from the public institutions related similarly to a question, I believed this theme was of importance, that the response was transferable and that it warranted a separate category.

Pilot Study

During the month of February 2007, and based on recommendation from my major professor, I conducted a pilot study in an effort to assess the virtues of the process and as a precursor to the actual dissertation process. I purposefully chose a sample unit, a continuing education division of a major public university in Georgia. I contacted the Dean of Continuing Education and the President's assistant to get permission and to explain that the purpose of this study was only to test the feasibility of the process and to experiment with the interview protocol. Similar to the real study, I collected two sets of data: interviewing and documents. I conducted two-one hour interviews with the Dean of the Division of Continuing Education as well as with the President of the university. These interviews were tape recorded and transcribed. I also took field notes. This process worked very well. Consequently, I used the same structure for the actual dissertation field work. However, data gathered during this pilot study were not used in the actual study.

I analyzed the data using constant comparative analysis (Roulston, 2001, 2004). These methods worked very well once I was able to do the coding and sequencing. I was able to evoke themes and categorize the actions in the sequence. The pilot study gave me much insights and additional information to inform my dissertation research. Findings of the pilot study revealed, among other issues, that funding is a critical issue that is resulting in major concerns of

efficiency and of the ability of many CE divisions to effectively carry out their missions. I also learned that some directors of CE units internalize the concepts of their units, that they consider CE units marginal to other areas of the university, while the university administration in this case the president revered continuing education as being valuable to the institution.

During this site visit I enquired of both informants whether or not they believed the interview protocol questions were effective and if they thought the process was efficient. They both agreed that the questions were valuable and one remarked that they were “food for thought.” After the pilot study and after discussions with my major professor, I revised the pilot interview protocol before I began the actual study. Hence, the interview protocol in appendix C represents a revised protocol from the one included in the prospectus.

Validity and Reliability

Validity and reliability are two important aspects that help to insure the trustworthiness of the study. Qualitative researchers will wrestle with validity, reliability, and subjectivity in every study because readers and critics of the research will need thick, rich, descriptive information that allows them to make sense of the study and to rely on it as being trustworthy and empirical. It is crucial then for the researchers to use qualitative methods that will portray the empirical social world as it actually exists to those being investigated, rather than as the researcher imagines it to be (Patton, 2002). It is also important for the researcher to address the issue of subjectivity and to discuss any biases.

Validity

Validity is categorized in two different ways. There is the issue of internal versus external validity. External validity is also known as generalizability. Internal validity asks the question, “How congruent are ones findings with reality” (Merriam & Simpson, 2000, p. 101). The

understanding of reality is the researcher's interpretation of the participants' understanding.

Therefore, internal validity is considered a strength in qualitative inquiry, as researchers strive to get as close to [this] reality as possible. In order to validate this reality and to evoke trust in the findings of this study, the following strategies as suggested by (Creswell, 2003) were employed for internal validity of the study:

1. Triangulation of data-Involves using multiple sources of data and data analysis to confirm the findings. As can be surmised I used various data collection methods as outlined above, in-depth interviews and document analysis.
2. Peer review-members of my doctoral committee served as my peer reviewers. I relied heavily on my chair and methodologist for guidance throughout the process.
3. Rich thick description-I used informants' responses and quotes to validate any assumptions and interpretations made of the data. Also, during the interview process I often asked participants to clarify an initial response to which they provided greater details and insights. These strategies have helped to convey the findings and to offer rich descriptions that will "transport" readers to the setting and give the discussion an element of shared experiences (Creswell, 2003).
4. Audit-trail-Keeping an audit trail and field notes of how I conducted the study was important.
5. Clarification of researcher bias-I have clarified my researcher role and bias below.

While referring to trustworthiness or credibility using external validity or generalizability, it is prudent to note that qualitative inquiry does not necessarily consider such generalizability [in the sense of it being] a useful concept to such methods of inquiry. The fact is the reader might not be able to *generalize*—externally apply the findings of the study, in a

statistical sense, to other cases. External validity in the statistical sense is concerned with the extent to which the findings of one study can be applied to another situation. For example, results of one case study that might be applicable to another similar case study (Stake, 1995).

Generalizability in this sense might not be possible. However, transferability, authenticity, and trustworthiness are better ways to refer to credibility of qualitative research (Lincoln & Guba, 1981). For this study, transferability of findings might be possible. Because the sample is diverse, some facets of the findings might be transferable to other continuing education units by readers or users of the findings (Creswell, 2003; Patton, 2002). In addition, in terms of knowledge acquired, and the similarities and co-variations of happenings that exist within these continuing education contexts might be “generalizable” in a naturalistic sense. This is referred to by Stake (1978) as “naturalistic generalizations” which include the kind of learning—intuitive knowledge—that readers take from an encounter with specific case studies.

Patton (2002) found that Stake extends ‘naturalistic generalizations’ “to include the kind of learning that readers take from their encounters with specific case studies. ‘The vicarious experience’ that comes from a rich case account can contribute to social construction of knowledge that builds general, if not necessarily generalizable, knowledge.” Although this is not an in-depth case study, I have attempted to provide rich descriptions of the data analysis, the units, and the participants which lend credence to the authenticity of the study. And hence, with respect to this idea of naturalistic generalizations, the cumulative knowledge obtained from this study participants and sample units, will contribute to and build general knowledge about such continuing education divisions, which other readers can obtain. In an attempt to establish trustworthiness, all transcriptions, notes of meetings with my chair, and methodologists,

documents received from respondents and all field notes are being retained as evidence of an established audit trail to verify the rigor of my field work.

Reliability

Reliability refers to the extent to which research can be replicated. However, qualitative enquiry does not assume that there is one reality that is applicable to all. Instead, qualitative inquiry describes the world as experienced by those being investigated, by their understanding. To address the issue of external validity and reliability I used a combination (*triangulation*) of methods of data collection such as in-depth interviewing, and document analysis, and I have given detailed-rich description of the data and data analysis. In addition, the strategies outlined above as a means of internal validation in collaboration with the audit trail can be used to establish reliability (Merriam & Simpson, 2000). Moreover, the methodology provides a detail description of the overall systematic process, the design of the study, and the methods of data analysis, which I am confident, will equip other researchers with an example for conducting similar future studies.

Researcher Bias and Assumptions

The role of the researcher as the primary instrument of data collection in qualitative inquiry necessitates the identification, and clarification of roles, personal values and assumptions of bias. My role in the study was a traditional-asymmetrical one (Glesne, 2006); complete observer, with limited involvement (Rossman & Rallis, 1988) and the objective was to relay the story of continuing education within a higher education setting. During my interviewing sessions I was an anticipatory learner; learning from my subjects and was non-directive, while asking and probing for questions. I took notes, subsequently analyze and interpret what I, heard, and noticed. This information served as data. Consequently, and prior to this study, I was “an

outsider” with little preconceived ideas about continuing education, except what I read in the literature. However, I am intrigued with the nuances of continuing education because I have been a professor of business within a higher education context, and with aspirations to continue along this trajectory. I am therefore interested in understanding the current crisis in continuing higher education with respect to my work, as well as my status as a doctoral candidate in a department of lifelong learning within a traditional land-grant institution similar to those included in the sample for this study.

Government mandates are increasingly requiring that higher education institutions promote lifelong learning as a necessary ingredient of economic growth and competitive global advantage. However, I am predisposed to the need for federal and state government to, as the old adage goes, “put their money where their mouths are.” I also believe in advocating for public higher education to promote the concepts of lifelong learning and the public good.

My undergraduate and graduate degrees are within business disciplines and therefore I am intrigued with the current discourse in higher education and specifically adult and continuing education as a segment of higher education that is most affected by the dynamics of global competition. I am also a Certified Public Accountant who advocates for acknowledging human capital theory as one of importance in the economics of corporate and national returns and evaluation of value for investment in such, and often, non-quantifiable assets. Many accountants have been for many years advocating the importance of human capital value. I believe that some aspects of this theory within the context of continuing higher education are highlighted in this study’s findings.

However, I do not consider my self as being overtly biased, because I have never worked in a continuing higher education setting nor have any particular relationship to such settings from

which to draw any preconceived conclusions or findings. Consequently, I do not believe that my subjectivities are by any means overarching in this study. My subjectivity or bias is limited to the fact that I am a Ph.D. candidate of adult education who is also a professor of business within a higher education context. Moreover, my prior assumptions about continuing education were derived from the reading of the literature as well as from the pilot study which together facilitated certain propositions about the phenomenon and helped me to further develop questions to guide my study. Notwithstanding any premise about continuing education, I only relied on those premises for theoretical structure, but while analyzing my data, I relied only on the data gathered during the study to narrate my findings.

Ethical Considerations

The following ethical principles guided my research as I fully considered the participants' needs, as well as the uniqueness of each site. Trust and respect are important ethical considerations and I believe I evoked and facilitated both. Potential ethical issues could have arisen if the participants were not honest about their programs, and or if they overstated their achievements without justification. Other ethical issues (risk) might have arisen if administrators were to reveal sensitive documents regarding students or faculty members.

I was concerned that there might have been the risk of feeling compelled to “choose sides” from the context of institution versus their continuing education school, or that they might have felt uncomfortable justifying their current operational strategies. Nevertheless, pursuant to these considerations, I have no reason or concrete evidence to believe that any issues of the above nature occurred during the process of field work and data gathering. I believed that informants were simply telling their stories from their own perspectives, what they conceived as reality.

Although the level of participation risk was minimal, I obtained a written, “informed” consent (Glesne, 2006). The consent letter included information regarding the purpose and benefits of the study, their level of participation, any aspect that might affect their well-being and their rights to participate as well as the right to voluntarily cease participation at anytime. It also included information regarding their right to ask questions; to obtain a copy of the results, and to have their privacy respected.

I have protected their right to privacy, their confidentiality, and anonymity especially of the interviewees by using generic titles instead of names of the participants and using anonymity codes for names of institutions. Finally, I have not engaged in any falsification or exaggerations of findings to meet my own or my potential reader’s needs. Regardless of the ethical considerations, participants felt they benefited from the study because they had an opportunity to take a critical look at their structure and strategic position within the larger organizational setting.

Delimitations and Limitations

Two parameters that establish boundaries, exceptions, reservations, and qualifications of research are delimitations and limitations. These are found in qualitative, quantitative, and mixed method approaches to research. Of course anything that is good comes with a price. Invariably, I encountered some of these limitations in my research. First, it took a longer than expected period of time to get participants comfortable with the idea and to consent to be a part of the study. Therefore, I met some resistance along the way. I was quite surprised and disappointed that potential participants from the public institutions were the most resistant to the process. One Dean told me “well, I will participate if the Provost will be willing to give her consent and if she is also willing, but I tell you, what you’re trying to do is very difficult.” Another Dean also from

a public institution told me, “I would be willing to sit in a boring one-hour interview, but I am not sure if I could get the provost or president to do so.” Still another VP for continuing education at a public institution remarked, “I would be willing to participate, but I am not sure I would want to spend ‘*political capital*’ to ask the president or provost to serve as the other participant.” Others consented initially on the phone but after they saw the IRB consent letter and the invitation letter outlining the process they withdrew because they believed they would not or could not expend the time to participate. Others said they would get back to me but have not done so, to date. I initiated approximately 30 invitations by telephone and email before getting eight institutions to firmly consent.

Secondly, and in addition to these stumbling blocks, I spent much time and money on the project. I believed that potential participants would feel more comfortable if they met me in person prior to the official site visits because a number of them from both private and public institutions asked me repeatedly if I would be attending the UCEA’s annual meeting in Vancouver during March of 2007 and said that they would love to meet me if I attended. So I sacrificed much time and money and attended the meeting and met many of the participants, and also some who had refused to participate or who did not respond to my initial contact. During those contacts some explained why they could not participate. Nevertheless, it was all worth it. By the time I conducted my site visits the participants I met at the conference, from both the public and private institutions were obviously comfortable and more relaxed during the process than those whom I had not met previously, it was like chatting with a good friend. Although my study is related to continuing higher education, my study site and participants were confined to continuing higher education programs within not-for-profit private and public research universities.

CHAPTER IV

THE ORGANIZATIONS

In this chapter I seek to depict a picture of the “many faces” and complexities of continuing education in today’s higher education organizations. Continuing education is a ubiquitous feature in every sphere of post-secondary education and various kinds of organizational configurations prevail. The purpose of this study was to examine continuing higher education within the socio-political context of higher education institutions. Accordingly, the ability to envisage the various models and structures of continuing education within higher educational organizational settings is important as a precursor to understanding the findings of this study.

The institutions and participants selected for this study are from various geographical locations, as outlined by the University Continuing Education Association (UCEA) in addition to several other criterion described in chapter three. These geographical locations are Mid-Atlantic, South, Great Plains, and Mid-America. In addition, the seventeen informants representing the eight institutions were selected based on the criterion outlined in chapter three, but were representatives of the institutions’ administration as well as representatives of the continuing education divisions within those institutions. Note that the participating universities highlighted in the study are not representative of all continuing education models and institutions within this selected region whether structurally, academically, or otherwise. Table 1 summarizes this overview of the institutions, informants, and units. Key to Abbreviations are as follows: (VP) Vice President; (VC) Vice Chancellor; (OR) Outreach; (CE) Continuing Education; (A. Affairs) Academic Affairs; (CS) Continuing Studies; (PS) Professional Studies; (Ext) Extension (COO) Chief Operating Officer.

Table 1 Summary of Institutions, Informants, and Units

Informants				
Institutions	Title(s)	Years in role	Responsibility to Continuing Ed.	Name of Continuing Education Units
Mid-Atlantic Public	Associate VP	3	Director of CE	Division of Outreach & Continuing Education
	Dean	15	Dean of CE	
South Public	Associate VC	5	VC for Extension	Centre for Extension & Continuing Education
	Assistant VC	5	Dir. Ext. & CE	
Great Plains Public	Provost & VC	9	VC-A. Affairs	Division of CE & Professional Studies
	Dean/Ass VC	11	Dean of CE	
Mid-America Public	Provost	8	Provost- Ext.	Division of Continuing Education and Extension
	Assoc. Dean	8	Assoc. Dean CS	
	Vice Provost	7	Dean for CS	
Mid-Atlantic Private	Provost	6	VP-A Affairs	School of Continuing Studies
	Dean	12	Dean of CE	
South Private	Provost	4	Chair A. Affairs	School of Continuing Education
	Dean/Ass VP	6	Dean of CE	
Great Plains Private	V. President	5	VP for PS	School of Professional Studies
	Assoc. Dean	7	Ass. Dean for DE	
Mid-America Private	Assoc Provost	3	COO-A. Affairs	Metro Programs After Sun-Down
	Exec. Director	12	Director of CE	

An Overview of Institutions, Structure, and Informants

Informants' quotes are used throughout the descriptions offered in this prologue, as their words serve as the primary data for the study. The quotes are taken from informants' responses to three interview questions related to: (1) description of the structure of the continuing education unit; for example, its organization, operation, and program structure, (2) the informants' title, role, responsibilities and connections to continuing education, and (3) the length of time in the current role. In addition to their words, I have relied on documentation gathered during my field visits, along with my own observations, field notes, and inferences made of their responses to give a synopsis of the dynamics of these continuing education units in terms of structure and organization.

For purposes of keeping the informants' anonymous and for research confidentiality, these universities' names have been replaced with pseudonyms that portray the region and whether or not the institutions are public or private. These are as follows: Mid-Atlantic Public, South Public, Great Plains Public, and Mid-America Public. Likewise, the private universities' names are replaced with Mid-Atlantic Private, South Private, Great Plains Private, and Mid-America Private. References to the name of the university or units, or a reference to any of the informants by name is replaced with this university's pseudonym 'name' or 'name withheld' respectively. Besides, noticeable pauses and breaks in interviewees' responses are indicated by ellipses (...) and where necessary, I have edited the quotes for grammatical errors, and punctuations. I have inserted pronouns and other common helping verbs or words in an effort to help the reader clearly understand what is being said. These are inserted in [...] within the quotes.

Results of this study show that no one continuing education type is known to be normative and or transferable to any other setting. In other words, there is no one model type of

continuing education structure that fits a “standard” continuing education unit. For this reason, benchmarking is only for comparative assessments. Continuing education units are structured and organized differently, and not surprisingly, this differentiation can also extend to sister colleges within a single state university system. Their expertise includes developing, marketing, and administering degree and non-degree programs.

Some continuing education units are large academic units headed by deans, vice presidents, and vice chancellors. In many instances, the deans are members of the Deans’ Council of the university. Continuing education units administer graduate degrees, undergraduate degrees, and certificate programs, in addition to other noncredit, training, certificate and programs. Many also offer professional development programs, youth and summer programs, conferences, institutes and other non-academic programs; they serve primarily nontraditional students in various capacities. Nontraditional refers to students and other “customers” who are not the typical college bound 18-22 years old, seeking a bachelor’s degree. Other continuing education units are relatively small, headed by a director, and offer only non-degree, noncredit, and or certificate programs. The following paragraphs outline the various institutions and give an overview of their continuing education units and representatives who graciously participated in this study. There are two separate sections outlining public and private universities.

Public Institutions and Regions

Mid-Atlantic Public. Continuing education within the realm of one of the largest state university systems in the Mid-Atlantic Region with its many colleges, schools, and campuses permeates throughout the Mid-Atlantic Public’s institutional system. Each campus has its own continuing education unit which offers many programs via the central Division of Continuing Education. I interviewed two informants at this university. The first is representing the university

administration. He has two titles (1) Associate Vice President (VP) for Outreach and (2) Executive Director of Continuing and Distance Education. He has served in this role for three years but has been at the university for greater than 20 years. The second interviewee representing the Division of Outreach and Continuing Education administration is the Associate Director for Outreach and the Division of Continuing Education. He has been in this role for 15 years, and describes responsibilities and connections to continuing education in the following manner, “Ok, so organizationally, I guess I would say we are a centralized organization and all those units report up to me and I report up to [name withheld] who is the Vice President for outreach.”

Continuing education at the university administers associate, bachelors, and masters’ degree programs, credit and noncredit courses, professional development courses, and other nonacademic programs, namely sports programs, youth programs, and environmental programs throughout this state. In responding to the question regarding his responsibilities and connections to continuing education the Associate Vice President for Outreach explained the following:

In my area Continuing Education (CE) and Distance Education (DE) I have executive administrative responsibility for 4 program areas: The first is DE which is [this university’s] World Campus and it delivers undergraduate and graduate degree and certificate programs and a few non-credit programs largely online nationally and internationally. The second area is conferences and institutes which is our academic conferencing unit. We have a residential conference center here at [this university] but it is also responsible for summer study abroad, summer youth camps and for two kinds of specialized programs.... The 3rd area I am responsible for is called Continuing and professional Ed (CAPE) and it is responsible for

more traditional CE programs that come out of the University Park campus at [this university] which is our primary research campus. It runs the evening program which serves the county route surrounding the university area and it also operates some specialized programs that also serves other campuses...Part of the responsible of CAPE is to develop University Park based CE programs that are offered at other campuses. And the 4th area is statewide CE. [This university] has a total of 24 statewide campuses including the world campus and most of them have CE offices and those CE directors report to an Executive director for statewide CE who reports to me. So that's the scope of what I do. We manage the CE functions at all the university campus around the state.

Continuing education on this campus is a central administrative unit that manages, markets, and delivers programs to nontraditional and adult learner. Markets, and offers degrees and noncredit programs. The Associate Vice President said, "[This Mid-Atlantic Public University's] continuing education is set up as a centralized administrative function. We work with all the academic units to extend their programs off campus in the way I have described above so we are a centralized administrative unit." In other words, continuing education is the central administration for all continuing education functions and programs within this large state university system. The degree programs are "offered" through the various academic departments, schools, and colleges of the parent university; there is full academic authority for the programs by the academic units offering the programs. Consequently, the image of continuing education for this university is one of mediator as it places continuing education at the interface of the large, external, community. As can be noted from the above responses it seems that continuing

education continues to evolve and is ubiquitous within the realm of this university and higher education.

South Region Public. The South Region Public University also depicts a different dynamic and structure of its continuing education. This university's continuing education extends to various programs that are credit and noncredit. The interviewee representing the university administration at this state university is the Associate Vice Chancellor for Extension and Engagement and Division Director for Noncredit Leadership Development Program; he has been in this role for five years. Representing continuing education administration is the Assistant Vice Chancellor of Extension, Engagement, and Economic Development, who is also the Director of the [name withheld] Center for Extension and Continuing Education. He has been in this role for five years as Assistant Vice Chancellor, but has been at the university since 1971, so he has been at the institution for a total of 36 years.

Various programs of study are offered through continuing education at this university including bachelors' degrees, masters and professional degrees, certificate and training courses, conferences other non-degree, and noncredit programs. In response to the question regarding the informant's responsibilities and role, the Vice Chancellor explains the following, "I have more than one title. I am the Assistant Vice Chancellor of Extension, Engagement, and Economic Development, and Director of the [name withheld] Center for Extension and Continuing Education." This center for extension and continuing education institute has seven major units, continuing and professional education, noncredit office of professional development, and faculty who do applied research for community projects and public schools.

During the time of the interview, all credit, summer, and lifelong education programs are administered through a central Continuing education division within this university. However,

the university was considering an effort to transfer its academic credit programs to the various schools and colleges after July 2007. However, the Vice Chancellor was concerned that this “decentralization” this transferring of the academic credit courses, would pose a problem for the nontraditional adult students. His concern was whether adult students would be adequately served through the various academic units, as they are currently, or if it would be better for them to be serviced via a central continuing education unit. When asked about the structure of his unit he replied passionately:

Credit programs, summer programs, and lifelong education [are] now centralized, after July 1st, (2007) we will be moving to decentralized. These programs (the credit and summer) will be run by the individual colleges....hopefully it will work...not sure if this is good, bad, or right or wrong only time will tell. Don't know if decision is good if it will work... the problem is the credit students who are nontraditional will now be served through their separate college. I am concerned if the focus will be a diluted one...they need to focus on their degrees no telling if, [or] will the colleges be willing to work with them?

The Vice Chancellor responded to the question about structural organization by remarking that:

We are administratively centralized...but each college does its professional development and continuing education training, [it is] not general we offer...technical assistance. There is no mandate that all CE comes through us; nor is it forced to be managed by us. There is a partnership with CE and colleges for training programs now [but] before all was through CE but not any more. All colleges do their own various CE for their academic department.

The above is a classic example of the many aspect of continuing education within a major state university system. The lines of demarcations between credit and noncredit programs are prevalent and obvious within this setting. This mélange would call for improvising so that efficient and effective service can be provided to students who use continuing education as a means of access to this university.

Great Plains Region Public. The public university representing the Great Plains Region is a large research extensive university, and continuing education is a major part of the academic function of the university. The first interviewee from the university has two titles she is the Dean of Continuing Education and Professional Studies and Associate Vice Chancellor of Summer Programs. She is representing the Division of Continuing Education and Professional Studies, and has been in this role for eleven years. In describing her responsibilities for continuing education and her role and title, the Dean offers information on continuing education in this manner:

My title is Dean of Continuing Education and Professional Studies. I also have a 2nd title and that is Assistant Vice Chancellor of summer programs and we can talk about why I do have a 2nd title and that is because of the budget issues but CE runs the entire summer semester.

The second interviewee representing the university administration is the Provost and the Executive Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs and the Dean of Continuing Studies reports directly to him. He has been in this role for approximately nine years. At this Great Plains Public university, continuing education offers associate degrees, bachelors' degrees, masters' degrees, noncredit, professional development, and other non-traditional programs. Continuing education oversees a number of other programs such as an "evening school" which offers classes to this

university's students as well as members of the community and a number of other students across the state. For example, a program for high-school students, and a pilot program for undecided college bound students. Uniquely and notably, the summer semester for the parent university is also run by continuing education exclusively. It also has a large outreach component to the state and supports faculty and graduate research for innovation and development. The Provost is proud of the accomplishment of continuing education at the university and describes the program structure below:

CE programs are also in charge of outreach to the state. Through funding from the chancellor's office and my office and CE, we offer faculty and graduate students funding to take programs across the state based upon the research that the faculty are doing and or the teaching innovation that they are doing, so we have a very large outreach component to the state that's under CE. Also our CE may be different than others in that it is in charge of summer school.

In describing the organization and the structure of continuing education, the Dean clarified her understanding of its organization in the following way:

CE on this campus is administratively centralized and academically decentralized. Each school and colleges have academic oversight for their programs but we work in, concert with them, in collaboration with them. The colleges and schools (S & Cs) are responsible for creating the programs. Professional studies, non-credit programs etc. In a similar way the schools and Colleges decide who to hire to teach summer sessions but I allocate budgets to them and we manage the marketing of the program. I convene a group of summer session deans who [are] assistant and associate deans in all the S & Cs. I have a director of summer

sessions who I have actually given the responsibilities for this so they plan the programs together.

As can be surmised, continuing education at Great Plains Region University has a hybrid organizational structure and models a facilitative role of scheduling, budgeting, enrollment of students, and program concept development, which is subsequently supplemented by an academic department faculty member for instruction. In commenting on CE at this university the Provost and Executive Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs noted that:

I consider [it] to be a little of an hybrid model; it's certainly more centralized than many institutions and by that I mean it doesn't have CE staff in each of the schools and colleges. All of the CE staff is in the office of CE. However, the reason that I say it's more of a hybrid model is because the Dean works closely with the other deans and the department chairs in getting courses approved. And in some cases, CE offers certificate programs and the CE programs are ones that are generated by the faculty on the campus but offered by CE that's why I say it's more of an hybrid model than complete "centralization or 100% decentralization."

From this Great Plains Public university example, it can be deduced that continuing education resembles other administrative units that interplay with the academic subsystems, notably colleges and schools within the university system. However, there is a notable difference, and that is, continuing education plays a greater role in developing, administering, and evaluating a variety of academic credit and noncredit programs even to the point of administering the entire summer semester of the university.

Mid-America Region Public. The institution used as an example from the Mid-American Region, is a major research extensive university with a great heritage in the field of continuing

education. Three interviewees from this university volunteered for this study. The first is the Vice Provost (Vice Chancellor) for Extended Programs who also serves as the Dean for the Division of Continuing Studies; he has been in these roles for eight and twenty years respectively. The following describes his title and role:

This Vice Provost title which is getting a new title is Vice Provost for Lifelong Learning which better reflects the responsibilities of the job so it's the lead position for learning across the continuum on campus and its major responsibilities is CE and CPE.

The second interviewee is the Associate Dean, for the Division of Continuing Education and Extension. She has been in the role for eight years. Both informants were representing continuing education and engagement administration. The third interviewee, the Provost for University Extension and Vice Chancellor of Colleges, represented the university administration. He has been in this role for seven years. In response to the question regarding his title and responsibilities he remarked, "As Provost for Extension I am the Chief Academic Officer (CAO). Again primarily, I am responsible for governance and faculty issues in extension and overall program issues in the institution."

Continuing education at Mid-America Region Public University is unique in many respects: There is the Division of Continuing Studies which is the central administrative office for all lifelong learning activities on the campus. Secondly, there is the Division of Continuing Education which is the program office for all credit and noncredit continuing education and extension activities. This university offers credit and noncredit courses, graduate and undergraduate degrees, professional development programs, and other nonacademic programs. Each college and school offers a different level of participation in continuing education and

lifelong learning activities. They offer continuing education to thousands of students each year.

The Vice Provost stated that:

CE is, one of the, well is the fastest growing part of the whole extension function in the state...we reach over 160K individuals each year through CE. So in that respect, it's [CE] making a great contribution to the educational mission of the university to serve people beyond the campus.

All continuing education is academically decentralized within the schools and colleges; however, there is a central office which is administratively responsible for all continuing education activities on the campus. When asked to briefly describe the organizational structure of continuing education at this university, the Vice Provost for Extended Programs and Dean for the Division of Continuing Studies, remarked that:

Well...most of the individual schools...have CE as their responsibility yet, given the way CE is funded in the state, each campus has a central office which is administratively responsible for the whole CE activities of the campus. At the same time, because of different 'degrees' of participation in CE at the school and college level, the Division of Continuing Studies also does CE programming in all its forms, distance education, workshops, institutes, courses, [and] short classes, it does that on its own and it has a core staff to carryout these functions.

Hence, continuing education at this university is viewed somewhat similar to an educational laboratory. It is a place where new programs and innovations are launched and where the university resources extend to the boundaries of the state and beyond.

Private Institutions and Regions

Private institutions for this study were chosen from various areas as well. However, the dynamics are different for the private institutions. Two of these institutions are categorized based on the Carnegie Classification as Traditional Liberal Arts institutions. Two are affiliated with and are affluent religious institutions.

Mid-Atlantic Region Private. The continuing education school selected from the Mid-Atlantic Region Private University is one of five schools within this university. It is a separate school in regards to its administration, academics, and governance. It has a very large administrative staff that supports its function within one central unit. There were two informants from this university. The first is the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs representing the university administration. She has been in this role for six years. In response to the question regarding title and responsibilities she said:

Ok,...my title is Provost and Vice president (VP) for Academic Affairs...That role here is 2nd to the President with four other VPs who have various functions, but the Provost and VP for Academic Affairs is responsible for the academic mission of the university.

Hence, her connections and responsibilities to continuing education are rooted in the fact that the Dean of continuing education reports to her. The second is the Dean of the School of Continuing Studies, representing continuing education administration. He has been in this role for twelve years and describes his role and title as follows:

I am the Dean of the School of Continuing Students. Essentially I am an academic dean of a free-standing school we have our own faculty part-time, [and] our own

curriculum, [It is] very much the same as a Dean for [a] more traditional school of business that I can find.

The structure is considered to be somewhat entrepreneurial. In responding to the question regarding the structure of the continuing education unit the Dean responded as follows: “Not sure what terms you want me to use, but ‘free standing’ is the way we would describe it.” This school of continuing studies offers various types of degrees including associates, bachelors, and a masters’ degree. In addition, it offers non-traditional, noncredit, and professional development programs. This continuing education school is also unique in that it is responsible for the administration of the Mid-Atlantic Region Private University’s summer school and programs. The Dean describes the program structure as follows:

The majority of what we do fall into...well, what we do fall into three categories.

The primary business is the degree granting part of the school that is offering a series of degrees certificates, associates, and graduate certificates, bachelors’ degree, master’s degrees, and a non-traditional part-time degree. That is our primary function or business unit. Secondly, we have a non-credit arm which we call community and professional education and that does professional development and personal enrichment courses for learners of all ages, kids programs to older adults programs and everything in between. The third part of our business is our summer portion [this] is where we connect most significantly with the rest of the institution.

In terms of the organizational structure, the school is technically one central ‘free-standing’ unit. The Provost responded to the question of organizational structure in this manner, “Very well decentralized as well as entrepreneurial, again we are entrepreneurial because we are

decentralized...The other thing structurally, I should have mentioned, the School of Continuing Studies is expected to be entirely self-supporting.” However, the Dean clarified this position by saying the following in his response to the same question of organizational structure:

Well... it depends on how you want to answer that question and it... continuing education struggles with the answer to that question. Centralized meaning that it, the continuing ed. function, is centralized into one unit on campus...yes if you mean it that way then the answer is yes we’re centralized into one unit. We are administratively, programmatically, and academically separate ...and centralized. The other way people categorize [it] we say we are decentralized into a specific unit from the institution, but I am not sure how you’re using the term.

This school of continuing studies is in a facilitator role in that it supports the university summer program, in addition to being a self-supporting, centralized unit. However, I also surmised that it is trying to secure political and economic autonomy so that it can chart its own destiny by hoping to achieve true independence and equality.

South Region Private. Continuing education representing the Southern Region Private is within a very large university and the School of Continuing Education is one of ten schools within the institution. The school also offers multiple continuing education sites throughout the state. The representative for the university administration is the Provost and Chair of Academic Affairs. She has been in this role for four years. Her responsibility for continuing education encompasses programmatic and academic responsibilities and the Dean of continuing education reports to her. “I am the Provost and Chair for Academic Affairs...the Dean of Continuing Education reports to me,” she explains. The Dean of Continuing Education and Associate Vice President for off-site coordination served as the second informant. She has been in this role for

six years and describes her role and responsibilities as such, “I have two titles: Dean of Continuing Education and Associate VP of off-site coordination.... My relationship to CE, I am the Dean; I oversee all continuing education activities.”

Continuing education at this institution offers a majority of programs and degrees, both credit and noncredit. The Dean describes the programmatic structure of continuing education as follows, “We have two major divisions: Credit and noncredit. Credit has a larger adult population and we offer an AA 2-year, BA, & MA degrees. Our noncredit is corporate training, certificates, and other training programs.” In responding to the question regarding this organization of continuing education at South Region Private University, the Provost describes continuing education as follows, “We have multiple sites of CE throughout [this state]. Some other schools do, but not to the extent of CE.” Within the school of continuing education, there are many opportunities to engage in new and innovative strategies and, because of its diversity, and multiplicity, continuing education within this institution is also seen as a unit engaged in opportunities for research and development within the lifelong learning arena. The Dean stated that:

South Region Private, as a university, is the most diverse school in the south and university continuing education is the most diverse in the university. As a school, CE has sites throughout [this state]. It is highly accessible physically. Physical accessibility is very important.... our primary function to figure out what [we] need to do to help you discover your potential. Discovery is all a part of everyone’s culture.

Thus this model of continuing education is viewed as an educational laboratory ready to experiment with various programs and structures. It is strategically positioning itself for the future in its quest to diversify programmatically and in its accessibility.

Great Plains Region Private. Continuing education at Great Plains Region Private University is administered via the School of Professional Studies which is a separate autonomous school of the university. There were two interviewees representing this Great Plains Region Private university. The Vice President for Professional Studies and Strategic Alliances representing the university administration has been in his role for five years but has been at the university for 25 years in various roles. He is primarily responsible for the supervision of all continuing education programs. In responding to the question regarding his connections to continuing education he answered as follows, “The two parts of my title has to do primarily with my supervision of all of our programs that we identify in the school of Professional Studies and that include graduate and undergraduate programs designed for working adults.”

The second informant representing continuing education is the Associate Dean for Distance Education and Director of Distance Learning. She has been in this position for seven years. She is primarily responsible for the distance learning and education part of the continuing education function in the school of professional studies at the university. In responding to her connections and responsibilities to continuing education she said, “The whole function of distance education is academic and that’s pretty important even though people think it’s an add-on, it’s not an add-on, it’s an integral part of what we all do.”

The School of Professional Studies is one of three major academic units of the university. It offers graduate and undergraduate degrees, certificates, as well as professional, and other noncredit programs via three academic units. What is important to note about continuing

education at this school, is its historical development from an auxiliary-service-oriented unit to one that is currently academic and highly regarded. This was notably referred to by the Dean in her comments about the structure of continuing education at this university. She proudly related the historical development that the school engaged in over an eight year period. She retorted:

I used to answer to the Chief Operating Officer (COO) and because it was considered a service unit, and then.... as time went on I was able to make a case for the fact that we needed to be regarded as cohorts to faculty because of the work we do...Work with faculty to produce instruction and learning, and effective learning and I think that was the tipping point to put us into the role of being an academic unit.

This school is organized as a unit with its own faculty and academic policy, procedures, and structure. In responding to the question about structure the Vice President for Professional Studies described the School of Professional Studies in this manner, “It’s a relatively autonomous administrative and academic unit of the university which is somewhat unique among not-for-profit universities.

Thus continuing education at this institution is somewhat laminated or egalitarian by definition or radical in its imagery. It is all about advocating for the adult learner as a utopian mission to the recasting of society and its basic ideologies. The Vice President asserts, “We are not like most continuing education programs, most of our programs are for credit and for degrees or certificates... for younger adults and older adults.”

Mid-American Region Private. Continuing education within the institution representing the Mid-American Region has a unique status until its recent reorganization. It is currently under the auspices of the School of Education and Professional Studies. The current Executive Director

(formerly Dean) of continuing education is the first informant who agreed to participate in this study, although she had recently lost her title of Dean. She notes that she has been at this university and had not changed roles for twelve years. She emotionally explains the ramifications of the change as follows:

My tile is now Executive Director; it was Dean, I thought we have emailed about that before [but] it went into effect...We are now a part of the School of Education and Professional Studies, so I couldn't retain my Dean title, my responsibilities have not changed but my reports have changed; who I report to has changed.

The second informant representing the parent institution administration is the Associate Provost, who has been in this role for three years. His responsibility is overseeing various aspects of academic life. "Really what I do is overseeing; it is the Chief Operating Officer for the university," he explains. Continuing education at this university is demarcated in two different structures and programs. There is an evening program that is entirely noncredit, it is dynamic and expansive. Then there is a credit segment that offers bachelors' degrees to adults. The Executive Director explains it in this manner:

Overall, we run a credit evening program, evening and week-end; it's comprehensive, its four years, [a four year-degree]. It's for everything, it's the whole program and it is catering to working adults and then [name withheld evening] sun-down program which is noncredit. It is not necessarily frivolous stuff; we're doing some fairly high-end stuff which is non-credit.

Organizationally, the unit is under the Dean of the School of Education and Professional Studies. It is autonomous in its operational activities, a relatively small operational structure yet very complex in its organizational structure. The Dean considers continuing education within

this university as organizationally both centralized and decentralized; centralized in noncredit but decentralized in credit. She clarifies it this way, “We are centralized in our credit because we run, the only, the evening adult program for the university, but we’re decentralized in noncredit, because of the other CE units on campus.”

However, the Associate Provost was surprisingly more pragmatic in his response to the question of organizational structure. He asserts the following:

I would say a, it is, boy, that’s a great question, it is amorphous. The university as a whole is centralized and although..... [Director’s name withheld] can do “some” entrepreneurial things, she is limited by what the university can give her before she does that. And there is probably more subtle oversight than intentional oversight. And so that kind of a cachet oversight doesn’t give you a lot of direction, it really is kind of a cloud.

I believe this model of continuing education can be construed as somewhat colonial in one sense; seeking to achieve some integration and acceptance in this private liberal-arts institution. Yet, it is fighting to shake the political impasse in an effort to formulate its own destiny, strategies, equality, and “statehood.” Nevertheless, I sensed that it is currently shaped by the cultural and socio-political environment in which it finds itself, while taking advantage of the current program opportunities which exists, it is going with the flow.

Summary

In this chapter, and with the assistance of seventeen informants, I have given a picture of the different models of continuing education within eight universities throughout four representative regions of the United States. Because continuing education is often portrayed by the literature and common research as entrepreneurial enterprises within universities, it is

important to note that not all continuing education units are “simply marketing” arenas for higher education institutions. They are; however, key elements in alternative organizational approaches and in strategic planning when thinking about program development and implementation. It is imperative to keep these various models in mind as a prelude to understanding how university administrators conceptualize the socio-political and socio-economic dynamics of their continuing education units within the context of a larger university setting. These perceived dynamics are delineated in chapters five and six.

CHAPTER V

CHALLENGES FACING CONTINUING HIGHER EDUCATION

We are living in a contemporary knowledge society, the information age, and a time when a college degree is equivalent to filling the digital divide between those who can achieve the American Dream and those who cannot. Therefore, in an effort to aspire to a greater economic, social, and cultural advantage, access to colleges and universities is paramount for those wishing to acquire “this dream.” For centuries, colleges and universities have been offering various means of access in an effort to foster this societal advantage. One avenue of access is via contemporary organizational efforts referred to as outreach, public service, and or extension. Continuing education is often under the auspices of these various means of access. Consequently, the purpose of the study was to identify continuing higher education’s strategic responses to the current political-economic context of higher education, and the following research questions guided the study:

1. What do university administrators see as the current political, social, and economic challenges facing continuing higher education?
2. What is the role of continuing education in responding strategically to the current challenges facing their institutions?
3. What do university administrators see as the return on investment of those strategic responses?

The objective of this chapter is to demonstrate how higher education leaders within public and private not-for-profit universities view the current, political, economic, and social challenges that are both global and local. These findings address research question one as indicated above. These findings are organized by research questions posed by the study and the

major correlating themes that emerged. These themes are drawn from the respondents' reaction to the "challenges", "responses," and "impact" intrinsic to continuing education settings. I have presented the discussions under separate sections relating to public and private universities. This format will prove efficient as I compare and contrast the dynamics within continuing education of public versus private universities as perceived by their respective administrators.

Findings in this section will show what university administrators perceive as challenges facing continuing higher education. It corresponds to the first research question that informs the study—current challenges facing continuing higher education. Interview questions were directly solicited about the interviewees' perception of the current challenges facing continuing education. But, in addition to those direct responses, the informants' responses to other questions also depict challenges and issues. Accordingly, those responses served as data for this section. These challenges are divided into two major categories: Internal and external. The internal challenges are further demarcated into three sub-areas namely: (1) continuing education-the organization, (2) academic relationship and quality (3) institutional governance. Similarly, the external challenges are divided into two sub-areas namely: (1) economic and (2) social. Each sub-area is further divided into emerging themes. Table 2 gives an overview of the internal political and policy challenges as perceived by the respondents and that are prevalent within one institutional type or the other. It outlines the major internal challenges by themes. Likewise, table 3 on page 172 gives an overview of the external challenges and follows a similar prototype like that of table 2.

Table 2 Overview of Internal Challenges

Legend: X denotes that the issue was prevalent for that institutional type; n/a denotes the issue was not necessarily applicable or highlighted in responses.		
Major Categories: Political and Policy	Public Institutions	Private Institutions
Program Structure: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of autonomy regarding program planning Cross disciplinary decision making 	X n/a	X X
Administration and Management: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> High turnover in leadership Dual titles and roles diminish scholarship Huge administrative staff; Multiple sites Administrative title 	X X n/a n/a	n/a X X X
Organizational Culture: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Existing tensions between CE and academic units Lack of Diversity 	X X	X X
Academic Relationship and Quality: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adult learner Paradigm-concerns of quality due to population served Concerns quality due to admission criteria Faculty in CE settings-concerns of quality due to high use of affiliate faculty 	X n/a n/a	X X X
Institutional Governance: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Faculty attitudes and perception of academic freedom and authority Accessibility & delivery-blurring of DE & CE with academic units Concept of accountability & control Ubiquity of technology results in internal competition with resident education Fiscal Policies-the power or the purse; Parent institution controls use of funds Generating revenue is considered a mission of CE CE continues to be an auxiliary unit Academic capitalism evident Ideas of entrepreneurialism undermined 	X X X X X n/a X X X X	n/a n/a X n/a X n/a X X X

Internal Challenges—Political and Policy

Continuing education as an organization within major university settings is faced with many internal challenges that are rooted in the political and policy interplay inherent to all organizations. Conversely, these political and policy interchange are magnified in the traditions of a socially and historically complex organization like higher education institutions. The following sections discuss the three main areas of internal challenges that emerged during data analysis: (1) continuing education-the organization, (2) academic quality and, (3) institutional governance. I have also arranged the findings under two separate headings relating to public versus private not-for-profit universities, as certain issues and challenges are more profound within one institutional type more than the other.

Continuing Education-The Organization

Public Universities

Within the public universities continuing education is not aligned with any particular academic discipline and often serves as an administrative support unit for all other academic units. Hence, its challenges are varied depending on its strategic position with the institution. The organizational challenges that are relative to program and structure, administration and management, and organizational culture are discussed in the following paragraphs.

Program structure. Results of the study found that within the public universities, program planning is normally carried out at the departmental level, but continuing education looks at program planning at a much higher level. It is more strategic than operational in nature. Notice what The Associate Dean of Continuing Education at Mid-America Public University stated, “You know, the institutions do program planning at the ground level, and we look at overall program planning at a much higher level not the same level of detail.” Further, since the policies

of most universities require continuing education to acquire prior approval from campus and academic units before it can move forward with new programs and courses, administrators view this practice as a challenging issue. The majority of administrators bemoan continuing education's restrictions and its lack of autonomy regarding program planning. The Associate Vice President for Continuing Education at Mid-Atlantic Public University had this to say about this lack of autonomy:

Academic units do not run their own CE operation, CE is responsible for that.

But, and here is the big but, CE is required [to consult] with academic colleges in order to offer any programs, credit and noncredit so CE doesn't have independent academic authority...while we "deliver" those degrees, it would be awarded by an academic college.

Continuing education has the ability to initiate programs, to do early planning, to conduct environmental scan and research regarding new programs. But one challenge is for continuing education to take the necessary steps and expend additional resources to acquire such approval from the parent university before it can implement any programs and or courses. The Dean of Continuing Education at Mid-America Public University explains her position in this manner:

We can initiate just about anything...We can conduct surveys, we can basically do a lot of early planning but at the point where we want to become serious, that is putting something in the catalog, we would want to be sure that the academic department support and approves what we are about to do.

Continuing education is viewed most as a delivery mechanism rather than an academic unit for credit and noncredit programs. The Associate Vice President for Outreach at Mid-Atlantic Public University supports this position regarding continuing education at his institution

and notes the following, “All the programs that are offered by CE and DE are the programs of the academic units. They have full academic authority over the programs, over the faculty; we have authority over the delivery.”

It is a shared belief that this challenge is due to the lack of continuing education’s academic authority over credit and noncredit programs. Yet, some administrators see this as a more strategic predicament of organizational status. Because most continuing education units are not endowed with the name, “school of” or “college of,” they are not entrusted with academic authority. “Well if CE would, on this campus, have ‘school’ or ‘college’ status rather than divisional status, it could theoretically move into offering degrees and reaching out to making the campus more responsive,” retorts the Vice Provost of Mid-America Public University in his discussion of the issue.

Administration and management. These findings identify various challenges that concerns university administrators about the management and administrative functions within continuing education, that they feel might preclude effectiveness and success. The first concern was the frequency of “turnover” in leadership, not only in continuing education itself, but also in the parent institution. Seemingly, when there is no longevity in leadership, continuing education is subject to periods of transitions that are not always effective. The Vice Chancellor and Provost for Extension at the Mid-America Public University indicated this period of transition and asserted that there is “The rise and fall of CE function; depending on the interest of the Chancellor at that institution at the particular time...CE is often left out of place.” Likewise, the Associate Dean for Continuing Education at Mid-America Public University supports this finding when she said, “We have [a] lot of turnover in leadership [name withheld] will be technically, since 1997 the 8th person in leadership. The average is about (1.1/4 per

year)....That's really a big turnover.” Then there is the concern with Presidents and Chancellors length of tenure and how that affects continuing education. The Assistant Vice Chancellor for Extension at South Public University alluded to the changes in leadership in this manner:

I don't know but there is a national data, [did] you know the average university president or chancellor is only on the job for 5 years? [This is the] average length of tenure. So when you have chancellors and VC's constantly coming and going you constantly have to make the case for why, not only [that] you should exist...[The] New president does not have educational background but loves a business model and approach. As they say, 'politics and money, it's the power of the purse.' He brought some changes to the university that indirectly impacted continuing education.

Another challenge to continuing education's success is the concern that continuing education leaders often have dual roles and titles which require varying aspects of complex responsibilities creating an atmosphere where scholarship is diminished. Administrators feel that they are subject to “burnout,” while they are not “esteemed” as professionals and scholars within their field. The Dean for Continuing Education at Great Plains Public University felt that with the varying responsibilities some administrators might suffer from “burnout” and this she perceived as a challenge and stated that, “Challenges to success...so, on the one hand, I don't want my staff to think they are not appreciated. How you continue to refresh your program without suffering from burnout.” She also expressed a concern for the professionals and stated, “Well, I am concerned with the next generation of CE professionals...Now, as we work with new hires who come from different backgrounds how [do] we socialize them?”

Likewise, the Assistant Vice Chancellor at South Public state that, “I have more than one title I am the Assistant Vice Chancellor of extension, Engagement and Economic Development, and Director of the [name withheld] Center for extension and engagement we wear ‘many hats.’ When asked to expound on what he meant by wearing many hats he continued, “...and it is a lot of responsibilities between graduate and undergraduate education so after a while we just put them all together, we put graduate and undergraduate together and we just do them all.”

The Associate Dean of Continuing Education at Mid-America Public University expressed her sentiment about the profession in this manner:

But a national challenge and one that gets a lot attention of when I speak to my peers, highlighting [that] we haven’t yet professionalized the field. When you say to someone, they say I am a teacher, I am doctor, a lawyer, when you talk to someone, a continuing educator, and they never identify themselves that way:

They say I am “in” continuing education we have not really turned ourselves into a full service profession.

Organizational culture. The organizational culture within which continuing education operates does not always produce synergies. Thus, the administrators see challenges of existing tension due to a lack of flexibility on the part of continuing education. The Vice President for Outreach of Mid-America Public University affirms, “I think there is always a tension between CE and the academic units where the academic units see some things and they say ‘we would sort of like to do this on our own,’ rather than work through a CE unit.” Lack of flexibility within the culture of the organization was expressed by many of the interviewees. The Associate Vice President of Continuing Education for Mid-Atlantic University declares:

We are going to be pushing the universities for flexibility for how ‘Ivory Towers’ address flexibility...Those things, those will be major challenges because they sort of attack the academic side of the institution and that is where we have our strongest resistance and the most powerful people to confront us.

Lack of diversity within the parent institutions also affects the culture of continuing education. The Dean of Continuing Education at Great Plains Public University explains this issue:

Well, as you can imagine, diversity is an issue. As you walk around you’ll notice we’re not a very diverse campus and CE is a lot more diverse, but I am from a major city in Illinois, and this is definitely an issue both at student, faculty, and staff levels and the university is trying to work on that because there is not much diversity as I would hope.

Likewise, the Associate Dean for Continuing Education at Mid-America University retorts this diversity challenge as follows, “Our problem is diversity “are we white or what?” She continues, “Germans, Norwegians, again the university is very white...we don’t have a lot of awareness about people other than ourselves...so instead of going to the university, we go to community partners” The Assistant Vice Chancellor at South Public expressed the culture that exists within his institution as follows, “To improve culture of management, most people like what they measure and measure what they like...The ivory tower mentality will have to change.”

Private Universities

Within the private (not-for-profit) universities continuing education is administered through separate schools or divisions. Consequently, the organizational challenges that are

relative to program and structure, administration and management, and organizational culture are dependent upon the nature of the schools and how closely it is aligned with its parent institution. Findings for these organizational challenges within the private universities are presented in the following paragraphs.

Program structure. Within private institutions, most programs and curriculum plans must be negotiated with the university board. This is especially true with respect to credit programs. These restrictions often pose a problem for continuing education. For example, the Associate Dean for Distance Education at Great Plains Private University acknowledges that:

We participate with the academic units to build courses according to their curriculum and using their faculty, and because we don't have our own programs they go through the regular academic process and we don't take them on until they've already done that, already been approved.

When asked whether or not this arrangement only applies to online courses, she replied:

No, everything goes through the academic process what we would do, and this is because we have the background, what we do then, we have some learning curriculum specialists. So we will facilitate curriculum developments. No, it's not [only for distance learning] that would be for the main stream continuing education programs and then distance learning will come out of that. We cannot legislate any of it, but we can call the questions and issue the invitation.

Likewise, when asked to comment on program and curriculum planning, the Vice President of the School of Professional Studies at Great Plains Private University said:

Yes, in a sense the School of Professional Studies (SPS) can make some decisions that are, well, some example would be that the SPS can introduce new courses

and in a sense modify the curriculum of any of the degree program without authorization of other university body. The area where all of the university seeks the approval of the university council is in seeking a new degree or for a significant change in the curriculum.

The Dean of Continuing Education and Associate Vice President at South Private University confirms that there are challenges when the mainstream academics and continuing education programs try to interface. When asked whether or not continuing education can make significant program planning decisions, she said, “No we can only negotiate, and program planning curriculum leads to graduate and undergraduate programs. The council leads to challenges and create difficulties, some of the general problems.”

Another issue is that of “cross disciplinary” decision making. When the continuing education units administer courses from various schools and programs or is under the patronage of multiple disciplines, it is very difficult to control the program structure and approval of academic courses. This following is what the Executive Director (formerly Dean) for Metro College at Mid-America Private University said in relation to this challenge in program structure:

Our degrees are granted by the school of education our courses that are developed go through the curriculum committee just like any other course. So my problem with the courses going through the curriculum committee is that I don’t, I didn’t have my own faculty, or I didn’t until we become a part of the school of education. I am hoping now that that will ease the process of developing new courses; but you can understand my dilemma then. In that, if we are a part of the

school of education and my course is in, let's say, human resources, who is going to approve it? Who is going to, because we cross disciplines?

The Provost for Mid-Atlantic Private stated, "No, they cannot do that they can propose things but they cannot implement without permission obviously they can take the initiative to propose but they cannot simply do that." This statement is a retort to the question of whether or not continuing education can take significant actions regarding curriculum and program planning. When asked if this relates to both credit and noncredit programs she responded as follows, "We do not direct them in what they want to do they can come up with what they want to do but they have to get written permission and see that it does not interfere with any other programs."

Administration and management. The management and administration of schools or divisions of continuing education can be an overwhelming task. There are so many variables to coordinate and manage, for example, a huge administrative staff, multiple sites and others. The Provost who is also the Chair of Academic Affairs for South Private University concurs with this assertion when she alluded to the concepts of decision making in continuing education, "With the CE school it's different because they have a larger staff and different sites across the state. It also has more non-faculty staff than other schools. This is a unique task for the Dean and this is a challenge!"

In a similar manner, the Vice President for the School of Professional Studies at Great Plains Private in his response to the question of institutional political challenges claimed that:

The principal challenge has to do with the fact that the adult program of the university is managed in a significantly different way from the traditional program and that ranges from an array of customer services to the time zones, to

the fact that most of our adult classes are in the evening and weekends. And about 60-70% of our classroom based classes are offered off campus at our extension sites and so the management of leasing and maintenance of the sites is completely different than the traditional program.

According to the Associate Provost for Mid-America Private, the title of the continuing education management makes a big difference in how continuing education is perceived at the university level. He referred to this notion when he addressed the issue of decision making:

When the title of Dean was eroded from her [referring to the former Dean], and now that CE is imbedded in the School of Education the management structure was altered and I am not sure why that was, but this has lowered the visibility of CE and this is the kind of necessary result you get, when you lower visibility you lower its [continuing education's] prestige.

Likewise, the Dean also for Mid-America Private shares this sentiment when she referred to her situation and her title change from Deanship to Executive Director. She perceived this as a demotion and alleged it to be politically disadvantageous to the status of Continuing Education:

I think communication, is one internal stuff, political challenge, and the visibility of my leadership position has diminished since my report has changed, and therefore the visibility of the school, and it always been postulate. But people forget we're here, it is sort of out of sight out of mind. They forget that we're such an important force on the campus, and it's not only my visibility, but the whole department and the students.

It is apparent that having an administrative title such as Vice President or other comparable leadership title elevates the position and visibility for continuing education's

management. This was alluded to by the Vice President for Professional Studies at Great Plains Private in this manner:

I would say we have a bit of a nuance in our structure in addition to the outreach of the three major academic units we also have a level of administrative autonomy which is characterized by my position as a VP and my relationship to the Board of Trustees.

In addition, to the issue of title and administrative role, relative to administrative structure, there is the challenge of managing interdisciplinary programs and having to work in concert with many different disciplines, to coordinate the various areas involved. For example, the Executive Director for Continuing Education (Metro College) at Mid-America Private University asserts:

Because we're more interdisciplinary I have to work through a larger number of people to get anything done. So it not just an up the line structure. It's an across the campus structure to get things done. I am a relationship person. I am not always, but it is not clear cut, it difficult to have to work through all those schools and disciplines. With that structure it doesn't fit anywhere quite clearly.

Related to the issue of managing multiple disciplines is the ideas of dual roles which can lead to "burnout" and lack of adequate scholarship. The Executive Director of Continuing Education at Mid-America Private noted that she also had varying roles and felt she didn't have time to do teaching or research in order to improve her scholarship:

My role is, there are many, when you run a small shop you do a lot of everything.... I do everything from managing the office to managing staff, and I on a number of faculty committee on the campus...I don't teach currently or do

any research, I just don't have the time but I try I like to do some campus wide stuff as well.

The Associate Dean at Great Plains Private University noted an era when her department was being asked to do so much that she and her staff felt overwhelmed and stated the following, "We would just do anything we were asked to do...then two years ago we reorganized our unit because we just about to die because we couldn't keep up we were doing any thing anybody asked." The Vice President at Great Plains Public also remarked about his dual title and stated that, "My title is VP for professional studies and degree programs and strategic alliances... And the strategic alliance part has to do with my work with partnership and that is to work with businesses and industry and other universities in terms of joint ventures an outreach."

Organizational culture. The issues surrounding organizational culture are very profound in the private universities. Culture runs deep within these private institutions depending on their affiliations. In addition, there is a sense of a scholar-practice culture that often leads to conflict and an issue for the continuing education units that have to operate within these cultures. "The traditional curriculum is more theoretical while continuing education is more practical, application base," observes the Dean of Continuing Education for South Private University. Systematically, there is the issue of cultural diversity or lack there of, in that most of these universities are "rich, white and fairly bright," as the Associate Provost at Mid-America Private emphasized in his response to the question regarding political challenges. The Executive Director for Mid-America Private concurs with the Associate Provost when she assumed, "I would say that diversity is a big thing for Mid-America. We are viewed, this institution is viewed as sort of an elitist kind of place" Within these cultures, the role that continuing education has to play is often ambivalent, and so the Associate Provost continued, "I think the biggest challenge

is what role it [continuing education] is going to play in the university, you know, and how visible it will be, how direct it will be with that unit, and it's very murky at this time. When asked to follow up on this assertion and whether or not continuing education is capable of addressing those issues directly he remarked:

I don't think so, the reason I say no because it's a linear process. I think it is so qualitative; it is culturally imbedded that is, there I think, there are multiple causes, multiple effects going on. And I think it also a factor that the university is itself going through its own identity crisis and what it's going to do. Is it going to move forward and become more selective in students academically or will it be holding onto that service orientation it has had for years? And they are on the crosspiece of choosing which one. If it continues to go into the same trajectory, I don't know where the room will be found for CE because prestige will be the dominated factor.

The Dean of Continuing Education at Mid-Atlantic Private University also made reference to this issue of cultural diversity when he declares that, "Our issue here at Mid-Atlantic Private is that we are perceived as 'lilies,' that is, as lily white." Also referring to the issue of culture and management as they relate to the political nuances of private universities, the Vice President for the School of Professional Studies at Great Plains Private emphasized:

So, there are a host of areas where the management of continuing education and adult is significantly different from the traditional program. But the problem we encounter aren't that they are opposed to the adult program, but that they come from a mentality of the traditional program so it's hard for them to really appreciate the needs of the adult learner. It's from the standpoint of

demographics, and culture; I guess two of the major ones [issues] that will be consistent with most of these programs.

Likewise, the culture of the institution can promote or deter biases against continuing education units. In addressing the issue of culture, and according to the Dean of Continuing Education at Mid-Atlantic Private, “The provost encourages cross school collaboration, interaction and discussion.” When asked to expound on this statement he said, “The structure reinforces that and the culture reinforces that.” He further illustrated his claim in saying that:

Something else, oh! at the end of the day no matter how you do this the bias is still there about 1/3 of people the campus is oblivious to what is going on elsewhere and that includes CE, about 1/3 will never be convinced and about 1/3 are supported of what you do. It varies from place to place, but it’s somewhere in that neighborhood that’s what I mean about ‘the culture.’

The Associate Provost at Mid-America Private summarized this issue of management and administration from a cultural perspective and emphasized, in the following statement, the difficulties involved in trying to be effective in such a traditionally riddled culture:

I think, for us, it’s so cultural and context specific, it is just so. In this context, a school that has gained a certain amount of academic reputation and would like to have a lot more, a school [the university] that is struggling to define what it’s going to be in the future; all departments and programs are a need because they don’t know where they are going to fall in the new [societal] order, and we have a new president. So, the contexts of CE here makes it more difficult I think for those really trying to work in the area because they don’t get direct signals, there

is not much intentionality and about what their role is and, man, that's hard; and I don't think that that intentionality is coming soon.

Academic Relationship and Quality

The concept of quality in continuing education is still elusive for administrators. Concerns of achieving and maintaining quality and an effective academic relationship are among the greatest challenges perceived by continuing education administrators. This section highlights the issues surrounding academic quality and an effective relationship and the findings are summarized under three main themes: (1) The adult learner paradigm, (2) faculty in private continuing education settings, and (3) program policy and quality. Nevertheless, not all of the above issues are of equal concern in both public and private institutions. The differences are demarcated in the separate sections indicated for public and private universities.

Public Universities

Of the three main areas of concerns with respect to academic quality, the two which are most profound are: The adult learner paradigm, and academic program policy. Therefore, findings related to these two issues are presented below.

The adult learner paradigm. Nontraditional students most often refer to those adult learners, working students, who are pursuing credit as well as noncredit programs on a university campus and who are older than the typical 18-22 year-old students. These nontraditional learners do not live on campus while seeking their degrees. In this study nontraditional sometimes refers to students who are younger than 18 years old and are pursuing various noncredit programs on a university campus. Consequently, the issue of quality is confounded when there are nontraditional, adult learners, who attempt to pursue a degree via access through continuing education programs. This shift towards the 'adult learner' is posing a big challenge for

continuing education. The Dean of Continuing Education at Great Plains Public University describes this phenomenon as, “while we’re serving a non-traditional population, were trying to do so within the context of a research university. So we’re very mindful that it is necessary, but not sufficient to serve a nontraditional population.”

There is the challenge of providing an ‘academic home’ for part-time working adults, and for them to be comfortable within such a culture. The notion here is that part-time working adults cannot effectively focus on the quality of their educational experience and their degree when they do not have an “academic” home. For example, the Associate Vice President for Outreach at South Public University explains that, “Enrollments in CE here have focused on holding steady the resident students who take our courses and focusing on the adult students who take our courses since we have a big campus...we have not focused so much on growth but on quality.” The Associate Vice Chancellor for Extension and Engagement at Mid-America Public University expressed his concerns about an academic home for part-time adult degree seekers when he said, “Once you have part-time degrees you must have some an organization some place on campus you just [students] can’t be running from one college on campus to the other you’ve got to have some kind of an academic home.”

Similarly, the Vice Provost for Extension at Mid-America Public expressed this issue relating it to being unsuccessful in this area when he stated:

We have been less successful on the credit side our programming for the adult student in this state has struggled for a couple reasons... And the problem that we run into goes back a decade since about 1995, we have actually seen a roll back, a decline in the number of adults taking credit programs and courses contrary to every trend information I have seen about adults, but that is the case and part of it

has to do with institutions on the whole concentrating on the more traditional students.

The Associate Vice President for Continuing Education at Mid-Atlantic Public relates to this paradigm shift towards the adult learner in a more subtle tone when he confirmed that, “In the past we had only a mild interest in pursuing adult learner but we have ‘ratcheted’ that up some in a major way.” The Assistant Vice Chancellor for extension at South University summarizes this challenge succinctly when he expressed his concerns about the issue, “Political dynamics impact organizational goals, but it does not limit quality and access to nontraditional students. There is a concern for adult students whether or not they will be taken care of like when they were facilitated by CE” When probed to expound on his observations he explained the following:

The problem is the credit students who are nontraditional will now be served through their separate college. I am concerned if the focus will be a diluted one...focus on their degrees, no telling if they can. Will the colleges be willing to work with them? Then there are those who do not necessarily need degrees but work force development or to enhance life skills. What will happen there?

Finally, there is also the challenge of “defining” what it means to be nontraditional versus what it means to be an adult learner. Are these interchangeable and or synonymous terms? The Vice Provost for Extension at Mid-America Public explicates saying, “adult learners, the nontraditional student, although the use of that term is becoming more problematic all the time, but that’s really the key point we are to be their advocates for programming both credit and noncredit.” The Associate Dean also shared her assessment of the issue of defining what it means to be nontraditional when she declared, “we need support to establish relationship with system

offices...defining what it means to be a nontraditional system it's not just 18-24; age is not a defining factor, you could be 20 and non-tradition."

Program policy and quality. While continuing education primarily serves as a conduit for credit and noncredit programs, it is the academic departments that offer the degrees. This challenge relates to the quality of programs that are offered through continuing education as the perception of lower quality is often an issue when it relates to nontraditional and adult learners. Consequently, the program policies are somewhat different because of the nature of continuing education. "Yes we have two fundamental administrative policies that establish the responsibility of CE and DE in working with the academic unit so it's very policy drive," explains the Associate Vice President of Outreach at Mid-Atlantic University. The Dean of Continuing Education at Great Plains Public observed, "What is challenging is that we are engaged in some things that are slightly different from main campus and some of it has to do with the population we serve," When asked to expound on this remark, she continues to explain her logic of the program guidelines saying that:

For example, it's also our role and mission to serve nontraditional students. The campus while they're not opposed to that, it is not their role and mission; they are principally serving degree students. Some principles that pertain, are the same, that is, to day we're involved in graduate and undergraduate education and so if we offer, again, using accounting 1010 [an accounting course], it has to say, follow the same guidelines as the regular course offered on main campus. The credit that is offered to the person coming in through the CE program is the same credit as the regular so in that respect it shows up on the same transcripts and everything...but we are concerned about quality...So the academic department

must provide oversight....we want students to capture what is special about a university experience and making that available in a way that doesn't compromise on the quality.

In the public universities, academic credits that lead to degrees are not distinguished between resident education and those delivered via continuing education. The Associate Vice President for Continuing Education at Mid-Atlantic Public expounded on this policy:

How can I say this? Mid-Atlantic Public works in a system in which a credit is a credit, so regardless of how a course is delivered, whether it's through resident education, or through the Campus or CE in a remote location... all credits count the same and no credits are distinguished on the transcript in how they are delivered. Those degrees have to be approved and it's awarded by a college but delivered through one of our systems.

The challenge is to maintain the integrity, quality of the education, while using the university's faculty. Hence, continuing education must follow university guidelines and policy regarding all programs but more so in credit than noncredit programs. Academic units are conduits for continuing education. The Associate Vice President for Outreach at Mid-Atlantic Public in describing this program-quality challenge declares:

"The academic units, they have full academic authority over the programs, over the faculty, we have authority over the delivery. Anytime there is a new program proposed for the university whether it is for or by the resident instruction or for CE there are questions asked For example, is there evidence that it can be sustained? Is there faculty capacity to teach it or access to faculty who can teach it? Do we need to hire faculty? Is there a market of faculty out there, a pool to

draw on? Can we in-fact reach the market with our marketing material? Can the program be managed with quality? There is less of a concern about this in resident instruction than it is for us.

The Provost and Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs at Mid-America Public made it clear that the onus is on the academic units to ascertain this quality. So he alluded to this notion of academic quality very cynically, “Well, those institutions have been given the responsibility for quality control that’s what it amounts to, it’s their reputation, and their faculty...they have to make that kind of assessment.”

In addition, responses on the subject of decision making for academic quality, the Assistant Vice Chancellor at South University explains:

CE is in the education business first and foremost, but education takes different faces and represents academic integrity, quality, of the university. But because we are self-supporting there is the issue of philosophy vs. reality compounded by management decisions, we want to do right by all...Program planning and curriculum, theoretically yes, we can make certain decisions for noncredit because it’s not as structured. But for credit, operationally we do it our self, but we’re expected to maintain academically institutional branding, quality of South State University.

He emphasized his prior statement by adding that, “CE has a certain level of control and latitude and the administration don’t try to manage day to day, but guidelines are fully articulated to South State University’s branding need for quality.” Likewise, the Associate Dean for continuing education for Mid-America Public also affirms the limited ability to make certain decisions relative to academic programs, “Oh, yes we can make some decisions, especially in

noncredit, but in credit, we have to follow absolutely university governance guidelines.” When asked to clarify and confirm this statement she declares, “Right and actually we don’t do any credit, our campus [academic] partners do. And all of that is campus credit we are merely a funding mechanism. But and our people [in CE] might coordinate it and hire the faculty but our faculty have to be approved by campus.”

Finally, the Assistant Vice Chancellor for Extension and Engagement at South Public University summarized this apprehension that continuing education can guarantee quality programs when he declared:

We are so busy with what we do that we do not take the time to examine things and there are always better ways to do something...like program audits. We need to get out of our comfort zone and find means, methods, and process; pursue efficiencies and effectiveness technical improvement because the quality might not be as good as it can be.

Private Universities

For private universities, the challenges on academic relationship focus on three main themes: (1) The adult learner paradigm, (2) faculty in private continuing education settings, and (3) program policy and quality. These themes interrelate to form a convergence of political challenge for continuing education.

The adult learner paradigm. Continuing education in the private universities caters primarily to adult, nontraditional, students and this paradigm alters the academic relationship between continuing education and the parent institution. For one thing, their admission criteria are often disparaged more than are the traditional 18-22 year old students. Nevertheless, the following is what the Dean of the School of Continuing Studies (SCS) at Mid-Atlantic Private

said in response to this political issue, “Our broader mission is to serve the larger community and specifically the working adult population that’s really our focus.” He asserts that admission criteria based on the traditional university policies is not conducive to continuing education students. “Students at the traditional undergraduate admission has 1300 SAT score. We at continuing education are an open admission school, we don’t have a 1300 SAT score.”

He continued to bemoan the apparent elusive stance that the parent institution takes with respect to adult learners and with a passionate gesture and much vehemence he made the following remarks:

We serve students who might not have otherwise been able to come to Mid-Atlantic Private. You know, our standard line is: Don’t look at us [the students] on the way in we’ve flunk out more than what (students) get through the (traditional) programs. Take a look at our students on the way out; that’s what matters, what happens from the time they came in to the time they leave. That’s the relevant variable and again, my gig is always: You [traditional] take your best five and I’ll [CE] take my best five and you name the competition, and as long as it not jogging or something that a twenty two year can do, we are going to kick butts, because these are working adults running a business; running a family; running household; running a community service activity and going to school for 5, 6, 7, or 8 years of their lives, they are amazing, and if they can get through that and produce at the levels we expect them to then we know that they are pretty special.

Similarly, the Provost of Mid-Atlantic University shared her admiration for the adult students who persevered and who were relentless in pursuing their degrees under less than ideal

situations. She began her comments with this question directed at me, “you know how long it takes a student to finish a degree?” I remarked that I was not certain, but would think it took a longer time than average. She then exclaimed, “18 years!” When asked if this was because they are pursuing one course at a time given their part-time status, she remarked:

When I came to the Mid-Atlantic University I was learning about the SCS so I asked the Dean how long it will take somebody to finish a degree if they take one course at a time and he said “18 years” and I said, “no body really does that,” and he said “oh yeah!” and every graduation we have a bunch of people who have persisted that long going to school in the evening, after work and then those people (non-traditional) are an inspiration to all of us!

The Vice President of the School of Professional Studies at Great Plains Private echoes the sentiments of the Dean at Mid-Atlantic Private, and shared his opinion about the state of continuing education within the liberal arts environment.

A lot of times universities have decided they want to predominately serve and put their resources into the younger adults, and not the older adults. I do not know of a case where the older adult in the long run have won and I don’t think it should be put into a win-lose battle but often times it is.

This statement in an excerpt from his response to the question of whether or not he would like to share any other thoughts about continuing education. Likewise, the Dean of Continuing Education at South Private University laments the academic position related to the adult learner. This is the way she avows the thread of continuing education relative to the adult learner, “Academic research delivers courses via the university and CE delivers to our own population;

the reset of the university does not address access. Our curriculum and program application is threaded with Androgogy, throughout curriculum.”

Faculty in continuing education settings. Faculty in private continuing education settings is also an issue of concern for administrators. Within most of these private institutions, faculty are predominantly ‘affiliates’ or commonly referred to as adjuncts who are hired on an as needed basis. The Vice President for the School of Professional Studies at Great Plains Private supports this allegation when he said, “The fact is that our labor costs are less, in comparison to other traditional colleges, because we use a high number, a lot of adjunct faculty which we refer to as ‘affiliate’ faculty.”

This was what the Executive Director of Continuing Education at Mid-America Private said about faculty in her department, “We have faculty who can teach at the quality, well credentialed faculty, I should say all of that is the same... but I do have to consider whether I can get adjuncts from the community who are well qualified to teach for, and willing to do what I need for the pay we can give them.”

In response to a direct question about political challenges and issues the Dean of the School of Continuing Education at South Private University counter as follows:

Ok, the first is the standard complaints of any adult entity or non-credit programs by many of other schools have debt. By the way, we have, this is important to know that CE here prides themselves on having full time faculty (FTF) this is very unusual. Most CE’s adult programs do not. Our FTF are well published, some more than others. Some are an ace of strength; experienced in applications of education, in various disciplines. They have the intellectual piece!

When asked to expound on this issue and the assertions regarding full-time versus part-time faculty, she remarked very cynically:

Do you understand? If you knew how to do something [if one has practical knowledge] you are considered less intellectual. This is the biggest stumbling block we face internally. The implication here is that you cannot be intellectual and have practical know how... at the same time this is how CE Faculty is often perceived because they are usually adjunct from the working world.

Program policy and quality. This issue of faculty is significantly tied to the policy issue of quality and to the perception of less quality in the curriculum within private institutions' continuing education divisions. Hence, it is important for administrators to recruit high quality faculty who are both professionally or academically qualified, regardless of their academic title or status. According to Dean of the School of Continuing Education at South Private University continuing education needs to:

...recruit people out in the field face to face staff who are definitive passionate cognizant about population we serve and about quality. This relates to faculty, how they are perceived. It is important about perception; they could be experts in the field, and they could be adjuncts for a while or teach elsewhere...once they come to the university, it is as though their intelligence drops.

She is referring directly to the way adjuncts are portrayed and perceived by some full time faculty who believe that adjuncts are less knowledgeable than full-time faculty. She believes that adjuncts need not be perceived as less intelligent if they are practicing professionals.

This following comment depicts the view of the Dean of the School of Continuing Studies at Mid-Atlantic Private. He vehemently expressed his concerns about this issue of quality and referred to it as a political issue that needs to be addressed. That it is a balancing act between the financial policies and the policy regarding program quality:

Well, the greatest internal challenge always has to do with quality and generally balancing the need to be self-supporting with the need to do quality stuff [programs]. It's easier to do quality if you don't need to worry about the cash. It's easy to make money selling education if you don't need to worry about quality. So the biggest challenge, the overarching challenge, is to do both. Politically, what that translates into is a lack of understanding by the rest of the campus, the different quality indicators effected by higher education generally has issues with this.

Consequently, the indicators, referred to above, are varied and relate to courses, affiliate faculty, curriculum planning, and full-time faculty attitudes, which the Provost for Mid-Atlantic Private focused on in her response to the direct questions about political and policy issues and challenges:

Well internally, I think the problem with all CE programs includes the perception that the courses and degree are of lesser quality than full time programs because, because, many of the professors are working professionals. The quality of the instruction can be more variable than a close-nit, tenured, faculty that is typical of a parent institution where people are held to high standards for tenure and promotion.

As can be surmised, this Provost agrees with the contention of the Dean at South Private in concluding that the perception of lesser quality is tied to the issue of affiliate faculty, or working professionals who typically teach courses in continuing education settings. Moreover, she also observed and agreed with the Dean at Mid-Atlantic Private that quality is a political-policy issue directly tied to the constraints of money, and to the attitudes of full-time faculty. Thus, she continued her thoughts as follows:

At times the perception is that the quality of instruction is not as important as the generation of revenue. So, as long as people are coming in and taking the courses getting the credit and paying the tuition there maybe less monitoring of the quality. All this is fed into the general perception of higher education, in continuing education. I think that is unfair because, certainly, at this institution, I think the regular quality of our education is outstanding, but it is a perception on the part of the full-time faculty that it's [continuing education curriculum] not as hard, not as good, and sometimes even out of sync.

Likewise, the Vice President for the School of Professional Studies recounted the following indicators relative to admission policies, aptitude scores, and faculty. He subsequently connections them to the issue of quality when he said the following:

What has happened, from a larger picture, is that most colleges have used their quality system based on their "inputs," inputs of students based on higher SAT or ACT scores, inputs of Faculty based on PhDs as a benchmark for quality and they have not focused on "throughput" or outcomes. But the adult programs generally have focused, on more, on outcomes as well as the throughout and that's a major cultural change in the last days.

In addition, the Provost, chair for Academic Affairs at South Private, also contended that often continuing education curriculum and programs are not valued for quality, “I think that the thing we need to improve is the relationship between CE and similar departments on main campus. There is not enough communication and discussion about courses at off site locations...they are not valued for quality, I believe so.” Again, the Dean of the School of Continuing Studies also at Mid-Atlantic Private argued that full-time faculty are revered in higher education while affiliate faculty are derided. However, the irony is that there is the expectation is to ‘do quality’ with a majority of adjuncts teaching in continuing education, and it seems that the arrangement is not an analogous policy. His statement succinctly recapitulates this challenge regarding faculty and program quality:

Full-time faculty are revered in higher education. I have 8 or 9, and 250 adjuncts.

How can you possibly be doing quality if you’re teaching by adjunct faculty? If you go down the list, all of the quality indicators are different. My standard line on adjuncts: It not that those adjuncts are not intrinsically good or intrinsically bad, I’ve been an adjunct; I’m a great teacher; it has nothing to do with being an adjunct. It has to do with how you recruit them, how you orient them, it has to do with how you assess them; how you develop them while they are here and how you engage them and involve them in the life of the school. You do all of those things and you get exceptional instructional performance, plus you get the benefit of someone who is doing by day what they do by night. So, but that’s a hard sell, it much easier to be ignorant and sit over there [main campus] and just say, how do you possibly do anything with a bunch of adjuncts? It’s the same with the admissions criteria!

Institutional Governance

The patterns of institutional governance in higher education institutions have for centuries been shaped by an academic structure whereby faculty and administrators collaborate to manage or govern, as it were, the administration, operations, and strategic plans of the university. This section underscores the patterns of institutional governance and relating challenges spawned by continuing education's attempt to be contemporary within such a historically traditional higher system. Those challenges are categorized under three main themes. The first is regarding shared governance, and faculty attitudes; second is accessibility and delivery approach; and third the issue of fiscal policies, and the entrepreneurial myths. I will first focus on those challenges within the public sphere followed by those in the private universities.

Public Universities

Public universities are facing unprecedented challenges, real and perceived, that garner attention and criticism both from continuing education administrators, as well as, ironically, higher education administrators. In the following paragraphs I highlight the challenges as perceived by those administrators.

Faculty attitudes and shared governance. As noted above, one of the challenges for continuing education in the public arena is that it does not have its own faculty, but has program administrators and directors who have responsibilities for the delivery of various programs that are 'technically' controlled by academic units and their faculty. The Dean for the Division of Continuing Education at Great Plains University acknowledged this premise when she said, "In terms of government structure, again, [and we have an organization chart for you] but we have different program managers and directors who have responsibility for different programs they work in concert with the faculty." This configuration often leads to negative faculty attitudes and

to doubts of a commitment to shared governance between continuing education administration and the parent university. This is how the Associate Vice President for Outreach at Mid-Atlantic University describes this relationship, “There’s constant negotiation and it has a lot to do with how faculty perceive their academic freedom and how we see our responsibility to the fact they can deliver high quality program so that’s always a tension... it a shared environment but they have all the academic authority.”

The Associate Vice President for the Division of Continuing Education spoke about faculty attitude and perception in relation to shared governance and commitment to continuing education in this fashion, “The institution as a whole, yes; now there are differences within in that the senior administration of this university is very committed. Now within the faculty you have much, well, there are many differences about that.” When prompted to expound on this statement he said:

Mid-Atlantic is first and foremost a research university. Faculty members are tenured and promoted on the basis of their research capabilities and publications.

As a result, what we do in CE is of secondary interest and of secondary importance. Some have a personal interest in pursuing work with CE but most faculty do not. But we constantly try to increase the number of faculty who want to work with continuing education.

This faculty approach might be as a result of the university’s position on shared governance, or lack there of. Referring to the question of whether or not there is shared governance between continuing education and the parent organization, the Vice Chancellor and Provost of Extension for Mid-America Public asserts:

...not really, let me explain that. We are primarily involved in the coordination and planning of budget; the governing piece in decisions, of what or who actually teaches and what is taught content wide, those take place at the campus [referring to the main campus] and so we don't really have lots of involvement in that.

Likewise, the Associate Vice President of Continuing Education at Mid-Atlantic Public responded to this issue of shared governance when he maintained that, "I would say the power relationships are always the same, but CE has less leverage than the academic world it's not a level playing field....but we get used to it." Along this trajectory, and based on this notion, of the possibility of an 'un-level playing field,' the Associate Vice Chancellor for Extension at South Public University alleged that shared governance might be elusive if there isn't equal emphasis and equity on continuing education by those who are in charge, those who are at the top. This is how he describes his point:

This [shared governance] is driven by pressures of the public for accessibility.

They have vice chancellors or assistant chancellors that head up the continuing education divisions. These dual titles of research and outreach may not have equal emphasis on the outreach government advisory board...might not be localizing to governance stature within the university, but deans and board of trustees will grant equity and governance I believe.

Furthermore, it seems that it is not conclusive whether or not higher education and continuing education administrators are equally convinced of their commitment to shared governance or whether or not the concept is clearly understood in such dual arrangements of administrative role versus an academic liaison role that continuing education plays. In an attempt

to clarify this dual position, the Vice Chancellor and Provost at Mid-America Public University explained:

Well, we are certainly committed to shared governance in lots of ways but, I don't, know for sure in other ways. Our faculty in CE are actually the institutional faculty so the governance rules that applies here institutionally, are at each of those institutions, not at this level. Does that make sense? [Asking if what he meant was clearly understood]

Accessibility and delivery approach. Providing new avenues of accessibility for students are posing unprecedented challenges for university administration and governing boards. But distance education and distance learning are increasing being regarded as the emerging conduit to accessing a university education. However, recently there has been a blurring of distance education and distance learning, as was originally accessible through continuing education units, and resident education. This new development has resulted in the need for constant revisions of policy within universities, and is now posing a huge challenge for continuing education. The Associate Vice President for Outreach at Mid-Atlantic University made this declaration concerning the seemingly unfair stance in governing policies regarding accessibility and delivery:

From a policy perspective we've started to see how, as technology becomes more ubiquitous in resident instruction, on-line education is becoming ubiquitous.

We're starting to see a blurring of distance education and resident instruction, and the academic units want to invite other students into their resident courses so that requires a sort of policy reinforcement.

When asked to expound on the issue regarding this blending of resident and continuing education he explains by saying, “A policy that basically says to academic units that the [name withheld] continuing education campus is the one that will serve on-line students, so we have to keep reinforcing that policy.”

There is the perception that the university partners are using the ubiquity of technology to compete within the system. Continuing education and higher education administrators both reason that there is internal competition with resident education for student accessibility and that this situation affects the governance relationship. The following is the response to the question about political and governance challenges from the Associate Vice Chancellor for Extension and Engagement at South Public “Well, it is the way we interrelate even with technology which should help us cooperate, there is, we compete even within the university.” And after what seemed like a long period of reflection he whispered, “Partners should not compete but should cooperate.” He then added this statement, “We need to determine who should be the leader; all cannot lead.”

In addition, the Vice Chancellor and Provost for Mid-America Public University expounded on this concern for competition versus partnering when he stated:

So you have extension as a separate institution it does no CE programming but it has responsibilities for coordinating all the CE activities that are conducted by the other institution, and the way to think about it is that all the content area, the instructions etc. all of that comes from the campuses. But our responsibility is to make sure that there are ongoing CE activities, that they do not compete with each other and where possible they in fact collaborate with each other. I think that's probably the best way to look at it. If you go on the web page you might want to

look at the academic series particularly series 5 and those are the policies that spell out how all of this is supposed to work.

Similarly, the Associate Vice President for Continuing Education at Mid-Atlantic Public added this thought when he was asked if he would like to share anything different that was not previously addressed, “Maybe I would say just one other thing, I think DE and CE is delivery but one and the same we have not particularly been interested in partnering in this area but we need to partner with other units.” He is insinuating that there is not much partnering in this area of distance education and that the university is not capitalizing on this mode of delivery, to the detriment of the institutions.

A second challenge and one that is perceived as politically aligned with the issue of access and delivery and that is associated with what the Vice President said above, is the belief that the university as a whole is not taking advantage of distance education in an effective manner. This is how the Dean for Continuing Education for Great Plains Public directly responded the question on institutional political challenges facing continuing education:

Yes one thing is in the area of Distance education. A second might be in the area of degree completion both of which are politically sensitive.this campus views itself as a residential campus so the idea is you come to the university and you have the ‘Great Plains’ experience...and for some students that’s a positive experiences but there can be instance when they don’t want to come and they have reasons to finish their degree other ways than coming to campus. This is something that this campus hasn’t yet grappled with and that we want to help them deal with, the idea of letting students finish a BA degree via distance education.

In response to the same direct question about political challenges, the Vice Provost for Extended Studies at Mid-America Public echoed the same sentiments when he affirms:

I am not sure how to express this but there are some things: One is a more coordinated approach to the use of distance education, and two... greater commitment to offer part time degree to part-time students... We're already responsive to professional graduate student in particularly in the professional areas such as law and education, but reaching out to undergraduate students to bring about greater BA completion is something that we hope in the future this division will be able to do.

Continuing with this trajectory, the Vice Chancellor and Provost at Mid-America University expressed, as a challenge, the need for improvement in this area of distance education, "Particularly in distance education (DE) area it not about quality but about the coordinating of DE area and technology. I don't believe we are positioning ourselves to take advantage of DE." In addition, the Provost and Executive Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs at Great Plains Public also agreed with the Vice Chancellor of Mid-America University on this point when he responded to the same question in this manner:

Well, I think the, and we've made a conscious decision about this, and I see a need for enhancing our distance education. We do some distance learning but not like other places and we do some programs through distance learning but we are very careful, and we need to reexamine if we should keep it where it is or if it's time to increase offerings through distance learning.

Fiscal policy and entrepreneurialism. The fiscal policy of a university is severely tied to its governing structure, and as one university administrator puts it—"the power of the purse." In

his own words the Assistant Vice Chancellor of Extension at South Public University believed that politics and money are what drives the governing structure of the institution, “Politics and money, it’s the power of the purse,” he believed. This fiscal policy that is tied to continuing education is a major concern for university administrators, as continuing education depends primarily on external sources of funds to realize the majority of its budget expenditures.

According to the Dean of Continuing Education at Great Plains University her continuing education unit was state supported but became entirely self-supporting, “You can read about our history but we were established in 1911 so we are a very old unit and we received state funding up until the 1960s and then at that point we became self-supporting.”

This policy is not unique to Great Plains University but is rooted in the governance structure of all the Public Universities in this study. Some are very complex revenue centers, others are cost centers, and still others are both revenue and cost centers—so they are essentially “profit centers.” These various designs all pose relative challenges in one aspect or the other. Here follows some examples of the policies as offered by the informants. For example, at Mid-America Public, the fiscal policy and relationship between continuing education and the university is described by the Vice Provost Chancellor for extended Programs as follows:

In terms of CE itself the board of regents of the system decided what amount of state support goes into the universities and in case of CE we have about 1/5 [20%] of our support at the present time from the state but it decreases every year. As costs go up there is no additional state money everything has to be generated by program revenue... we operate under the standard financial policies of the University of ‘Mid-America’ systems and we neither have any more flexibility or restriction than any other school or college.

“I am trying to be diplomatic here!” The Vice Provost and Chancellor for extended Programs said cynically referring to his previous statement.

In this particular state, funds are given to continuing education which is quite unique and opposed to what other institutions have described, and that I have alluded to in subsequent paragraphs. He further explains the uniqueness that surrounds this institution’s and continuing education’s budget design as an anomaly:

We are actually the central office, but the budget gets distributed to the other schools and colleges for their CE activities... the entire CE budget is coordinated and allocated out by a system wide extension and not by the individual campuses... But this state keeps CE as a separate allocation in the state budget. It’s not ‘mixed in’ with regular undergraduate and graduate education and that makes it an anomaly in the U.S.

In addition, the Provost and Vice Chancellor for Extension at Mid-America Public also concurs with the Vice Provost above but he highlights extension’s responsibilities and oversight of the funds received from the state government in this satirical way:

Because it’s an institutional process as I mentioned so we have direct fiscal control over those funds and use of those funds and we monitor those on an ongoing basis. So in one sense we are an independent agent in terms of funding support for the CE functions across the institutions although having said that we are also 70% program management something along that order, so we are pretty dependent on program revenues to support our programs.

When asked if continuing education at Mid-America is required to return any portion of surplus revenues generated to the central budget he replied in a vague manner:

No, ok, we are a separate institution in a sense and even in extension that component, excess revenue, there might be some discussion about some pieces of it being pulled into our central administration but in practice, that seldom happens. So that too might be unusual! [Referring to the alleged anomaly described above.] They have generated surplus revenues; the surplus generated at the institutions stays at those institutions with a requirement that it be reinvested in support of the extension function at the institution that is a core policy.

Similarly, the Dean for Great Plains University gave details about her budget structure and fiscal policy and remarked that:

All these program managers meet and they need to present their individual budget... summer school [continuing education administers summer school at this university] is state funded and we have to keep these budgets separate because it's [summer term] like the fall and spring. We are mainly helping the campus plan the on-campus activities. But essentially we have about an allocation of \$2 million from the general fund pool that we can use to fund salaries. We have budget goals we try to meet those budget and we have profit sharing back to the school.

When asked to expound on this profit sharing policy and whether or not it applies to both continuing education and summer session she said, "Yes and there is a formula for summer school: 60% of the [net profits] go to the schools and colleges, 20% to the provost, 10% to the chancellor, and 10% back to continuing education." As can already be surmised, then the complexities of these arrangements are profound, and they do pose additional challenges for the continuing education units. "In the case of CE, each individual program, and we have eleven; a

lot of programs, and we have different arrangement depending on the program,” the Dean at Great Plains University continued.

The Provost and Executive Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs also at Great Plains added his thoughts to this fiscal policy and arrangements. He describes continuing education as an “auxiliary unit” and consequently budget policies are based on this auxiliary status:

CE is considered an auxiliary to the university which means that there are no state funds that go into its budget... so as far as policy goes even though CE is an auxiliary and self, generates its own funds, CE is still under the campus as far as budget request policies.... So as I said none, well let’s say the university doesn’t fund the CE. I shouldn’t say 100%, as an auxiliary, in this state, CE can receive no more than 10% of its funding from the university and I doubt that we even put in 10%. We put in some for summer school and for outreach but overall, I think its fair the university puts in less than 10% of the budget for continuing education. They return excess to my office.

The Associate Vice President for Continuing Education at Mid-Atlantic University also alluded to the revenue-cost center design and noted that:

Our budget is about \$85 million. We receive about \$9 million from the university. All the rest, approximately \$75 million we have to generate. It comes from tuition and fees, grants, and contracts. The money the university provides is ‘used for infrastructure.’ Tuition and fees covers the rest of cost and provide us with funds to do some new things. We also have what is called revenue sharing arrangements. We share revenue back with the colleges and depending on the

amount, it's a mixed system of revenue sharing; gross, not net for given set of programs, but for conferences is still net revenue sharing.

What is interesting to note is the fact that the contributions that continuing education receives from most of these 'central budgets' are to be used either for undergraduate students, as in the case of Great Plains summer term or for "infrastructure" as the Vice President above describes it. But infrastructure denotes different things to different administrators. Notice how the Associate Vice President for Outreach at the same university—Mid-Atlantic Public depicts this fiscal arrangement and how he explains this revenue sharing agreement below:

We are also a cost recovery unit so we are able to charge tuition select tuition and use that tuition to pay our cost and then we share that revenue with the academic units that have generated the programs. We pay the faculty who are teaching in these programs or working the conferences etc we fund all of the cost related to design and marketing for those programs, and delivery of the programs and we use the revenues to pay all of our cost and plus money to go back to our campus.

That is an important part of the definition of our function.

When asked whether or not continuing education received any central support he replies in a manner that collaborates with the response from the Vice President for Continuing education but he elaborates on the issue of central funds for undergraduate students:

We do have some central funds and those funds derived largely from the fact that we here locally at university CE serves a large portion of resident instruction students who want to take a [CE-administered] class because it's in the evening instead of the day time. Those students are allowed to come into our classes without paying tuition to us and in turn the university provides to us an annual

subsidy. For the most part, our fiscal relationship is that we are a stand-alone financial cost center we are expected to generate revenue to fund our cost and share with our academic units.

He further detailed the fiscal policy that allows continuing education to operate in this mode. Moreover, he expanded on the issues of revenue sharing, and when asked to describe the fiscal policy that governed the fiscal arrangements he clarified this position in stating that:

Two years ago we adopted a new revenue policy which is a revenue sharing policy which we called net revenue sharing. After we covered our cost we'd share the left over with the academic units. In two of the academic units today we operate on gross revenue sharing model units which when a student enrolls the academic unit gets a share of that tuition, so we're doing things like that.

The issue of fiscal policy and governance leads to the challenge of negative nuances and perceptions related to continuing education being solely a revenue generating unit for universities. However, the findings suggest that what is undermined, is this process and outcome of institutional entrepreneurialism—of continuing education's autonomy to act like an enterprise—executing innovative programs that lead to the generation and retention of profits, taking the necessary risks, plus showing dynamism based on self-reliant responses to changes. Here is what the Vice Chancellor and Provost for extension at Mid-America Public had to say about this perception of lack autonomy as it relates to institution fiscal policy:

Policy wide, I think that the fact that we are a separate division has been a blessing and a curse at times. The blessing side of it is, [that we have] specific attention and resources to support the function. The curse part of it is, not every body, well, often times we are looked upon as a resource that the institution ought

to have and doesn't have greater control over. And that premise is, that the chancellor, they would like to have some of the funds that we use for CE to support other initiatives and we resist that and that causes some flack inside the system sometimes

For example, should there be a disaster, continuing education is not necessarily solely responsible for this risk according to the Dean of Great Plains University, "If there is a disaster, the Provost for Academic Affairs would be ultimately responsible. We need to understand and use discretion if we had a disaster or short fall." This statement is in reference to the question of who is at fault in instances where there is a budget shortfall. "Right now we provide about \$300k for outreach for faculty to travel around the state and extend their scholarship, but if there is a disaster that might be the first to go," she continued. In this Great Plains state, the Commission on Higher Education determines how much of the revenues generated by continuing education are kept in reserves. "We need to keep 15% of projected revenues as a reserve, but we're not a cash cow for this university," the Dean said.

Likewise, at the Mid-America State University, the legislature provides the institution with general program revenue (GPR) and continuing education is responsible to oversee the budget of this university's extension function. Consequently, the legislature dictates how this money is to be used. "We are merely a funding mechanism...we distribute out to our campuses. Well...they want us to watch over that the money...it is air-marked specifically for the extension function we watch that money. We need to manage the 20% carryover," says the Associate Dean for Continuing Education at Mid-America Public.

Similarly, the Vice President for Continuing Education at Mid-Atlantic Public alluded to the lack of flexibility to act autonomously with regards to fiscal policy, in saying that,

“Occasionally, the university will allow us some flexibility to do something special and different so in general we are governed by the fiscal constraint policy the university places on us.” In his analysis of the fiscal policy at South Public the Assistant Vice Chancellor for Extension and Engagement summarizes this arrangement in this manner:

We are 5% is funded. It is a fixed controlled budget annually. This 5% Controlled budget is fixed for support of key leadership staff positions. 95% must be generated on our own. No surplus is required, no overhead [cost] is paid to the university or state... there is some flexibility. For the fixed grants (the 5%), there is no carryover, it's not guaranteed. But CE is flexible to carryover self-support funds receipts from program registrations. So CE can carryover one source but not the other source you, and CE needs to apply for this carryover. It's not a good business model without this flexibility.

The Associate Vice Chancellor for Extension and Engagement at South Public University also concurs with the assertions made above. He agrees that there is low centrality of budget sources and that private donors and the Board of Directors determine how funds are to be used and that the financial policy sets continuing education apart from other units:

Appropriations are given back to the university, but surplus contract fees or private grants are kept to cover expenses and for intended use. CE is not a separate function of the university but is a total complement of the three core function of research teaching and extension. Also, the way financial policy is integrated sets us apart from other units in the university, but we are committed to this tri-core research, teaching, and extension. It is hard sometimes meeting some

funds and fees year to year to cover program operations, some problems lie with the flexibility in accounting.

The Assistant Vice Chancellor at South Public University's remarks also implied that the parent university often shows its power in its fiscal policy by allowing money to be taken from continuing education to support its core function. The following is his response to the question of internal institutional policy issues:

The university core function is undergraduate and graduate education. Then there is the enabling function, CE is an enabling function. And Shifting out of money is an issue. The core must be done using money from enabling function. So enabling function money is used for core function.

Private Universities

While there are some similarities, academic governance in a private university differs among institutions. Those differences are related to different institutional histories and affiliations. This section highlights the findings for the four private universities in this study as it relates to institutional governance. The findings reveal that shared governance within private universities are not as rigorously tied to faculty attitudes as it is with public universities, but that is more closely related to the concept of accountability and control.

Faculty attitudes and shared governance. Shared governance is an accolade that all continuing education administrators anticipate will prevail. When asked whether or not the university was committed to shared governance between continuing and the parent institution the Dean of Continuing Education at South Private University retorted:

There is a university misunderstanding, but between CE and traditional. I have had the privilege of working in both so we understand "the problem" of

misunderstanding but we are working on it, seriously, seriously. We've gone through strategic planning but this is a special philosophical part of it.

Others have a different view of shared governance and felt that being committed to shared governance was imperative for accountability. The Provost at South Private chided, "Commitment to shared governance? Well, yes, as with all schools so we do [so does continuing education], that's academic. All are committed; all deans have regular meetings to make decisions, direct programs etc...All need to be accountable." Similarly, the Provost, Vice President for Academic Affairs at Mid-Atlantic Private shared the same sentiments regarding the question of shared governance when she commented that, "Yes, but they [the school of continuing studies] run themselves; they are not basically by themselves, it's our school too, but the Dean is accountable to me for the mission of the school and for his own performance and his responsibilities." Also responding to the question of commitment to shared governance, the Vice President for the School of Professional Studies at Great Plains Private assumed:

The answer to that would be yes because the strength of the adult program division is the strength of the university. That is also necessitated by the fact that we have a number of strategic alliances that I manage, that are coordinated with the Board of Trustees. Also, the university academic council which is known as the Academic Policy and Planning Council of the University is our coordinating body. So all the schools are aware of what the other schools are doing and any significant changes will go through that body. And any changes that need to go to the Board of Trustees will go through that body.

Hence, while some believed that shared governance is imminent, others lament that it is a challenge when administrators sense that shared governance between the parent institution and

continuing education administration is superficial. The Associate Provost for Mid-America Private responded to the same question about commitment to shared governance in this manner, “No!” When asked to expound on his answering in the negative and whether his answer related to his previous comments on visibility, he supposed:

Well, I think it’s just a second tier program. Now, I think that as far as the university is concerned, the first tier would be to serve 18-22 year olds, that’s the first tier. The service piece, of which continuing education is a part, is the second tier and so, I think the university is less likely to share governance with the second tier.

Before the Executive Director of Continuing Education at Mid-America reacted to the question of shared governance, she pondered about it for a long time then she gave, what is surmised as an abstract of this discussion on shared governance when she said contemplatively:

I think so, I mean, there is no real evidence of not doing that. Again, we’re pretty autonomous. They [the parent institution] pretty much just want me to do; again, I am pretty much aware of what to do with the “quality control thing” that has to be done, and there is a sharing, but I will say there have been some decisions made with no input from us. I would believe that sharing governance, will mean, in order to make the best decisions, would involve talking and communication and making best decisions, rather than just making decisions and we just have to implement it. And there has been some of that lately where some things have been implemented and where we were told of the decision and we had to say, “that just doesn’t make any sense” or some things are still in the table like we still don’t know if we were going to move to a semester schedule versus the terms we’re in.

That is huge for us, our markets want the terms! Well all this happens because I have no full-time faculty, I have no power! This is an example of the administration exerting control, but not in a helpful way. It's like a top down decision, but we're not given any input.

Accessibility and delivery models. The findings reveal that the notion surrounding accessibility and delivery models in the private university settings is allied with distance learning as well as with accrediting bodies and accountability. The issues surrounding accrediting bodies and accountability did not have predominance in the public arena. Many of the private universities employ professional course designers for their online courses; however, they still need the input of faculty. For example, the Associate Dean of Distance Education at Great Plains Private said, "It is important to get to the point where faculty understand that there are ways they can improve their practice in teaching... but we have struggled with faculty...with the sense to on-line first of all and to have instructional designers inform their practice."

Likewise, the Provost of Mid-Atlantic Private shared her concern for the variability in instruction she implied that this variability in delivery could also thwart quality and effectiveness. "The quality of instruction in the School of Continuing Studies can be variable sometimes, and it is not always easy to maintain such variability." In addition, the Provost at South Private University echoes the Provost of Mid-Atlantic. She believed that the School of Continuing Education needs to limit the number of off-site areas and trim the number of delivery sites. "We need to fix, close some areas or do something. Control the number of sites, and put resources in good programs close some sites seriously look at those things," the Provost declared.

The Vice President of the School of Professional Studies at Great Plains Private implied that a principal challenge is the way programs are delivered and that it is difficult to maintain these sites. He suggested that:

The principal challenge has to do with a range of difference between traditional programs from an array of customer (students) services, the time zones the fact that most of our adult classes in the evenings and weekends. And about 60-70% of our classroom based classes are offered off-campus at our extension sites.

The Executive Director for Continuing Education at Mid-America Private University bemoaned the issue of accessibility and the need for the university to decide to increase its access via distance education and she said:

If we could move into a distance education model, currently we...sort of market and talk of the in-person course that brings people together and I believe it is, and that is one of our strengths...but I do believe if we are really about providing access to education were missing a lot of folks and so that's more of an institutional decision. But, are we going to only continue to reach the ones that are willing to come to campus and that want that campus experience?

Moreover, continuing education within the private institution has to deal with the constraints of accreditation; this issue was highlighted by the Dean of the School of Continuing Studies at Mid-Atlantic Private when he held that, "We are accountable to SACS which is the regional governing board in the South. The AACSB which is the business school accrediting association board, and also other specialty accreditations out there. So we have to fit those guidelines." The Provost for South Private also alluded to this accreditation issue as it relates to proprietary schools she assumed that this will continue to be a challenge in the future as it might

not be easy to maintain accreditation for transfer credits. She assumed that, “It will be a challenge to try to get transfer credit approved by SACS schools. How will that affect our private school transfer credits?”

“The School of Continuing Studies is accountable to SACS and this affects our program planning. If they want to start a new degree program there are certain requirements simply because of the accreditation that they are held to,” says the Provost of Academic Affairs for Mid-Atlantic Private University. Finally, the Vice President for the School of Continuing Studies at Great Plains Private sums up the issue of accreditation as it relates to access and delivery he assumed that this is a challenge for continuing education programs that caters to adults and notes the following:

The area of accrediting is where I see as an issue, which I think that adult programs face, is the two levels of accreditation: regional and disciplinary. Regional is not such an issue for any of the regions. SACS, for example, has given more “fit” to adult programs more than any body because they have built in more barriers to using part-time adjunct faculty. But the second level would be, is in the area of disciplinary areas. Most of the disciplinary areas have discriminated against adult programs and discriminate against the use of part-time faculty in most programs; most notably is the group called the AACSB which is the (Formerly: American Assembly of Collegiate Schools of Business; (now the Association for the Advancement of Collegiate Schools of Business) which is considered “old boys” network of business schools.

He further explained how this issue of accreditation related to the “input,” accessibility stage and why it is not effective to focus only on input and accessibility but to also focus on throughput:

A major cultural change in the last days and most of the accrediting agencies, the disciplinary ones, are still too heavily focused on the input stage. Now fortunately, the regional boards have moved over to the output stage in kind and have been saying, “We measure outcome and effectiveness.” There is some validity to input, you want people with the correct credentials, but the question is; how do you determine what the important credentials are?

Likewise, the Associate Dean for Distance Learning at Great Plains Private concurs with the Vice President when she mused that accrediting boards were not doing an effective job in evaluating distance learning, “Accreditation should not be government it should remain in local boards. They are not keeping on top of things. For example, they did not know how to evaluate distance learning, how to tell us what to do, what questions to ask.”

Fiscal policies and entrepreneurialism. The issue of funding within the private universities is considered to be both political as well as policy driven. While some administrators view the fiscal policies within these participating universities as “benevolent,” others view these political-policy issues as a value proposition that results in continuing education being a revenue generator for the universities. When asked to describe the fiscal policies at her university, the Provost for Mid-Atlantic Private University said the following:

Well the university does not give them any money, and so they are completely autonomous and so in a sense, how they divide up their budget is pretty much up to them ...as long as they meet their costs. Their [continuing education] goal is to

increase their budget every year that is what that implies, and the Dean is responsible for any budget shortfalls.

She then continued, “I don’t think we charge them for building use, but they, for example, pay for a part-time salary part of a full-time equivalent staff person in the registrar’s office because of all the extra work the registrar do for their school.”

When asked if the School of Continuing Studies is required to return surpluses to the parent university the Provost said:

Any surplus comes back to the central university and School of CE gets to keep some of the money for new programs but that would need to be approved. As I said earlier, part of their mission is to generate a surplus and that helps the operations of the parent institution.

The Dean of the School of Continuing Studies (SCS) also agreed with the Provost as he described the fiscal policies and structure at Mid-Atlantic Private. The following is how he described the structure while highlighting some additional information regarding budgeting within the SCS:

We pay our own way and we make an annual renegotiated contribution to cover overhead. So when we do our budgets every year we do, you know, we start out with what we call a zero based budget. [No money, as all goes back to the central budget.] So it is my job to head over to the VP of finance and to go over how much of our revenue margin he expects for next year. Typically it’s what we did last year plus something. I mean, there are some great things [about our system] that are wonderful. It’s about our doing our job, its great! Some of our budgets are permanent 8700 accounts; all the study aboard programs those stay in that mode.

But about October 1st the university comes through and sweeps everything out of them so even though they are a roll over accounts they just sweep them [university takes the entire surplus out of those accounts as well] but our general contribution is about a 10% contribution. That is a funny number but it is because we don't pay rent, but we do pay for half a position in the registrar's office, half a position in the library, half a position in the career development and in the information services. One other that I am forgetting, we are actually paying for the staffing and benefits and support service which are built into our expense budget.

The Associate Provost for Mid-America Private University noted that the fiscal policy at his institution is akin to the central budgeting process, but bemoaned that it was antiquated and does not necessarily commemorate continuing education's success. "We don't have a decentralized funding source, so what is generated out of an academic unit, and we would consider CE an academic unit, it just flows centrally. It's an antiquated budgeting process being successful doesn't help a lot." When asked if there is a policy regarding surplus funds and whether or not his continuing education unit is a cost center he declared:

That [the budget process] doesn't determine, what your expenditure will be next year, and so it is kind of an incremental budgeting process. No one carries over, as a matter of fact, they really don't get, they don't see it, [cash revenues] the money goes directly to the university and the university gives them a spending amount. There is no collection of revenue. The university would see how much money a unit will generate and if they generate a lot more they are not going to give a lot, much more next year. And well, no, we're not a cost center. Because, even if

they don't fund themselves they won't go under, so, what we do is make it up in the end.

In describing the fiscal policies at Mid-America Private, the Executive Director for Continuing Education said:

We don't get hit for space etc. We do not have a charge for space so what we are making for the university is not profit per se, but we do make a heck of a lot more than our costs in terms of our expenses, personnel everything. But our budget hadn't increased in a number of 4 or 5 years. And so, on paper, it appears that we are expected to do more and with the same amount of money. And I guess ideally they would like for us to do that, but they are allowing us to overspend our expense budget but they have not made a correction for that. It is kind of faulty budget, the numbers do not add, up but we need to control our expense but their focus is very much on revenue, all the surplus go back we do not negotiate surplus. It is just very problematic!

The fiscal policy and relationship at Great Plains Private is described as benevolent, which is a much different depiction from that of the former institution, Mid-America Private. When asked to describe the fiscal policy and relationship between continuing education and the parent university, the Vice President of the School of Professional Studies (SPS) claimed, "Benevolent, we have a positive relationship. Members of the SPS sit on the university's budget council and the council makes all the decision and recommendations to the President or Board of trustees for the establishment and management of the budget."

When asked to expound on the policies regarding surpluses and allocations he explained:

Our budget process is called a disk pattern and this is for all the schools. First thing we would look at the revenue for the upcoming year for both our online and classroom basis for our local students because they are priced differently. Then we make a recommendation to the board along with our estimates of how many students we will have participate in our programs to determine tuition and fees and that tell how much we anticipate spending. To achieve that, we try to look at our gross and net margins about 45% gross and net 35% [net is gross tuition fees less the amount direct costs] for the school, my office, the deans office and the directors offices. And then we return 35 cents on each dollar [that is (35%)] goes to pay for president's salary, registrar's office, and profitability.

When asked to explain what financial benefits the university provides in return or whether or not continuing education had to pay for overhead he said:

Some can be turned back to CE but that would be one of two situations: If there is surplus money required when we are looking at developing new projects; we do pro-forma [a future capital expenditure budget] to see how much capital we will need from the university to do these projects.

Likewise, the Dean of the Continuing Education at South Private University described the fiscal relationship at her institution as interesting and reflects on the history compared to what it is today. "Fiscal, that's really interesting the history of our CE was that it was a 'cash cow' [that was] true until two and one-half years ago. The challenge still is to be a major contributor to budget. She then described the allocation of the budget, "We have a negotiated budget we look at programs expenses, potential environment. We argue with Administration to defend budget...I think it's a fair process, that's very unique about us. A percentage of indirect is

paid by the university.” The Provost for South Private concurs with the Dean when she said the following in her response to the question of fiscal policy, “Budget approval is a negotiated process. Deans decide the budget proposal. Dean proposes to CFO and to Provost. All meet and talk about budget enrollment. Again, expectation and estimates go up and down and are negotiated.”

As can be surmised, the fiscal policies are intrinsically tied to the notion of entrepreneurialism, or lack thereof. As the Provost of South Private notes, subsequently, that, “Continuing education gives us money. They are not independent; it is centralized fees and tuition.” Similarly, the Dean of Continuing Education also at South Private implied that continuing education is simply tied to cash and revenues when she alleged that, “If CE did not come with a cash value proposition they would not exist in most universities.” To be entrepreneurial, would surmise that the department is independent, innovative, and an enterprise. But, as the Associate Dean for Distance Learning at Great Plains acknowledged:

It’s really hard in an academic institution to be innovative, because the traditional thinking of the way things are set up is so incredibly ingrained and invested, so when you try [new] ‘stuff’ it’s hard for people to accept. We certainly do try to fit into the regular main stream of the university process and at the same time were coming from a direction they never saw before and they are thinking: “what, you need money, what, you need resources, where are you coming from?” I love being an innovator, but it is damned hard when you go against “such” a traditional environment and you suggest you want to try something or you’ve tried something, and you think it will be a good idea to try it again, God you get grilled!

Ironically, the Provost also for Mid-Atlantic Private University alleged that schools of continuing education are intrinsically entrepreneurial when she said:

Schools of continuing studies are of that nature. And so it has been for the mission of the school to be entrepreneurial and thinking of new programs that will quote “sell” within our public educational endeavors. They are always assessing new markets and paying attention to the way other institutions are offering in the market and opening new programs switching their programs they are very agile, closing down something program that are not self-supporting.

However, the Dean for Continuing Education at Mid-Atlantic Private University countered this statement when he held that what sets continuing education apart is the notion that it has to pay its own way in order to survive. In addition, he highlights the power of the parent university should continuing education not perform effectively from a financial position:

The piece that makes us different is that we have to pay our own way. So that we must generate revenues to do whatever we want to do; plus we must give the university a percentage contribution, to overhead, profit if you will, each year. I guess that would make us different. We are trying to find our ways for the departments to be innovative and work with us and one way of doing that is to have a revenue sharing plan.

Then he added the following avowal that confirms the power of the parent to cease the operation of continuing education should they not perform to the financial standards set by the parent, “You will have a physics department whether or not they [the physics department] whether or not they create revenues. We can’t do that we have to generate revenues.” Likewise, the Executive Director of Continuing Education at Mid-America Private affirms this implication

of the power of the parent university when she alleged, “You know, they’re not going to close down the English department if they don’t have a lot of students, but you know they’ll close us down if we don’t have a lot of students.”

The above statements substantiate the perception of finance versus entrepreneurialism and confirm that both are intertwined within these private institutions. Moreover, the notion of entrepreneurialism is threatened when the parent university demonstrates its power in respect to the hiring of staff and in program planning. This is what the Provost of Mid-Atlantic Private said about hiring, “Continuing education needs to have permission to hire new people, you know, if they wanted to hire more permanent faculty or more staff there is a general university policy that that must get the approval from human resources and the provost in terms of allocating having money every year for that.” Similarly, the Executive Director for Continuing Education at Mid-America University also confirms this power relations when she said, “Those who teach for us regularly, the contracts comes through the Deans, but the contracts come through these other chairs for the schools we don’t do our own hiring.”

She continued with this additional statement implying that entrepreneurialism is threatened when continuing education administers credit programs:

In non-credit we can be more entrepreneurial we can make decisions and make it happen, be more experimental, but in credit curriculum, we, it is hard to get it approved, first we need to say how it fits. And if it doesn’t quite fit the questions you get is where does it fit, in what program? And I ask what does it matter? If the course is viable, and is needed, then why not!

In addition, there are tensions existing between continuing education and the parent universities and this can be surmised based on the various discussions and responses to several

questions that the informants assumed was as a result of the need to be entrepreneurialism. For example, the Associate Dean for Distance Learning at Great Plains Private noted the political tension that exists between the parent and continuing education and bemoaned the uniqueness of trying to be entrepreneurial:

Two years ago we reorganized our unit because we were just about to die, because we couldn't keep up we were doing anything anybody asked us to, so we reorganized our unit and, this was in 2004 and we segmented, outlined all our process and we went from an entrepreneurial venture to a real honest to God level-two organization. That's what we did. It took us a year to do it. So as a result, there is a little bit of antagonism there.

Likewise, the Associate Provost for Mid-America Private alluded to the tension and alleged that the Executive Director of Continuing Education was limited by what the university gave her, "She, can do some entrepreneurial things but she is limited to what the university can give her before she does that." Consequently, and this might be a paradox, but most higher education administrators perceive continuing education to be 'too entrepreneurial.' This is what the Provost of Mid-Atlantic Private claimed about continuing education's need for improvement:

It might be minor when they start new programs they could be more careful about assessing the impact on other units of the university before. They haven't fully considered the impact for our SACS accreditation or the work load on the registrars. So, they are sometimes so entrepreneurial and act so quickly that they haven't touched all bases before they launch a program.

The Dean of the School of Continuing Education also expressed that sentiment when he implied that continuing education needs to improve in the area of developing an understanding of the process and needs of the parent. Indicating that this shouldn't be a linear process:

So we are constantly pushing the institutions to respond and probably don't understand the needs of the campus as we might and probably don't do enough homework to figure out how to be supportive of the rest of the campus needs. That's a process I would probably say, developing the relationship we need across campus, I don't see that we have done that as well we might.

External Challenges—Economic and Social

Both public and private universities clearly have to deal with challenges, issues, and constraints that affect continuing education directly or indirectly from an external point of view. This section outlines the second major finding relative to the first question that informs the study; the question related to external challenges as perceived by university administrators. These external challenges are divided into two main groups namely, economic and social. These challenges are varied and affect both public and private universities similarly but with more emphasis on one or the other. The external challenges are demarcated in separate sections under public and private institution. Table 3 outlines the external challenges as perceived by university administrators.

Economic Challenges

The economic challenges are perceived by both institutional types as relative to government and financial aid policies, the issue of economic stability, and industry needs. However, in addition to those stated above, the private universities also saw the educational market place as a big challenge.

Table 3 Overview of External Challenges

Legend: X denotes that the issue was prevalent for that institutional type; n/a denotes the issue was not necessarily applicable or highlighted in responses.		
Major Categories: Economic and Social	Public Institutions	Private Institutions
Government Policies and Financial Aid: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of adequate financial aid for adult and part-time degree and non degree seekers • Lack of fiscal policies • Title IV policies • Too much pressure to self-generate revenue 	<p>X</p> <p>X n/a</p> <p>X</p>	<p>X</p> <p>X X</p> <p>X</p>
Economic Stability and Industry: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Industry need for professional development, and training • Decline in manufacturing • Decline in training budgets • Increased dependency on state funded programs for retraining • Very high tuition and fees • Increased competition 	<p>X</p> <p>X X</p> <p>X n/a n/a</p>	<p>X</p> <p>X n/a</p> <p>n/a X X</p>
Social Challenges and Issues: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Serving nontraditional learner needs • Serving the underserved • Serving diverse populations • Bridging the social disparities • Addressing language barriers • Addressing negative attitudes towards achieving a post secondary education 	<p>X</p> <p>X X X X</p> <p>X</p>	<p>X</p> <p>X X n/a X</p> <p>X</p>

Public Universities

Public universities are not immune to the issues of financial aid. This challenge is affecting public institutions on a wide scale, and university administrators are very concerned about this issue and the policies surrounding it from a government and legislative stance. The following paragraphs highlight the perceptions of continuing education and their higher education colleagues of this profound challenge. Two of the major issues affecting public universities are (1) government policies and financial aid, and (2) economic stability and industry needs.

Government policies and financial aid. The issue of financial aid is aligned with that of government policies. In most instances, financial aid is limited or very mediocre for the population typically and primarily served by continuing education units—nontraditional students. Because university administrators understand that financial aid and other resources are imperative for moving communities forward, for advancing economic well-being, and for global positioning, they all lament this lack of adequate financial aid for adult part-time degree and non-degree seekers alike. This is what the Provost at Great Plains Public University had to say about the issue of financial aid:

Well, I think one of the challenges that our CE unit faces we have no state funding and very little scholarship and if we do, it is so small. And so, from a state level and national level; and then again I am not sure how from a national level how other CE units are treated nationally, but certainly from a state level, CE is available for those students who are able to pay, sure and simple! And if students, whether they are college students themselves, or adults who have degrees, or individuals who don't have degrees who want to continue their education; if they can't pay for it they can't take the courses. So it would be

interesting to see ways of getting financial support from the states for CE for those who want to attempt educational opportunities but cannot afford to. I cannot speak for nationally.

Likewise, the Vice Chancellor and Provost for Extension at Mid-America Public University in his response the question of external policies and issues remarked that, “Lack of financial aid for part-time students is a big issue. We are trying to address state needs in terms of workforce needs and they cannot recover from high tuition and we need to address this, this is a big policy issue.” Similarly, the Associate Vice Chancellor for Extension and Engagement at South Public University added this thought also in response to the question about economic issues:

We need to look at service versus accounting for money. For example, the [name withheld] Leadership Program that extension services do; its impact is profound with cooperate extension and veterans. Local, state, and federal government needs to help with money. There is a profound need; “caring” costs money, and this is problematic.

The Vice Provost (Chancellor) who is also the Dean for the Division of Continuing Studies at Mid-America Public University noted the fact that the issue of financial aid is a national political and polity issue and he said, “I think a national issue is financial support for the part-time, nontraditional student.” Also, the Associate Dean for Continuing Education at Mid-America Public also concurred with the Vice Provost saying that the issue of finance and money is a national one in saying that, “I think there is a lot of concern right now in education. I think the pressure to generate money is increasing.” Her position is that, with the lack of or the limited amount of financial aid, the pressures for universities to self-generate funds is increasing.

The more expensive a university is the more pressures there is to generate the funds needed to substitute for the declining aid historically offered by the state and federal government. Hence, the Associate Vice President for the Division of Continuing Education at Mid-Atlantic Public University agreed with the Associate Dean above when he said:

Well Mid-Atlantic State is the most expensive public university in the country. Our tuition is about \$12K per year, \$1,500 per course. That is a heavy burden for people to afford that level of education. When we talk about higher education [necessary] to serve the needs of both the regional and national economy, you need to find more ways to help people to access the education and learning opportunities that exist. We need to work with the state and others to find how we help people afford higher education in this environment.

And although Mid-Atlantic State is expensive as alleged above, the Vice President for Outreach was delighted that his university received some financial aid for part-time learners and said euphorically, “I am very happy that this state has set aside some scholarship dollars for part-time learners, and we get that money and we use that money to bring more adults into our program in certain areas and we certainly encourage that.” However, he also noted that this was not the case on a national level:

I think that on a national level, the financial aid policy nationally tends to favor traditional age students rather than adult students. That’s for the nation; not just us, and if we’re going to compete on a global level, we need to strengthen and train our existing workforce and we’re going to need national scholarships to support working adults.

Although some institutions, for example, Mid-America Public and Mid-Atlantic Public as alluded to above, currently receive state government financial aid for continuing education and nontraditional students that is not the case for most of the public institutions. With respect to the economic policy and financial aid, university administrators are not euphoric about the financial aid they receive from federal and state governments. However, they believe that something should be done. That there needs to be some significant policy adjustments or even a bill equivalent to that of the Veteran's GI Bill of 1944. The Vice President for Outreach at Mid-Atlantic State University continued and affirmed, "We might need the equivalent of a 'GI Bill' for working adults, but those are the kind of policy issues that we confront more than others."

The Associate Dean for Continuing education at Mid-America Public also agreed that something needs to be done about the lack of financial aid in light of the current economy and acknowledged that:

People say higher education is stagnant and they [the government says] look back at the 'GI Bill.' But we haven't done anything significant since then and since we have been moving away from an agriculture and manufacturing economy to an informational and technological economy.

This apparent stagnant condition of the legislature is perceived by university administrators as an issue that need to be addressed so that the state governments will enact and devise a plan; revisiting the issue of financial aid for nontraditional students. The Assistant Vice Chancellor of Extension, Engagement and Economic Development at South State University recognized this apparent dormant stance when he said:

Well, CE is shielded generally, if not operationally, from political influences, we have economic but financial realities; issues that we face, but politics not much.

We are shielded from state politics. Whoever is in the government and legislature we are not directly impacted negatively or positively, that is [not overtly] influenced by state government. However, politics influence budget cuts overall so, we are economically affected.

Likewise, the Vice Chancellor and Provost for Extension at Mid-America Public recognized the need for some legislative action in his state and noted that this state's legislature should agree to redistribution of tuition. In essence, those who cannot pay will benefit from those who can. This is how he phrases his thoughts on the issue:

Most financial aid is geared towards our full time students. We still face some issue about how to fund higher education generally. There is a huge discussion about that in general. The idea is to get the legislature to see how the institutions could raise tuition and then use the additional income for those who cannot attend. That is a huge discussion!

Similarly, the Provost for Great Plains Public University added his concerns and thought about the issue of redistributing of income and extensively described this modeling and this strategy, how redistribution works, and why he believes this policy could be a success. He responded to the question of policy-political challenges as follows:

Well, I think one of the issues, and it's counter intuitive and let me explain that.

At Great Plains our resident tuition is one of the lowest in the country and you might think that is good from an access stand point. It's under \$5K per year. For a public university however, we have a very little financial aid because usually the way financial aid operates is, you take a certain percentage from resident tuition and put it into financial aid. But because resident tuition is very low we have very

little in the pot for financial aid from the university. So we are an institution that is low tuition, low financial aid. So from an access standpoint, the neediest students we can help. However the students right above the poverty level, whose parents are making \$30, \$40 or \$50K per year, it's almost impossible to give those students any financial aid and so one of our challenges is to convince the legislator, and Georgia is in a wonderful position with hope scholarships, to allow us to increase resident tuition, even to double resident tuition with the idea that we would put \$25 cents of every dollar into financial aid. And we have done modeling that shows how [that would work.] If we were to double our resident tuition we would put 25% in financial aid, so that students whose parents are making \$70k or less would not see an increase in tuition because we could provide the financial aid to off-set that which we can't do now. So what it is, the higher socio-economic students who are able to pay the \$8-9K per year of tuition, and in fact, through that they are able to help bring in students who are in that lower to middle socio- economic state because we could help them with financial aid. But unfortunately, this state is a very conservative state and they see it that as a redistribution of wealth, in a sense that those who can afford it pay it, and those who can't can still come through financial aid. I actually do think that's the way it should be! That's what most states do.

Economic stability and industry needs. As can be surmised, the economy is significantly allied with industry and the need for professional development and university administrators agree that there are great issues at stake. Issues of economic stability and industry needs all

related to training, continuous learning, and professional development. The Associate Dean for Mid-America Public stated that:

You know the economy is fairly stable but we've a strong decline in manufacturing in this state, they call the north the rust belt. This state is challenged in that it doesn't have a major city. You know Illinois has, Chicago, Minnesota has Minneapolis. Our challenge is the infrastructure, our poly grids is not as robust, our transportation was not robust.

This decline in manufacturing is one issue that is economically devastating to most states represented in this study, and due to this economic position, continuing education is having an additional burden for catering to training and retraining needs of industry and displaced workers. This is what the Vice Chancellor and Provost of Mid-America University Public said in reference to this issue of industry decline, "Heavy dependence on manufacturing is declining and the state not having the workforce to move into the new economy and that's a big challenge for us in my mind that requires some additional public investment." But a counter issue is the decline in training budgets, and ironically, this is an area of great industrial need. The Assistant Vice Chancellor of Extension and Engagement at South Public noted that, "depending on the stability of the economy, organizations and companies training budgets lead to stable enrollments for continuing education, but when the technical sector bottoms out, then we[continuing education] need to refocus and make adjustments." The Vice Provost for Extended programs who is also the Dean for the Division of Continuing Studies in his response to the question regarding economic issue stated that:

I believe one local issue is government and businesses having less money to invest in the professional development of their employees. Even though we're

pretty successful, we find more and more that we [continuing education] have to travel to places because they [industries] want more and more on-site education, they cannot afford to send people here. I think in the government and non-profit sector that's where the drop off is and I think that's troubling down the road as money gets tighter in government and non-profits. As money gets tighter, one of the first things to suffer is professional development.

The Dean of Continuing Education at Great Plains Public commented that continuing education at her institution also has a challenge to serve industry needs in her local region.

This is essentially a knowledge economy in this area so we do not have much industry in this city. We have high tech companies here like, level3, IBM, bio-tech so as a result, our challenge is to serve these knowledge workers which means increasingly, we are serving students at the graduate level, masters level, masters degree, and professional masters. We do a lot; but also certificate programs, that is an area of growth for us. As we define them [certificate programs] are sequences of courses in a certain content area that students can take and apply that information in their company. We have an arrangement with the graduate courses that all courses will count towards the master degree if they choose to do that later.

The Associate Vice President for Outreach at Mid-Atlantic State University added his notion about the local and regional economic issues facing his state and how it affects continuing education in his state when he said the following:

We've seen in this Mid-Atlantic State now that the state is investing in workforce development we've seen that employers who used to fund the training of their

staff now are sort o, are relying on the programs of the state level, and that's fine as long as the state funds continue. But I think it sets up a dynamic which might not be a healthy dynamic in the long run where the corporations rely on the state priorities rather than on their own company needs to train their staff, so that makes it harder for us to go into those companies. We have a history of doing tailored, customized programs to companies and now they are saying to us 'we don't need you to provide us, we don't want to pay you to customize that program because there is a generic program like that funded by the state'that's not a good thing!

Private Universities

Private institutions also are affected by economic issues that are facing higher education in general. However, they encounter additional issues relative to federal reporting and other issues of funding sources that are not analogous to public universities. This next section highlights some of the economic concern that affects private non-for-profit universities.

Government policies and financial aid. Private universities are confronted with issues of government reporting policies and financial aid. They receive no financial aid for students at all. They can only administer Federal Stafford and other Loans to students. Moreover, tuition and fees tend to be much greater for private universities and thus pose additional problems for access through continuing education. The Associate Provost Mid-America Private University acknowledged that there are two main economic concerns that affects them and responded to the issue of financial aid in the following manner:

Well, two things: Tuition and financial aid policy. Our tuition costs are bound a lot and federal financial aid policy are abysmal for people who may need

continuing education. The number of grants are just non-existent. To come to a place like Mid-America Private that's so expensive, how can we ask a person of meager means to come here to take out significant student loans? This is an ethical issue for us...Do you want somebody to have a \$40k student loan and they can go the Public university in the City and have no student loans and graduate with a degree that will give them, will provide them with the same opportunity to have the same employment. And so, that combination of being well, for us, a higher tuition school with a very poor financial aid policy at the state and federal level is a tough nut to crack for us.

Likewise, the Vice President for the School of Professional Studies at Great-Plains Private Universities responded in a similar manner to the issue of financial aid and agrees with the prior statements when he said the following:

So the financial aspects of the program [CE] are different. Federal financial aid is significantly different. For the younger adults they talk about 'packaging.' We don't package for the older students, it's basically coordination of Stafford Loan for the older adults. We all have to deal with the issues of government. We operate in other jurisdictions [through distance education] so we need to seek authorization to deal with regulatory affairs of those states and seek approval that we would not have to deal with in the traditional programs. The way we deal with federal financial aid those are some of the dominant issues.

The Executive Director for Continuing Education at Mid-America private University responded thus to the question of economic challenges and the issues this poses for adult learner needs for continuing education and degrees:

Well, financial aid for sure. I think that it's changing; it seems I think that we've got to find a way to address not only the first time college students, but the lifelong learners, older adults. How can we, whether it's credit or non credit; how can we support people so they can come back to school; there is a big gap between credit and non-credit education. Adults cannot afford to do the time and the money resources to do credit so they do noncredit between and it, [non-credit] is not recognized by anybody [implying government and higher education] and there needs to be a connect back, because other countries are just going so beyond us in terms of their education and the efficiency of their work force. And there all these people who need to be updated in their skills sets and higher education is just not addressing that. You have these liberal arts schools that are so ivory tower in their mentality and they don't want to do any thing particularly that is work-force driven. How are we going to keep the work force current and who is going to pay for it? The cost of education and it is the true costs are out of control...that's a problem I think.

The Dean of the School of Continuing Education at South Private said it very succinctly, "Financial aid, there is not enough money for financial aid for sure." Similarly, the Associate Dean for Distance Education at Great-Plains Private concurred with these issues of accessibility and money, the cost of tuition, and noted the following:

Being a Jesuit university of course one of the great issue is social justice and that means accessibility to as many person as possible and that accessibility is means no person left behind who want an education and the biggest prohibiting factor is costs. Although some opportunities for scholarship aid are there, it is minimal.

The Dean of the School of Continuing Studies at Mid-Atlantic Private University retorted thus when he was asked about economic challenges that affected continuing education:

Economic challenges? I suppose, I am not sure I understand the question. We have enormous budgetary flexibility and that is perhaps unique in terms of what we want to do. Our challenge really is, and I'll put it in the fundraising realm. We continue to get more and more expensive as a CE unit we each provide more scholarship assistant for students and we can't possibly [continue to do that] we have given away \$79K, or 72K in scholarship this year to our credit bearing students and we could have given another \$50k. That is the request we had from students for some assistance so we need another \$1 million to meet current financial aid for student assistance.

Subsequently, the Vice President for the School of Professional Studies for Great-Plains Private University highlighted another financial issue that affects not-for-profit institutions, That of investment funding and capital investments. He exclaimed, "I would say that the most difficult economic issue that we have to deal with is sources of investment funding." When asked to expound on this topic he explained

Yes, when traditional colleges need to expand they will normally use "the bonding process" and the bonding process is used for capital expenditures for building primarily or maintenance of buildings. With the adult programs, you're really not going out buying buildings all around the country. You're leasing, and leasing works against such financial formulas for bonding. So the question really is, how do you build an infrastructure for adult programs given the current financial regulatory financial environment as a, as a, not-for-profit? Because the

for-profits can attract venture capital and participatory investments, but a not-for-profits really can't. When we commit significant amounts of money to start a new project that has a capital component it works against our debt-ratio formulas for the university. So in a sense, the ability for the university to build an infrastructure for adult programs or extensions sites and online is much more difficult than it is for for-profit structure because the rules were designed for the traditional model. Is that helpful? Did I explain that clearly enough?

I acknowledged that the information was clearly understood, but reiterated what was said and evoked his input about what I understood to which he agreed. So I added the following, "Yes, I understand it, when you referred to the debt ratio do you mean the debt-to equity ratio, the equity you'd get from building versus the building value, mortgage value?" To this he replied:

Yea, with all your bonds that requires certain balance with all your equity. So if you will default on the bond loan. And you don't have that process for the adult programs because you're not going out building new buildings. The infrastructure for adult programs happen to be [informational technology] IT, and those are generally not that bondable, it has to do with extension campus sites, which are leased, it has to do with expansion with your market outreach, which are not bondable.

In addition, he mentioned that it was very hard to acquire endowments when you run continuing education programs because most donors would want to have their contributions acknowledged by having their names on buildings. He continued with this statement:

And you cannot bring in outside investments other than endowments and other types of funding donations to the university and most people don't want to donate to adult programs and even if they want to donate they want the name on a building [and] we don't have a building to put people's names on.

Economic stability and industry needs. As can be surmised, economic stability is intrinsically tied to higher education and industry needs. Within different geographical locations, the perceptions are that as industries in the United States change from a manufacturing and industrial related one to a service, and informational one, continuing higher education must adjust to meet the needs of this changing society.

The Provost for Mid-Atlantic Private University recognized this concept in her response to the matter of socio-economics and assumed the following:

You see, the fact that people want to come back [to higher education] for their degree, I think is motivating. Sometimes personal desire or to obtain something they did not achieve when they are younger. But the larger social issue is that of people's perception; that fact that you need a degree or certification to better yourself where you work, or to get a better job. Those are some of the social issues that impact the mission of continuing education, to develop a market that people want to come back to get a degree, get a certificate or switch careers or whatever their need is and some of these are the society driven social issues.

The Associate Provost for Mid-America Private University confirmed the fact that the economy in his state is changing from a manufacturing one to one of service and business and admits that this change affects higher education and continuing education in a profound way.

“For us the changing economy itself is a big issue and I am not sure we know how to meet that changing economy in this region.” When asked to explicate on the above statement he said:

Well, by changing economy what I mean is that one time this ‘City’ was a steel manufacturing industry economy and now it’s a business, it’s a banking and medical economy center. This is a big shift so now it’s very wealthy, it’s like Atlanta. At one time, where I live houses were \$150k now, if you don’t have \$350k you cannot even start looking. And that is for a two bedroom one bath [house] these are tiny little houses and so we have all those changes that have occurred that has made the city much more affluent, made it much more transient made it much more connected nationally and internationally because the people that are brought in are from all over the world. So it a very different feel from what the city was 30 years ago. And it’s continuing to change!

Competition and the educational market place. Within the realm of private universities the educational market place and the competition seems to be greater, than for those in the public arena in effect, the perception is that the educational market competition is being experienced by private universities due to other for-profit universities that have greater opportunities for cash and funds flow. However, there is also the issue of community colleges transitioning to four-year colleges and offering bachelors degrees. In her response to the question of economic concern, the Provost of South Private University saw competition as a political issue that is linked to the economy and bemoaned the decisions to allow community colleges in this state to offer bachelors degrees. Thus she responded in this manner:

Well, I think continuing competition. I don’t believe this State has done a good job with higher education recently and that has created some problems, not sure of

the decision to take Community Colleges to four-year institutions. This has been difficult in terms of enrollment. It is a struggle for the School of Continuing Education to maintain enrollment.

Equally, the Dean of Continuing Education at South Private University also explored the subject of competing with community colleges in the state. She felt that this policy was disadvantageous not only to higher education and continuing education within the universities, but was equally disadvantageous for those members of society who relied on the mission of the community college for their educational needs. So she remarked, emphatically, that this competition is one of the greatest social and economic challenges this institution confronts:

Actually, in the short-term the challenge is complete program identity loss or in the long-term, community colleges have lost their sense of purpose. The move of community colleges to 4-year degree providers is a big challenge for continuing education. It's not just economic, not just that they provided degrees [referring to academic degrees] but they provided a degree of emotional and social safety for some. The average age for community college students is 29. They [the legislature] did not look at population. They wanted to be like City College of New York (CCNY) [CCNY, is a big community college in NY that offers BA degrees etc.] The notion of this safe space is eroded.

When asked to expound on how this move has affected continuing higher education she said:

People will say community college is where I can go to college to get educated. I know, I worked in Community college for a long time and adult education for a long time—there is a common denominator—adult education and community

college. This is a two fold education curriculum and it's all good stuff...they [community colleges] have forgotten their mission! I believe they are self gratifying, forgotten the students. Back in the 1960's they had a mission, but their mission is gone, it has been very subtle; they think it is no big thing. The legislature is not paying attention! This is very personal for me, my mother was an educator this is a family of educators. I believe in the social and individuality of education. Community colleges were the place where you ended the discord and began social reform community colleges did it! It was about equality, leveling the playing field. Community colleges did open the possibility that there was a place for everyone to enter, to access [to higher education]. There is a subtle psychological component in that. The same principle exists in adult education, our job is to help them believe in themselves they can do this.

The Provost of South Private responded to the matter of economic challenges and acknowledged that one of the economic challenges that the institution faces is an increase in competition and stated the following, "Economic challenges, well, at the minute, off-site campuses is a challenge, and the increase in competition. You know, there are lots of people who will teach for less, lower tuition." The above statement refers to providers of continuing education who will charge less tuition than would a research university. She continued after a long pause, a moment of contemplation, and then said, "People have to do other stuff and that leads to education being a "last resort." employers are less likely to pay for CE [that is] on the decline, their reimbursement [is becoming] less generous more specific." She is referring to those employers who in the past would pay for continuing education and training for their employees, but those funds are no longer being earmarked, at least not generically, for such

discretionary spending. And so she continued, “They expect return on investment (ROI) do you believe? This is the general trend [they have] cut back on CE perks etc. and discretionary funds.”

The Executive Director of Continuing Education at Mid-America Private agrees that the market competition is putting a crunch on continuing education at her institution when she asked sarcastically, “How much do you want? If I look at the external community, increased competition is the big economic challenge.” She then referred to some of the private for-profits institutions that pose the greatest competition for the private not-for-profit institutions. And so she continued her thoughts of frustration with the competitive trend in the educational market place in saying that, “Strayer University has recently opened a campus, the University of Phoenix is building a bricks and mortar campus, and this City is ‘ripe’ for this [educational market place] and that is all so frustrating, because I do not have the marketing funds like those places do.”

Other administrators also saw competition as a big problem for their educational market, and their institutions. The Associate Dean of Distance Education at Great-Plains Private sees the competition from a different perspective, not economic, but political. The issue has to do with the shared usage of the internet, the software, and the regulations being posed by the public university and the state’s government. The following statement reflects her thoughts about the matter:

Of course there are political issues connected with the University of Great Plains Public. Of course, the university is connected with the *Internet II University Metadata Pegging* for content learning object data base academic library. If we don’t have a major system that we all use [for example] *Triple I, EEI* to standardize mega data object this will impact us and will impact us over time.

Another issue is *SCORM* it's a government built system to make courses interoperable so you can use them with online use in compliance. So we pay attention to that system as well, but locally. It's advancement in protecting that as well.

There is going to be a *State Bridges* which is used for video transmission which we're going to participate in. I don't think that is going to be political, it is more [about] money, but there is a lot, it's really interesting!

Social Challenges and Issues

As can be construed, social challenges are intrinsically aligned with economic stability. And higher education has historically been revered as one institution that has been responding to such challenges. These challenges are momentous and include the current adult learner needs, population diversity, and barriers to educational attainment.

Public Universities

The administrators within the public higher education arena feel that it is their responsible to help maintain social stability within our nation. However, they are also cognizant of the overwhelming challenge they face and how continuing education is affected directly or indirectly by such profound issues. Each institution suffers from its particular needs that are unique to that region.

Population diversity and nontraditional learner needs. Catering to the needs of the nontraditional learner is a big issue for continuing education administrators. They universally bemoaned the need to serve this nontraditional population while doing so within the cultural context of a research university. The Associate Vice President for Continuing Education at Mid-Atlantic State affirmed:

Well, one of the things I think is critical is serving the adult learner across the US and certainly in this state. The global economy is having an impact on how we operate and survive; the clear message is that American adults need education. Those who [already] have, need to have more education, those who haven't started need to start, and those who have started need to finish. If we're going to be a competitive country we're not going to do it on low skilled labor we need to do it on skills that require education. That is a really essentially tied to the nation.

The outcry is for public policies to really support the nontraditional learners in the total sense. Not only degree seeking adult students but those who are non-degree seeking, but who need some post secondary education to help them improve their lives. When asked to specifically address some social issues facing continuing education directly or indirectly, the Associate Vice President for Outreach at Mid-Atlantic Public stated the following:

The real need for public policy to support the education, the CE of adult workers, that's a social issue as much as anything. Also, better support for displaced workers, and those special populations who are incarcerated. I think in the US we have the highest population that's incarcerated, more than any other country in the world, and the federal financial aid for those people has dropped steadily over the years and many of those individuals are not in there for violent crimes but debt-drug related crimes and so forth.

The Vice Provost for extended programs at Mid-America Public referred to the socio-economic disparities that existed in his state and noted that, "The University is becoming increasingly expensive. We're not, well, are less likely to reach out to the underserved populations and to disadvantaged populations. So there are some that would say that a university

education is out of reach to a significant number of the population.” When asked if he personally believed this to be the case he retorted, “No, I personally don’t believe that but some will claim that. But the reason I don’t believe that is that it is not steady.” Then he further explained that:

In some areas that is true and in others that is not true. Yes, I think you’ve got pockets in the state where this is difficult and in others it is not difficult. Because, it is not scientific, but I would imagine that people around [name withheld] county, most people, will be able to find the money for their kid to go to some university in this state but if you’re in the Northwest or the far Northeast of the state it’s not going to be as easy, the economic base differs from around. I bet it’s the same in Georgia.

Likewise, the Dean of Continuing Education at Great Plains Public University related to this issue of serving the needs of “the underserved,” migrant population that live in the remote areas of her state. This is related to the socio-economic disparities among geographical lines; geographical borders of urban-rural areas when she said the following:

This is a fairly expensive, well educated, beautiful community. But the population is not represented, not all through, not everyone has the same access to education and good paying jobs. So we have to provide distance education. And it’s a challenge to provide the means to help all the migrant population and all the state. When asked to expound on this issue as it relates to social disparities she continued: Well there is, believe it or not, there are regional differences right along what we call the Front Range and we are geographically bound. The Front Range is all of the communities along the corridor, right along I-70, so most of the population in

the state is right round here these three [Great Plains Cities], And there are much urban issues in theses areas etc.

Along this trajectory, the Provost for Mid-America Public who is also the Vice Chancellor for University Colleges, resonated with this issue of immigration and diversity along geographical lines and also alleged that social issues and disparities are demarcated along these geographical lines in asking me the following question, “How familiar are you with the state?” When I replied that I was not very familiar he continued with the following statement,

If you moved down from ‘Mid-America City’ ...they have a whole sleuth of problems down there and so, there are problems with business start-ups and all kinds of social issues. Then if you go to the Central regions there is a South Asian population relocated from Lows, they have had some struggle but they are doing better.

The Assistant Vice Chancellor for Extension and Engagement at South Public University also focused on the issue of diversity and the needs of migrant population and the retired older adult needs in saying that:

The growth of Hispanics and Latino population, we are sensitive to this, and to help with education and learning skills that will be used in being successful in the new environment. The population is living longer, 30% is learning way over 60 years of age. We need programs to keep them intellectually stimulated and personally enriched which will lead to a healthier life and to make them active citizens, mentally stimulated then there will be less illness.

The Provost who is also the Executive Vice Chancellor for Great Plains Public agrees that in his state there is a high number of immigrant population and that the effect is a social and economic issue for his state and for continuing education. He declared:

This is a state with a high number of Hispanic/Latino students and we see more of that population graduating from our high schools and the question is dealing with Latino students who have another language, can we provide them with some services though CE. But CE is self-funded and they will have to pay for that in addition to any tuition for classes.

Subsequently, there are other issues related to the nontraditional learner needs and diversity, for example, the international students' needs and language barriers. The Associate Vice President of Continuing Education at Mid-Atlantic State focused on the issue of ethnicity and diversity as it affects higher education and continuing education he noted that, "the issue of access income and ethnic groups vary in kind and participation in higher education and we need to deal with both of those issues and find ways to address them." Likewise, the Provost who is also the Executive Vice Chancellor for Great Plains Public also referred to diversity from a different perspective, that of international students and their needs and alleged that:

Well I think that one issue is, how do we internationalize the campus? How do we become much more of an international campus than what we are today? And that means exchanges both ways...We would like to bring more foreign international students to the campus whether it's for full time study or for a semester or a year. But again, if we do that, we would want to make sure we are equipped to offer ESOL classes to these students if they need those classes and, right now CE handles all of the ESOL. So we go through with our foreign programs through

CE, but if we increase that number we would then have to increase the staff pretty significantly and I think that is an issue we are dealing with which is an international issue.

Barriers to educational attainment. Barriers to educational attainment include, in addition to those already discussed above, many social population challenges, as well as attitudes towards education, and other social disparities and the issue of competition among institutions. For example, the Provost for Mid-America Public referred to the question of social barriers and alluded to the issue of attitudes towards educational attainment and the inability ‘to reach’ certain sectors of the population with education. And he avowed the following:

So there are population challenges, we have a Hispanic population tied to our dairy operating and industry. This is a growing group and [if] you look at the participant rates [referring to participation in education]...that is something we are going to discuss tomorrow with the board of regents. We seem unable to attract students from that population.

Likewise, the Dean of Continuing Education at Great Plains Public University agrees with the Provost of Mid-America and implied that, in her state, the population isn’t well integrated in terms of their views towards education:

If you leave this area and go to the plains you might believe you’re in Nebraska or Kansas there’s a lot of farming. And if you go to the other side of the mountain, it also very rural, it’s what they call the western slope. Grand Junction is basically west of the Rocky Mountain. So, in someway the state isn’t well integrated in terms of their views.

In addition, the Associate Vice President for the Division of Continuing Education at Mid-Atlantic State alluded to this issue of geographical disparities and acknowledges that it affects the view about higher education:

Well we have a variety of them [social issues] I guess the issue of low income, and then we have a very urban-rural-urban like [City in the East] and then another [city in the West] but most of this Mid-Atlantic State is very rural. So the needs of those two groups' [populations] are different but both [needs] are real. So, figuring out how to deal with those two groups is very difficult and critical to us. Although this state has an extensive higher education system; system in not the word, we have a large number of HE institutions in the state nearly 300 colleges and universities, but the large parts of our population doesn't have college education degrees we rank about 38th [in the nation], in terms of [the number] of our population with BA degrees. We have only 3.5% of adults participating in part-time learning which is low compared to other states. This is driven by culture, particular in the rural areas that are not particular supportive of higher education.

The Associate Vice Chancellor for Extension and Engagement at South Public referred to the educational barriers of waste in human capital and developmental potential with regards to huge amounts of high school dropout rates when he declared, "Oh, I think k-12 education and university response and concern is paramount. Poverty in this state is a problem. Educational achievement is critical for society; however, the drop-out rate in the state is 35-40% in many areas. There is wasted human capacity and human potential."

And so many administrators acknowledged this social barrier as profound in our societies across the United States and continued along this trajectory of waste in human potential and capital development. The Provost for Mid-America who is also the VC for Extension declares the following: “One of the things that the state has not done well is to address the diversity needs.” He briefly interrupted his thoughts and asked, “You’re keeping me secret aren’t you?” When I affirmed that I was keeping his responses anonymous he continued, “The public school system is horrible! The drop out rate is almost as high as 70% in some areas

He noticed my expression of shock and awe and then he continued, “It is localized and some of the schools, in some individual schools, but it faces a tremendous struggle, and it is also economically a struggle for a variety of reasons. So for CE, for us to reach into those areas is crucial, but not very easy for us to do.” When asked why this was such a difficult task he declared, “Well, I am not absolutely certain I think it’s because the problems and concerns are so overwhelming, daunting that not one knows where to start for sure. We go in as a higher Ed institution and the base isn’t there really, given the sort of condition of the high schools.”

The Associate Vice President of the Division of Continuing Education at Mid-Atlantic State University gave his thoughts about this daunting social issue and that it not only affects high school but college drop-out rates as well when he acknowledged, “If we are going to address these problems, as well as keep the system going, we need to stop the ‘leaking pipeline.’” When asked to explain what he meant by the ‘leaking pipeline’ he said:

What I mean is some; many start college and never finish. So it is the college drop out rate, if you look at the statistics, the numbers are astounding. My understanding is that for 100 every ninth grader you take a look by the time they would have been 6 years out of college only about 18 of them would have

finished college. So even though about 50 would have started college only a few would have finished. We hope CE would be part of that solution there.

Then there is the issue of competition among institutions. The assistant Vice chancellor who is also the Dean for CE at South Public noted that:

The world is global and ever changing need for lifelong learning so that caters and leads to competition. More important fundamental variable is lifelong learning as a concept for the nation and for people. Accepting lifelong learning as a concept is important for the economic wellbeing of the nation.

The Vice Chancellor and Provost at Mid-America Public University stated the following in response to this socio-economic issue facing his institution and state, “State budgets have suffered deficits for the last four years, significant amounts in some cases, so the struggle is how to maintain where you are? And that doesn’t get us [continuing education] very far.” When asked how this aligns with the need for lifelong learning and human capital development he responded:

Yes...the problem is how you find not only the fiscal resources, but the physical resources in how to reinvest in your human capital and we are struggling as a state with that...I think there are some signs that it might be getting better, but it is a big problem.

Finally, he, in fact, summarized this issue of human capital development and the competitive edge for educated citizenry when he said the following in a very derisive way:

Well, the significantly increased demand and flat out declining resources...the way I see this is that our global economy and our ability to compete in that requires investment and participation in higher education generally, the whole bit:

community college, technical education, and the whole of that, and at the same time we are facing some restrictions in resources.

Private Universities

The private universities administrators in this study alluded to many societal and social factors that directly or indirectly impact continuing education and their institutions. The following section highlights the issues they felt posed the greatest challenges with respect to the external environment.

Population diversity and nontraditional learner needs. Population diversity and nontraditional learner needs and access are some of the external societal affairs that administrators viewed as challenging to continuing higher education. The Executive Director of Continuing Education at Mid-America Private posits increasing access through continuing education for the nontraditional and underserved in the areas surrounding her university, “Access, yes and we would like to increase that [access] and begin to serve the Hispanics as well. And we are open and would like that to be a lot higher and would like to serve Hispanics.”

Likewise, the Dean of Continuing Education at South Private also sees an issue in catering to the needs of the nontraditional, adult learner and notes that her university has ‘adult-pain’ and stated that, “We have adult issues we share issues in adults, these are complex and acute we have ‘adult pain’ because its not a total end policy, but adults are quasi-independent.” When asked to expound on her prior statement she replied, “How can I put this?” And after much contemplation she said the following:

Well we have a problem where they will act out weird, [and it’s] hard to handle if there’s mental and emotional stability. This in an important challenge enhanced in adult programs, transition phases in life changes which have created emotional

acuteness. We are conscious of that and I think that years ago not enough attention [was] paid to those elements; you [the adult students] were on your own.

The Vice President for the School of Professional Studies at Great-Plains Private University also agreed with the matter of adult needs; that they are significantly different from those of the younger traditional learners. He affirms this notion by stating that, “The needs and wants of the older adults are significantly different than younger adults as the literature in adult education speaks about that difference is predominately marked by the significances of experiential background.”

He also acknowledges that another challenge is the changes in the population that his school serves and the shift from an “upper caliber” to a “lower caliber” of students, in saying that:

The second social issue has to do with the changing demographics in the country in that, when we first started to develop programs for older adult students we found that there were few options available to them so we were dealing with much higher socioeconomic and managerial group participants. So it was not unusual to find presidents, VPs, upper managers, etc who were the bulk of our student population. But as time has gone by, what we are seeing now is middle to lower managers who are trying to move up the management ladder so we have gone from upper to middle to middle to lower in terms of our populations of students we are serving.

The Dean of Continuing Education at South Private agrees with the changes in the caliber of students in the continuing education programs at her university when she alleged:

Externally in the South [region] there is dramatic up and down in the economy.

Returning adults who are not 'going anywhere' in jobs feel like they have hit the glass ceiling. Take for example, police and fireman, they need more credential so these changes have required them to have more education.

In addition, one administrator the Vice President for the School of Professional Studies at Great-Plains Private noted that one concern was that of government policies regarding the adult learners who need to take courses on line, "There are some concerns about the rules some of the rules that the department of education makes. The most significant concern has to do with Title IV and whether Title IV really treats adults fairly and especially adults taking courses on line."

Barriers to educational attainment. One very prominent barrier to educational achievement is the perceptions that various groups of the populations have about higher education. The informants in this study alluded to these facts and perceived that those barriers were indeed about perception or language or other such social issues. The Dean School of Continuing Education at Mid-Atlantic Private said, "There is a very large and vibrant Hispanic population in here in this City we have no clue why we don't do well with the Hispanic population. I guess that would be the biggest social kind of issue is the perception that we are not hospitable or that we are unwelcoming when in fact we're just the opposite." What he is saying is that the Hispanic population views his University as having a culture that is not hospitable and welcoming to them as a group.

Similarly, the Executive Director of Continuing Education at Mid-America Private agrees with the notion that perception of value or rather lack thereof is a challenge and a barrier to educational achievement and access in saying that:

Well, in this [region] at least in this State, the value of education is not perceived, at least in my point of view, it is not as high as in other parts of the country. What I mean by that is, people in this state don't want to pay for higher education. You know you hear upper middle-class folks complaining about tuition at our two major public universities which is lower than here. Tuition in this program is half of our day rate but is still higher than the state schools. So how can you convince someone who has his or her child in school to convince them to go back to school? And then for credit programs, Hispanics are focusing on their children, if they value education, not on themselves, but on the second generation.

When asked to explain why she believed the above statement was true she noted that employers also had similar perceptions whether or not higher education is highly valued in that city and that state.

Now a lot of our students get tuition assistance from their employer and that really helps. But I don't even think that all of our employers are tuned into that...the big ones tend to be, but we need some of the middle ones to and smaller sized employers we need to do some work to 'educate' them as to why they should educate their workforce and that's basically a disconnect there. I think the expectation is that if you educate them they will leave. This is especially with the younger generation there is no loyalty I think in this State that its harder to convince people that higher education is 'worth it' and that is it is worth putting your money into [higher education] and that its an investment that is worth it. It's difficult to get that message across.

Other administrators believe that this issue of population diversity is posing a huge problem for communities, including their institutions. The Provost at Mid-America held that the issue was very personal for him and alleged the following:

Now the Hispanic population is growing rapidly and is creating great stress for me. In the town where I live in Homewood they are in essence driving anyone poor out they [the developers] are buying up all the apartments, tearing them down, and are building million dollar condominiums. Its like Decatur [referring to (GA)] My kids go to school where only 25% of the kids are on reduced lunch [kids who receive lunch subsidies] and if this continues my kids will go to school with no one on reduced lunch. From early on, elementary schools, they will go [all through high school] with no one on reduce lunch for twelve years. So it, those shifts, are creating tensions, people like me at Homewood want Homewood to retain its diversity its background, but people on the profit side [developers] don't want that. So we got a university with identity crisis and a city with identity crisis.

The Dean of Continuing Education at South Private said, "This state, this area of the state has many immigrants from the Caribbean. Clearly there we are conscious of it. But, how do we hire people with proficiencies in Spanish and Creole? [a local derivative of the French language]. We do not teach in these languages, but with other issues in advising we need to match advising to geographic and demographic population, a degree in sociology helps.

This issue of population diversity also relates to class, and the Associate Provost for Mid-America Private University sees class as an underpinning of these social issues and their impact on continuing higher education and access.

I think kind of the underpinnings of the social challenges is the issues of class.

This part of the city is becoming very class oriented and that is a also the tendency of this university, to cater to class, you know. So where does CE fit within class?

You know, I think about Freire and “*Pedagogy of the Oppressed*” how it plays out in this setting. Its very class conscious in the negative setting, and how and if you haven’t already ridden, don’t already have a ride, how are you going to get there in a class oriented environment?

Finally, the Provost at South Private refers to the increase in high school drop-out rates and confirms that this will be true of our area. The increase in the population that does not have high school diploma is a difficult one. It’s very expensive to hire educated people. Even in social location at the undergraduate level. Other out of state providers are coming to recruit in Florida for traditional students In terms of numbers, it’s not what it seems to be, people are not well educated here.

Summary of Findings for Question One: Challenges

In this chapter I have outlined the findings that university administrators perceive as the greatest challenges or issues that their institutions confront. These issues are categorized as areas of two major concerns: internal and external. The internal issues are driven by the institutional political and policy “rhetoric,” while external challenges are of two major related trends: social and economic.

Internal Challenges Recap

Internal challenges are viewed from various concepts relative to continuing education as an organization within the traditional realm of the parent university, the academic relationships between continuing education and the parent university, as well as institutional governance.

Continuing education is primarily an administrative function within public universities and so, the programs offered via continuing education are for the most part the responsibility of the academic units. Within the private universities continuing education units are organized as autonomous in most instances; however, as with the public institutions, continuing education lacks academic authority over programs, and requires that all credit programs be approved by an academic unit and by an academic council. But, there is some flexibility with noncredit programs. For the private universities the issue of cross disciplinary programs is also a challenge when continuing education students take credit courses from various disciplines there is no control or decision making attributed to continuing education.

With respect to administration and management, the overarching issues relate to turnover in leadership as well as administrators having dual roles leading to the possibility of “burn out.” These issues are prevalent in the public institutions. In addition, there is the perception of administrative titles, whereby leaders within the private institutions perceive that title of dean or vice president attracts more autonomy and more visibility for continuing education. Likewise, the issue of culture is a matter that often leads to conflict and tensions within the university. There is the sense of scholar-versus practice. Continuing education is often seen as more practically based while the university as a whole is scholarly driven. Diversity is also a cultural dimension that affects public and private universities alike.

Academic relationships are intrinsically related to the issue of quality. Maintaining quality is a challenge as often continuing education programs are viewed as being of a lower quality than those administered by the parent university. This is especially true for the private universities as those continuing education units use a high amount of affiliate faculty. Moreover,

it is often perceived that students who gain access via continuing education are not matriculated by the same academic standards as their peers within the university.

Institutional governance is related to the challenges of shared governance and faculty attitudes. The notion is that the lack of fulltime faculty precludes continuing education from equally and proportionate shared governance. This notion is true for public and for private universities. Faculty perceive continuing education as “powerless” because there is less emphasis on outreach and service oriented units than there are with research. Additionally, there are issues of accessibility and delivery which are linked to distance education and online learning. Essentially, the university as a whole is concerned with traditional on campus education. Hence, there is a lack of motivation to provide alternate routes of access and delivery of educational courses. Furthermore, traditional academic units are also offering distance education (DE) blurring the lines between continuing education units that are used to providing distance education. These roles and lines are being eroded, resulting in tension between the academic units and continuing education. This issue is especially prevalent within the public universities.

Finally, there are the issues of fiscal policy and entrepreneurship. These two premises are interrelated. The notion is that continuing education would not exist on these campuses if it were not for the cash values that it provides. But, continuing education as a unit cannot independently assume financial risks for its strategic positioning within this traditional setting. Although they are predominantly self-funded by tuition and fee structures, most of the public institutions still receive some funding from state budgets. However, the private universities receive no such funding from the state or from the parent organization but they are still held to the political and policy guidelines of the parent institutions and must follow the Federal guidelines with respect to *Title IV* provisions for nontraditional students. Title IV is the student assistance section provision

of the the Higher Education Act (HEA) of 1965. This section deals with grants, scholarships and loans (www.tgslc.org/pdf/HEA_Title_IV_Oct02.pdf). First passed in 1965, and reauthorized every six years, the HEA coordinates all federal government programs in higher education. At the heart of the HEA are the student aid programs under Title IV of the act and the assistance to "developing institutions"-colleges and universities that serve populations with special needs. The challenge is that many adult students seek education and training from institutions, like some of the private institutions in this study, that do not fall under Title IV of the Higher Education Act, since these institutions cannot distribute most forms of state and federal student aid.

In addition, private universities bemoan their funding potential as very restricted because there are little or no endowments for continuing education units. In this study, the continuing education units have limited control over their strategic positioning, they lack autonomy over their program structures, and over their funds; leading to feelings of despair with respect to shared governance. Hence, administrators lament the notions of entrepreneurialism and enterprisial ideals as limiting, while feeling that the *notions* of academic capitalism are evident as continuing education continues to be an auxiliary unit.

External Challenges Recap

The premise of external issues are seen as economically and socially constructed. The economic constructs relate to government financial policies, industry needs, and the educational market place, while the social constructs relate to population, diversity, and barriers to access and educational achievement. The findings show that the lack of policies regarding financial aid for continuing education programs is linked to those of the adult, nontraditional learner. Nontraditional learners are not a focus of federal and or state financial aid policies. There is the availability of loans, but scholarship is limited or nonexistent in most cases. Economic stability is

also reliant on how well our societies promote the education of our citizens and this poses a problem as many nontraditional students are not able to access higher education and thus are precluded from acquiring those jobs that satisfy our current industry needs. In addition the issue of competition is paramount for the private institutions administrators. Competition in the educational market place is posing a crunch on all of higher education, but this is felt more within the private universities as community colleges are contemplating offering more degrees, and as the internet allows more online providers to offer degrees through distance education.

Within the social realm, population diversity, high attrition rates in high school and colleges, as well as language barriers are posing challenges for continuing education. However, the overarching challenge is one of perception or attitude towards higher education. Many within our societies, urban areas well as rural areas, are still ignorant of, or nonchalant about, the values of higher education and hence these elements preclude prospective students from pursuing post secondary educational opportunities that can foster self-actualization or the common good.

CHAPTER VI

STRATEGIC RESPONSES AND RETURNS ON INVESTMENTS

The purpose of the study was to understand continuing higher education's strategic responses to the current political-economic context of higher education. Hence, the first section of this chapter focuses on the findings related to continuing higher education's strategic responses to current challenges facing their institutions and their units—research question two. The second section, returns on investments and the value chain concept, focuses on the findings related to the returns of investment of those strategic responses—research question three. The words of the informants serve as primary data for this chapter; however, I have relied on documents to substantiate, corroborate, and or compare their responses to several of the interview questions. Data derived from documents are excerpted and extrapolated from various strategic, planning, and marketing documents, and are outlined in the section labeled documented strategies and action. These findings are also separated between public and private institutions. Table 4 outlines the overview of strategic responses as pursued by each institutional type, while table 13 on page 270, is a prototype of table 4 and outlines the return on investment using the *value chain* concept.

Strategic Responses

Responding to challenges always requires tactical strategies. Using various combinations of strategies has proven to be the best approach to addressing and solving problems and issues that threaten the effectiveness of any organization. In today's higher education arenas, and with the pressures being imposed on continuing higher education, it is imperative for institutional administrators to fully understand and implement their strategic responses to an environment where challenges are varied and profound.

Table 4 Overview of Strategic Responses

Legend: X denotes those strategies that were prevalent overarching within that institutional type; n/a denotes that the strategy was not overarching or prevalent within the institutional type		
Major Strategic Responses	Public Institutions	Private Institutions
Mission Recap <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Using resources of the parent university to extend educational opportunities to diverse, nontraditional learners Mission of the university and to educate people to roles of servant leadership in keeping with the Judeo-Christian ethic of service; to enrich lives Mission is to generate surplus 	X n/a n/a	X X X
Balanced Scorecard Matrix: Usage <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Financial stability Customer (students) service Learning and growth opportunities Internal organizational processes 	X X X X	X X X X
Financial Stability <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fiscal stability measures success Objective strategy for procuring mission Increases in revenue a measure of success 	X X n/a	X n/a X
Customer (Student) Satisfaction <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sustained volumes of students a strategy for advancing mission Increase in student enrollment a measure of success Students report life changing experiences 	X X n/a	n/a X X
Learning and Growth Opportunities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some synergies with collegiate faculty and staff Work on building relationships with academy; need commitment from leadership Training staff advisors to specifically address the adult learner needs Allowing leaders of CE to be content specialists, fostering young hires to be innovative Need for faculty to improve skills 	X X X n/a	n/a X X X

Major Strategic Responses Continued	Public Institutions	Private Institutions
Internal Organizational Processes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Significant program policy changes • Needs assessment and environmental scanning • Shape programs and degrees to suite the economy and industry • Implement adult friendly initiatives, ex. CAEL • Focusing on benchmarking of quality and success • Implement initiatives that focus on diversity • Make real business decisions about budget • Need for HE leaders to be relentless in promoting values of CE 	X X X X X n/a n/a	n/a X n/a n/a X X X X
Strategies for Improvement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resources to measure and evaluate outcome of post event and impact • Creating academic homes for students • Being proactive; anticipate changes • Develop sustained partnerships and relationships with key constituents, with the parent organizations • Market and promote CE within an elite traditional setting 	X X X X n/a	n/a n/a n/a X X

Public Institutions

Within the public institutions, administrators perceived the importance of triangulating strategies in an effort to foster effectiveness and efficiency while responding to the challenges that are facing their institutions and their units. These strategies include (1) an understanding of continuing education's role and mission, (2) understanding the importance of preserving the notion of the "Balanced Scorecard", (3) documented strategic responses, and (4) finally, seeking strategies for improving their effectiveness.

Continuing Education's Role and Mission.

It was almost unanimously echoed that the role and mission of continuing education is to serve the educational needs of nontraditional learners who want to gain access to a university. As surmised, nontraditional students are nonresidential students who are normally older than the average 18-24 years old and who do not normally matriculate into a university immediately after graduating from high school. How administrators view the mission of the organization is crucial to their strategic outlook for that organization. Therefore, this section outlines the responses to the question regarding the mission of the continuing education units as perceived by the informants representing that institution. I also substantiate their thoughts with the written, stated, published mission. However, due to confidentiality issues, when quoting the written missions I substituted words that identify the institutions and the continuing education units with pseudonyms as necessary.

The Assistant Vice Chancellor of Extension who is also the Director of Continuing Education at South Public University believed that “the mission of continuing education is to facilitate the external, the knowledge, and resources of university to the needs of general public...it is the portal linking meeting needs and to response to use, knowledge, and resource of university.” The Associate Vice Chancellor also for South Public said, “We have a special mission, to reach the community. As I said before, I am proud of our extension efforts.” The following is the written, stated mission taken from the marketing publications of the university's center for continuing education. *The [South] Center for Extension & Continuing Education is dedicated to enhancing the skills and enriching the lives of the State's citizens, communities and organizations by facilitating and expanding access to [South] University's intellectual and*

technical resources. As can be surmised the stated mission corroborates the perceived mission of the two administrators in context.

The Dean for Continuing Education and Professional Studies at Great Plains Public University perceive the mission as follows, “So, I believe that it is our role and mission, well, we are frequently the group that manages that interface with the community.” Similarly, the Provost perceives the mission as one of serving the community and said, “Well obviously the mission is to provide educational experiences for our non-traditional students whether they be, again, members of the community, and through distance learning, people from other states and from other countries.” The written, stated, mission as published in marketing documents reads: *The mission of the Division of Continuing Education and Professional Studies is to provide quality, innovative, lifelong learning opportunities to a diverse student population by extending the educational resources of the University of [Great Plains.]* The perceived mission although different from the semantics of the written mission is essentially expressing the notions of catering to the larger community and a diverse group of students.

The Associate Vice President for the Division of Continuing Education at Mid-Atlantic State University understood that the mission of the unit is to, “Provide access to learning opportunities that Mid-Atlantic State can make available through its resources to populations who might not have otherwise had access.” The Associate Vice President for Outreach also related to the idea of extending resources and said, “The mission of CE is to extend the resources of the university to address needs in society.” However the stated mission as outlined in the *Strategic Plan* for Mid-Atlantic State University reads: *Continuing and Distance Education uses a variety of program delivery technologies and methods to connect learner needs with Mid-Atlantic State resources to help individuals transform their lives through education.* Notice the ideas of the resources and delivery to help people to transform their lives.

At Mid-America Public, the Associate Dean for Continuing Education perceived the mission to be, “We are leaders in the highest quality programs partnerships and service in support of our lifelong learning.” The Vice Chancellor claimed, “That unit has primarily as its mission, the service mission to adult learners, the nontraditional student. That’s one way, and the second way is to the traditional sort of to extend the resources of the university to its citizens.” In addition, the Vice Provost for Extended Programs believes, “The mission of CE on this campus is to very simply to extend the ‘State’s Idea [of education] making the boundaries of the university the boundaries of the state, and in these days, beyond. It serves the community beyond the campus walls.” The stated written mission which is part of the Strategic Plan for the university reads: *We foster professional and personal development by sharing the knowledge and expertise of the university and making its resources available to individuals of all ages.*

The “Balanced Scorecard” Conceptual Framework.

Because the goals of all these units are to adhere to their missions stated above, I am employing the Balanced Scorecard managerial concept with an essence that continuing education organizations employ various strategies to counteract the challenges outlined in chapter five. These strategies have assisted them in becoming more efficient and effective in achieving their missions and goals. This balanced scorecard concept was not explicitly stated or reiterated by any of the participants in this study. However, during my analysis, I recognized that the processes being used by the units relate to the purview and the ideologies of the balanced scorecard conceptual framework. Hence, I interpreted their strategic actions as the balanced scorecard matrix because it covers the elements of their strategic responses. The Balanced Scorecard (Kaplan & Norton, 1991, 1996) is a managerial accounting or management concept that defines a strategic-based responsibility system. It essentially translates an organization’s

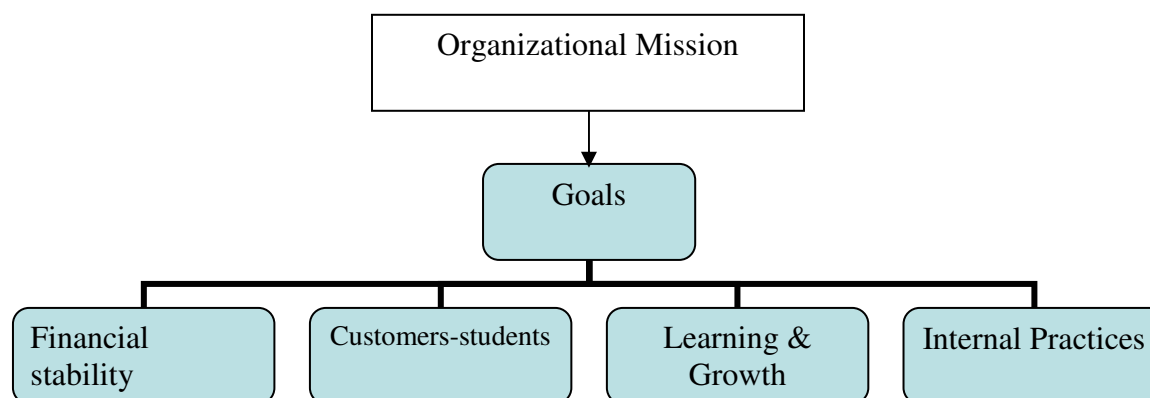
mission and strategies into operational objectives and performance measures. The Balanced Scorecard recognizes that management must consider financial and non-financial performance measures, linking them to the organizational mission, goals, objectives, and the strategies for achieving these goals. The Balanced Scorecard conceptualizes strategies from the perspective of (1) financial goals, (2) customer satisfaction, (3) internal business practices, and (4) learning and growth opportunities and their relationship to stakeholder satisfaction. According to Horngren and Harrison (2008) “Organizations that adopt the balanced scorecard usually have specific objectives that they wish to achieve within each of the four perspectives” (p. 1273). For this section, I adopted the balanced scorecard concept, but have modified it to suit the context of the continuing higher education organization and this study.

Consequently, I am using the four guidelines, perspectives as follows: (1) financial stability; the objective of financial stability describes the economic consequences of actions taken in the other three perspectives, (2) customers—students; defines the customer and the market in which the organizations compete (3) learning and growth—human resources; describes the capabilities that the organization needs to create long-term growth and improvement, and (4) internal practices—programs; describes the internal organizational processes needed to provide value for customers and other stakeholders.

When asked how successful the continuing education unit has been in procuring its mission, vision, and values to stakeholders of higher education, the administrators addressed this question in various ways related to the four balanced scorecard objectives outlined above. They then supplied me with documents that provided me with additional information that I used to corroborate their personal perspectives.

Figure 1

The Balanced Score Card Matrix.



Financial stability. The objective of financial stability is to have ‘profitable’ growth and financial viability. The Assistant Vice Chancellor of Extension who is also the Director for Continuing Education at South Public State University said, “One bench mark is that of maintaining fiscal stability, financial stability. Again, to summarize, we are successful in meeting needs of financial stability.” Likewise, the Associate Vice President for Outreach at Mid-Atlantic State perceived financial stability as an objective strategy for procuring the mission and that it is also a measure of success. And so he said with pride:

I think we’ve been very successful. Three of the four units I have are revenue generating units. The World Campus, Continuing Education at University Park, and conferences and institutes. Each of them generated more that \$15M in revenue last year, big bucks. So from that perspective, I think we’ve been very successful.

The Vice Provost (Vice Chancellor) for Extended Programs and Dean for the Division of Continuing Studies at Mid-America Public perceived fiscal stability among other things as a

means of success, “Well, we’ve been constantly growing. CE is one of the, well, is the fastest growing part of the whole extension function in the state. So the fiscal stability plays a role in determining that.”

Customers—students. The Assistant Vice Chancellor of Extension who is also the Director for Continuing Education at South Public sated, “CE as been around since 1924. Well, some things overall have been successful. For example, in sustained good volume, 150-190K [students] served annually.” The Associate Vice President for the Division of Continuing Education at Mid-Atlantic Public State University responded to the question of success in procuring the mission of continuing education unit by focusing on the number of customers served, and the way his unit has responded to the challenges regarding the adult learner. And he said the following:

I think on the whole CE is very successful. They have a new emphasis and offer, in launching in a significant way, our focus on the adult learner. In the past we had only a mild interest in pursuing the adult learner, but we have ratcheted that up some in a major way, to be a major interest. We will see how successful we can be in the next 5-10 years. But in general, South Public has been a leader in CE and DE in the country we bring in thousands and thousands of people into our courses every year.

The Associate Vice President for Outreach at Mid-Atlantic State viewed an increase in student enrollment in various programs as a scorecard of success and also a strategy in advancing his unit’s mission:

Enrollments in DE have grown by 15% to 20% each year over last few years.

Enrollments in CE here at University Park (UP) have focused on holding steady

the resident students who take our courses, and focusing on the adult students who take our courses. Since we have a big campus, our resident students use us for schedule shifting, but our adult students have been increasing steadily over the last three years. Our study abroad program has grown about 30 % over the last few years. Our summer program, and our camps have produced here at UP over 20K students [These students] come here every year. So we've been growing, I think we have been *informally* [italics supplied] successful.

The Associate Dean for Continuing Education at Mid-America Public University spoke of the strategic plans which lead her division in assessing the needs for an increase in nursing degrees. And she alluded to this as an example of the many services that continuing education does in an effort to reach customers:

We are leaders in the highest quality programs partnerships and service in support of our lifelong learning that is the change that we brought about 5 years ago.

When we did our strategic planning five or six years ago, it has always been very programmatically focused, our strategic planning exercise lead us into different directions so that we recognized that the value we brought in terms of creating partnerships and also in providing services to these state-wide communities.

When asked to explain what she meant by leading into different directions she remarked that those initiatives lead to an increase in the number of students, customers who have since been serviced and subsequently graduated:

One example is a number of years we surveyed all the Associate degree nurses around the state to see to their interest in pursuing a BA in nursing and approximately 9000 expressed a strong interest in nursing. Based on that interest

we convened the five schools of nursing over a period of time to build a common nursing curriculum and last year they graduated over 300 nursing.

The growth in the number of students served is an important scorecard for the Vice Provost for Extended Programs who is also the Dean for the Division of Continuing Education at Mid-America Public, “We reach over 160K individuals each year through CE so in that respect its making a great contribution to the educational mission of the university to serve people beyond the campus.”

In an effort to tackle the high attrition rate in young college students, continuing education at Great Plains Public instituted a program called ACCESS. This they believe is a way to procure the mission of continuing education. The Provost of Great Plains described the program in the following manner:

We have a program called *ACCESS* through CE and this is not for a student who was denied admission, but is thinking about Great Plains and if that student is not sure if this is the place for him or her. The student graduates from high school (HS) and the student, instead of going through the [main] university, goes through CE and that student will enroll in 6-9 credits in communications or English. The student has not yet enrolled or matriculated at the university, but they can decide if this is the place for him or her and at the end of a semester or year the student will apply to the university as a transfer student. And I would say, each year we get a few hundreds of students doing that program. And I actually see that increasing and I think more of our students when they graduate from HS not wanting to jump into a full-time living on campus program taking 12-15 credits

they want to wait and see, maybe still living at home or in an apartment near by, that is going to continue.

Learning and growth—human resources. One way that continuing education procures its mission is to take advantage of human resources and learning and growth opportunities. The Associate Vice Chancellor for Extension and Engagement who is also the Division Director for Noncredit Leadership Development Program at South Public State University held that “Each college within the institution is unique, but we integrate as total institution, there is synergy with collegiate faculty, we share staff and funds.”

Also, the Vice President of Continuing Education at Mid-Atlantic Public focused on the commitment of the university’s administration to the mission of continuing education and saw that as an important scorecard factor. He claimed that, “The institution as a whole [is committed to CE] yes, now there are differences within that. The senior administration of this university is very committed. “He also noted that a strategy for responding to the internal challenges they confront is to form relationships with the parent university, “We form the links and we work on building personal relationships with the academy.”

The Provost and Vice Chancellor for Mid-America Public University relates to the idea of learning and growth as a strategy, training staff advisors to be prepared to specifically address the needs of the adult learner and said that:

We have a significant initiative we are indicating for adult students. One is to equip ourselves as a system with people who are specifically trained to be advisors of students who are adults, and to we have a fairly elaborate electronic advising system. But in most cases we realize that adults need more than just

access to an electronic system we are trying to build a capacity across the system as well as at our own institution.

The Associate Vice President for Outreach at Mid-Atlantic State alluded to the commitment of the parent to the functions of continuing education as a strategy for learning and growth, and that allows corroboration with the parent university regarding program policies:

We are pretty much an ongoing unit and we've been in place for quite a while and so we don't have a lot of start up issues. This year we had one policy change that I think is significant and that is [applicable] for both CE and DE. We have adopted a protocol for approving new programs that basically positions us as if we were a campus of the university. So when CE University Park wants to launch a new program there is now a process where a proposal is put forward, the academic unit signs on to it, and then there is consultation. It's a much more main-streamed, visible, and open process; which is meant to avoid problems down the line when we launch a program and when someone else, down the line, would have liked or should have had something to say about it. So that is one example of a process improvement which is actually a new policy that we've adopted.

The Provost at Great Plains Public University alleged that the parent institution was committed to continuing education in light of the Dean of Continuing education being an integral part of the Dean's council, and due to the major role that continuing education plays on the campus, "Well, as I said, CE is certainly a part of the university it's not, I don't view it as an extension. It plays a major role in the day-to-day activities of the university. As I mentioned earlier, The Dean is a member of the Deans' council which meets every other week she works

very closely with the deans.” He further implied that continuing education through its human resources was one strategy for moving the campus forward:

I see CE as not only integrated within the campus, but playing a really vital role in moving the campus forward. For example, we are in the process of doing strategic plans for the university and CE and the Dean is playing a major role. She is one of, what I consider to be, a content specialist [being able] to talk about the role of the university to our state and she is taking on that role.

The Dean for Continuing Education who is also the Vice Chancellor for summer programs at Great Plains Public University perceived her staff, human resources as a strategic objective for success in declaring that:

As we work with new hires who come from different backgrounds, how we socialize [is important]; they can learn from our past, learn from our mistakes, and from our successes. It is helpful to involve everyone in our programming process; each has a role we do [things] different but older ones can foster to our younger hires.

The Associate Dean for Continuing Education at Mid-America Public University referred to the innovative strategies that continuing education employs in learning and growth, not only for internal staff but for all who would like to take advantage of these innovations, “Ok, CE here has the Dean’s office and then it has sub-units one of which is the “School for Workers”, one of which is called “Great Plains Learning Innovations.” And learning innovations is if you look at the [organizational] chart you can see various elements.” Pointing to the organizational chart she said:

Here is what I am responsible for; there are my staff and what they do. At our level, it is usually state-wide, but if we take it on at our level, there are innovations for teachers' licenses, developing websites, and partnership with teachers union...One that all can take advantage of, pre-service teachers use it.

Internal processes—programs. Internal practices are the programs, and processes that continuing education uses to procure its mission to its stakeholders. As well as the strategies employed in addressing the various challenges they face. The Assistant Vice Chancellor of Extension who is also the Director for Continuing Education at South Public said “We look at needs, programs, and the people served. Overall, what are the types of courses we offer?” He then gave an example of some of the programs used to address the challenge of social population diversity that they are proud of:

We do have the Chinese agreement with international trade. We do have a Chinese institution where we teach a link to cultural and religious training for example, Confucius Institute for Chinese. We also have a new unit marketing assessment growing program and partnership development which [I believe] will help us to grow.

The Vice President of Continuing Education at Mid-Atlantic State University highlighted some of the programs and strategies that his unit offers in its effort to counter various social and economic challenges relative to the adult learner needs, financial aid policy and other issues discussed in chapter five, and said the following:

In terms of economic development and push, that issue; we are building strategies around how and what we do to tie in with the local economy. So we are seeing about our local economy and seeing the kinds of business and industries that

exists there and try to better shape our degrees and educational programs to suit that so when people go to our programs they are prepared to contribute to that local economy.

He then focused on those strategies that are in place to help alleviate the burdens that adult learners face in an effort to gain and retain access to the education they need, but being able to do so in ways that are not only adequate, but also practical:

We are also in that context trying to find out better ways to help people think about their own career development we have developed career counseling services as well as workshops so we're trying to build a complete structure as to how we connect to the economy. In terms of adult learners we're trying to become a much more adult friendly institution. We recently completed a, are you familiar with CAEL organization? (Council for adult and experiential learning) they came in and did a study as to how friendly we are to adults and we're using that data to increase our friendliness and therefore attract more adults. We are trying to create more flexible scheduling arrangements we are going to open in the fall a weekend college where individuals can complete nine credits by taking courses just on the weekend in a given semester. We are extending, we have moved our offerings and extended our operations to the rural areas to give more people more access to what we do. So we're trying to build a whole range of services and opportunities around meeting the needs of adults where they are.

He further expounded on the issue of affordability which is related to the issue of access and financial aid. Both pose a great challenge to higher education in today's economy and have

been highlighted in chapter five as administrators bemoan this lack of financial aid. So the Vice President spoke about the strategies his unit is adopting to help alleviate this challenge:

On that issue of affordability, which is our biggest challenge...one of the reasons we are allowing adults an opportunity to do nine credits at a time is because it will allow them to tap into financial aid for one thing, and we are really pushing about scholarship and aid for our CE and DE students. This is a really big issue; the lack of financial aid. This state has done something that is really ground breaking in three years. For the first time a wade fund [of] \$10 million goes to adult part time learners only.

The Associate Vice President for Outreach at Mid-Atlantic State showcased his award winning programs as a benchmark of quality and success, “[For] our conference and institutes we have not focused so much on growth, but on quality and we’ve see some very good quality conferences that have won awards or have received federal funding for high quality conferences, and research units that have sponsored the conference and so forth.” He further addressed the strategies that continuing education should employ to assist with alleviating some of the social issues prevalent in our society in saying that:

I think that if you look at reports like “Rising above the gathering storm” the most recent national academy report, it talks about the need for universities to address some of the social needs in the country: providing more teachers, more assistance for schools, insuring that students come out of schools prepared for college and to get their science technology degrees and things like that. I see CE and DE as a resource to help the institution to respond to those kinds of issues. We can help extend the universities into schools; we can help to continue to train existing

teachers as well as new teachers. So, I see CE as resources for helping higher education respond to the social issues that are emerging.

When asked to expound on the statement of social issues and how it relates to continuing education directly or indirectly he said:

Now, as a resource, education can be a real resource for getting those [disenfranchised] individuals off to a fresh start. Yet we don't have the financial aid to do it or the infrastructure. What I am saying is, and the other thing I am looking at is, more and more as education becomes employer supported people who are not employed has less and less access to education.

Similarly, the Dean of Continuing Education at Great Plains Public refers to a program called *Flag Ship 2030*. This program was initiated as a strategy for encouraging diversity and to help alleviate some of the social gaps, population, and globalization issues alluded to in chapter five, and to encourage sustainability within the society they serve. Thus she expounded on the program in the following way:

We're trying to bridge that gap with 2030, and the distance education we're trying to do. I have been serving and we have been engaging in a future planning exercise with the Chancellor in what we want this campus to look like in the year 2030 it's called "Flag Ship 2030" and there are all sorts of people engaged in this exercise. Not only university people, but community people, alum, students, business people, hundreds of people; and I am involved as well. My recommendation is that in the year 2030 all people, irrespective of income, should have an opportunity to study aboard. Again, given this globalization that we're experiencing, it's important that we should have an opportunity to understand

other cultures, other institutions, and other people who are not like our selves.

Right now about 25% of our students study abroad, by 2030 I think all of our students should study abroad. What does this mean for CE? Well, I am not sure, but then again my role has to be bigger than servicing my peripheral self, and then by default, there should be opportunities for CE. So it has to be kind of an intuitive process.

The Associate Dean of Continuing Education at Mid-America Public claims that diversity and ethnicity are intrinsically related to the issues of the nontraditional learner needs and claims that her institution has a strategy for social diversity issues, and that is developing programs with university community partners:

There is a program for Native Americans, Hispanics, and African American and then again the university is very white, we don't have a lot of awareness about people other than ourselves so instead of going to the university we go to our university community partners. And we give, one of the programs we give money to work with migrant workers, about \$1 M.

When asked whether or not continuing education was successful in procuring its mission, the Provost and Vice Chancellor for Mid-America Public University claimed that, "I think it varies somewhat I think we have a very strong non-credit programming across the institutions if you look at the university. We have been less successful on the credit side." He mentioned further that there are other initiatives that are being employed in an effort to address some of the issues affecting the adult students:

We are also involved in providing support for development of distance education and we are concentrating more of our efforts there in supporting the other

institutions, in developing degree completion by other electronic means, primarily the internet, but not exclusively. The idea behind that is because we have so many two-year degree holders, what we need to do is to provide the means for them to move from where they are. We have been moving in that direction over the last two years through internal reallocation [of funds] but we also have a budget proposal that actually looks like it might be funded.

He spoke further about other strategic initiatives in an effort to raise awareness and aspiration levels which he believes is crucial to the future of the local community and the state:

We are trying to work at the local level it goes beyond CE with various things at extension raising aspiration levels is crucial to individuals' future, but also to the future of state as well, financial, family, education and other things. Classification of higher education, curriculum options, diploma options because if students are not prepared for university for any reason [these options] might help to alleviate some of the drop out rates.

Likewise, the Vice Provost for Mid-America Public elaborated on some of programs and internal efforts that continuing education and the university are projecting that will help to counteract some of the social challenges that face his community and state:

We have a huge summer program called *People Program* reaching out to 800 minority children from the City to our east that's ongoing and growing. We have an *Odyssey* project that works in a deprived neighborhood that brings college education to people who never had an opportunity before. We have a very large adult student services operation, it's on this floor. It is large compared to many universities where people are doing community educational counseling education

advising both on campus for people who want to come here, who can come here and also out in the community. So I have people out there, down there in certain parts of this City, in the libraries doing educational counseling to people of all types. So there is a reaching out on the part of the university to reach the educational needs of disadvantage and minorities.

Finally, he ended with the following thought that sums up the notions of the commitment to the mission of continuing education. When asked if there was anything he would like to share about continuing education that I had not specifically addressed he said very succinctly:

Well, one very important thing to say and that is, despite some difficulties that I've pointed out or that others might have to say about CE and the university and its commitment to CE or the levels of commitment. Overall, in our state we have a very strong commitment to the education of nontraditional students. But you know, unlike most states, you're just not left on your own. There is a system wide commitment to the extension function. Talk about small extension, cooperate extension, radio and TV, CE all those aspects of extension works, public service (is that what you call it in GA?) that exist in our state and it is hard for other states to copy, it is unusual. But it's all part of the "States [educational] Idea" and it's all over 100 years old. In a nut shell Sandria, this outreach idea is still a very strong force in the state, you've probably read about it!

Documented Strategies and Action

The Balanced Scorecard framework defines strategy as choosing the market and customers segments that the business units intends to serve, identifying the critical internal and business processes that the unit must excel at to deliver the value propositions to customers in the

targeted market segments, and selecting the individual organizational capabilities for the internal, customer, and financial objectives (Kaplan and Norton, 1996, p. 37).

Based on the above definition of strategy and in collaboration with the nuances of content analysis, the following section highlights some of the written goals that are outlined in the strategic plans and other documents of the continuing education units and that corroborate the *perceived* actions-intent that foster the missions of the units as outlined above. Tables five through eight, depict excerpts quoted directly from the various strategic planning documents obtained from the public universities' continuing education units. I have highlighted one or two goals and the related objectives, strategies, and performance measures that are implemented in an effort to meet the unit's mission. I have made every effort to extrapolate those goals creating a prototype that most closely interpret the mission and support the concepts of the Balanced Scorecard Matrix. Likewise, tables nine through 12 highlight those of the private universities using similar concepts like those of the public institutions.

The analogous figures, five through eight, depict the balanced scorecard concepts as it relates to the varying goals and related objectives that the public universities espouses. The figures show how the particular goal(s) and or objectives outlined in the tables are encompassed by the elements of the balanced scorecard concepts. Each figure is followed by an expanded explanation emphasizing the goal outlined in the table. Like the public universities, the private universities' goals are also depicted in the corresponding figures six through nine. Likewise, each figure is followed by an expanded explanation of the relationship of the goal to the purviews of the balanced scorecard concept. These expanded summaries included all the notions of the balanced scorecard matrix relative to the goal(s), related objective(s) or how these goals are to be met, and the related performance measures

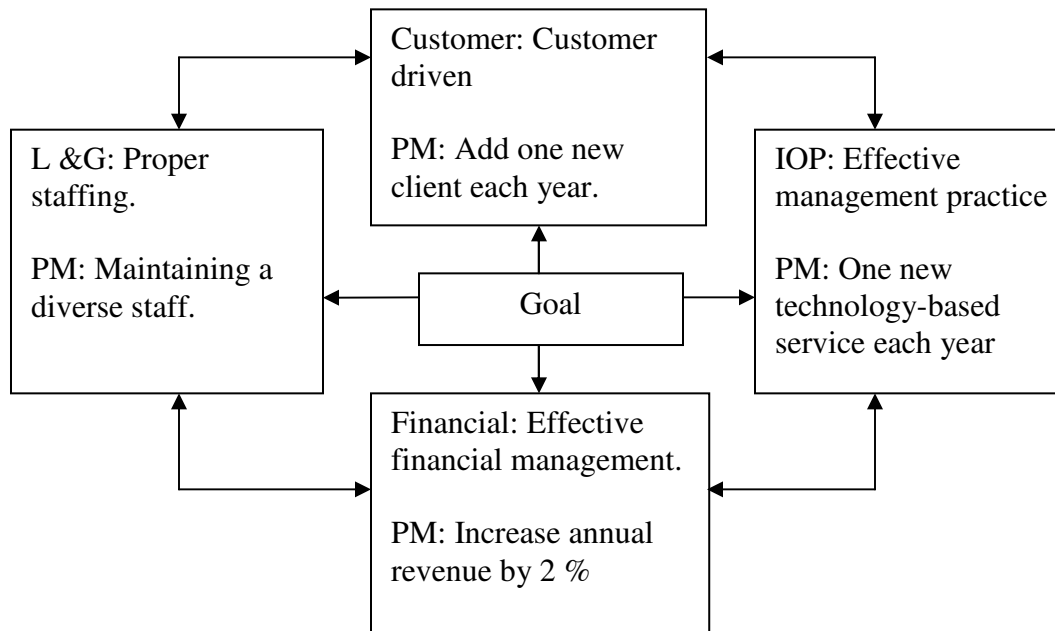
Table 5

South Public University Extension and Continuing Education: Strategic Plans 2005-2010.

Mission	Continuing and Distance Ed. uses a variety of program delivery technologies and methods to connect learner needs with [Mid-Atlantic] resources to help individuals transform their lives through education.
Goal	Provide a responsive, customer-driven operation that incorporates effective management practices, maintains financial stability and employees, a well-trained diverse staff.
Objective	Ensure long-term program stability and a quality image through proper staffing, effective financial and project management, and greater visibility.
Strategies	1. Increase project revenues by expanding existing projects and creation of new projects; 2. Add new customer services and market them on a bi-annual basis; 3. Hire and maintain a well trained, competent staff; 4. Maintain financial accountability and standards consistently meet contractual requirements.
Outcome	Increased annual operation revenue created by adding projects, expanding services, increasing awareness and integrating good management practices.
Performance Measure	1. Increase annual revenue by at least two percent; 2. Provide at least one new technology-based service and add at least one new client each program year; 3. Maintain a diverse staff, with at least 20% minority.

Figure 2

South Public State University's mission-*balanced scorecard*-concept emphasizing the goal outlined in table 5.



As can be surmised, this particular goal for South Public encompasses all the notions of the Balanced Scorecard. An example of each objective and related performance measure (PM) is outlined: Customer perspective: For customer perspective, part of the objective is to provide a responsive customer-driven operation. Internal business [organizational] processes (IOP): For internal business practices the objective is to help to achieve the organization's mission by using effective management practices. Financial [fiscal] perspective: The objective for South Public is to provide effective financial management. Learning and growth (L&G)—human resources: The objective here is to have 'proper' staffing. Should these objectives be met then the related performance measures should be achieved and are used as a means of tracking these objectives. For example, for proper staffing to occur, this should be measured by maintaining diversity in

staff and faculty, annual revenues should increase by at least 2 % each year in order to meet the financial objective, and at least one new technological-based service should be added each year to assist with efficiency and effective internal organizational practices.

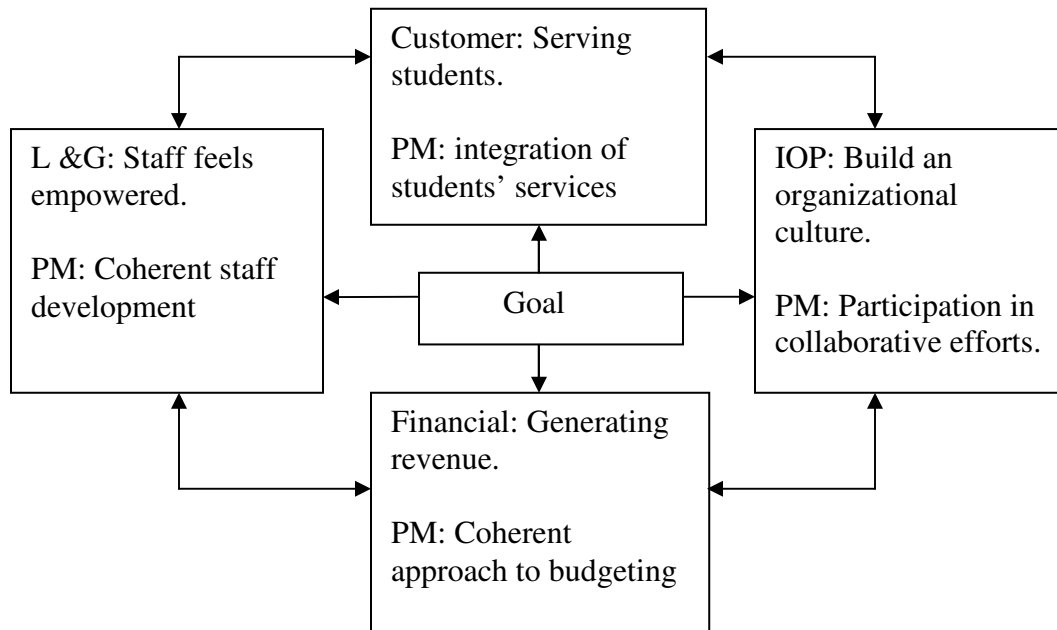
Table 6

Mid-Atlantic Public Continuing and Distance Education 2005-2007 Strategic Plans.

Mission	Continuing and Distance Education uses a variety of program delivery technologies and methods to connect learner needs with Mid-Atlantic State resources to help individuals transform their lives through education.
Goal	Continue to refine the organizational structure, culture, and services of (C & DE) to ensure increased integration and innovation for seamless access and service to the publics served by the program units.
Objective	Build an organizational culture in which all staff feel empowered to innovate based on a common sense of purpose and balance among achieving excellence in core competencies, serving students, and generating revenue.
Strategies	Build an organization with a common sense of purpose that shares resources across delivery platforms and establishes productive and collegial relationships with other Outreach units and with the academic community.
Measurable Outcome	1. Participation by each unit in one collaborative, cross unit program per year, 2. Development of a plan for a more coherent C &DE approach to budgeting and costing and staff development by 2006, 3. Full integration of instructional design and student service functions by spring 2006, 4. Identification and elimination of duplicated functions.

Figure 3

Mid Atlantic Public University's mission-*balanced scorecard*-concept emphasizing the goal outlined in table 6.



This stated goal for Mid-Atlantic also outlines the four concepts of the Balanced Scorecard. An example of each objective and related performance measure (PM) is outlined. For customer perspective, part of the objective is achieving excellence in core competencies, like serving students. There must be integration of students' services as a means of serving students. Internal business processes (IOP): Building an organizational culture that will promote the organization's mission. Participation in collaborative programs each year that promotes organizational culture. One financial perspective is in achieving excellence in core competencies, financial management. Coherence in budgeting and costing must be met in order to achieve the financial objective. Learning and growth (L&G)—human resources: The objective here is to make certain that staff feel empowered. For staff to feel empowered, proper staff development must be realized.

Table 7

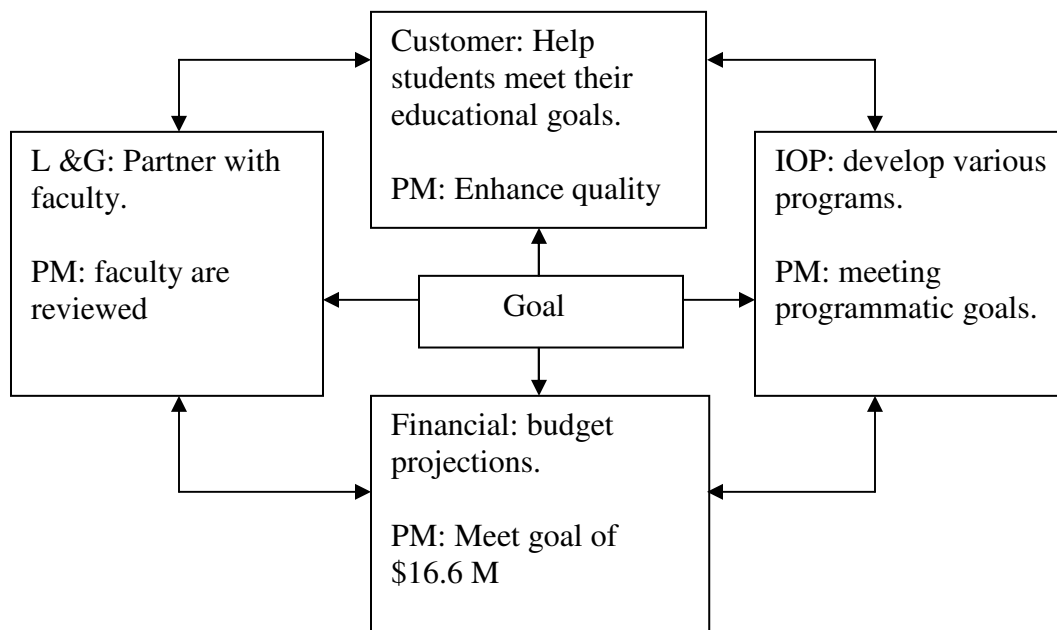
Great Plains Public Continuing Education and Professional Studies (CEPS) Strategic Plans F/Y 2007-2008.

Mission	The mission of the Division of Continuing Education and Professional Studies is to provide quality, innovative, lifelong learning <u>opportunities</u> to a diverse student population by extending the educational resources of the University of [Great Plains.]
Goal	Enrichment of the undergraduate learning experience.
Objective (s)	Provide quality, innovative, lifelong learning opportunities at the undergraduate and graduate level by extending the educational resources of GPU. Help students meet their educational goals by offering a wide variety of undergraduate courses and innovative programs. Provide innovative noncredit programs to undergraduates to enhance their education.
Strategies	Maintain and enhance the quality of the undergraduate programs offered through ACCESS (See chapter 5), the Evening Program; Independent Learning, and International English Center Programs. Maintain and enhance the quality on noncredit programs offered to undergraduates. The established programs should meet their programmatic and budget goals for 2006/07. The 2006/07 budget projections total revenues of \$16.6 million in tuition revenue.
Performance Measures	Each program benchmarks with peer and aspirant programs at AAU universities. The established programs should meet their 2006-07 budget

	<p>and program goals. All CEPS courses and faculty are reviewed and approved by appropriate academic department, school or college.</p> <p>Partner with faculty, school, and colleges to develop various programs that serve traditional and non-traditional students interested in earning a bachelor's degree.</p>
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Figure 4

Great Plains University's mission-*balanced scorecard*-concept emphasizing the goal outlined in table 7.



Great-Plains Public focuses on the four concepts of the Balanced Scorecard, an example of each objective and related performance measure (PM) is outlined: For customer perspective, the objective is to help admitted and non-admitted students meet their educational goals. One

performance measure is to enhance the quality of the educational programs. Developing program is one internal business [organizational] processes (IOP) that is measured by meeting programmatic goals. One financial [fiscal] perspective is in achieving budget projections measured by meeting the 2006/07 budget of \$16.6 million in revenues. Learning and growth (L&G)—human resources: The objective here is to make certain that faculty is involved in program development. The related performance measures should be achieved by faculty reviews.

Table 8

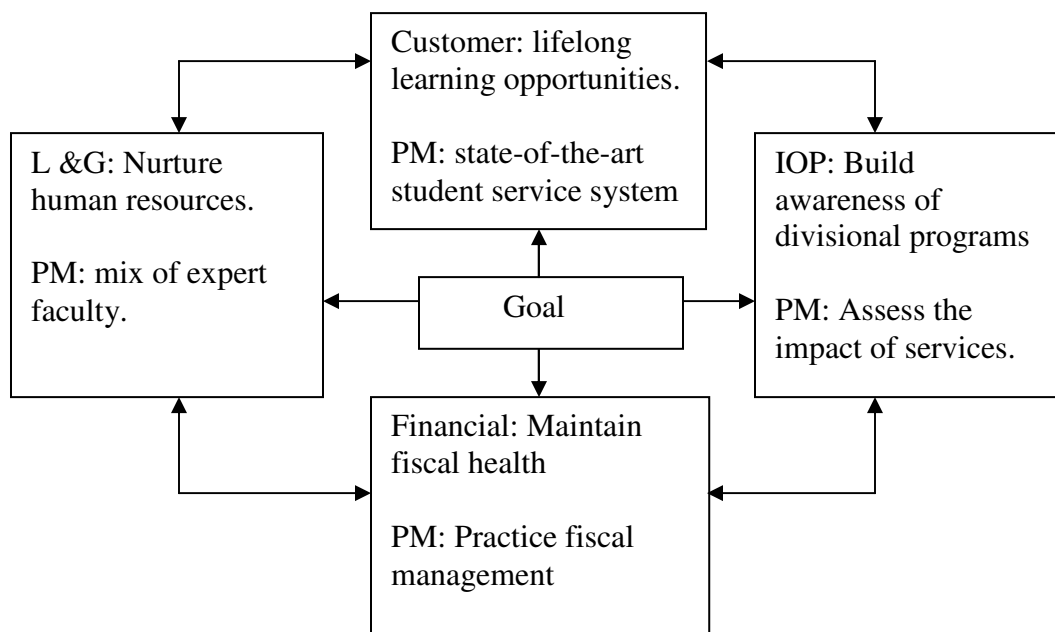
Mid-America Public Division of Continuing Studies Strategic Plans 2002-2007.

Mission	We foster professional and personal development by sharing the knowledge and expertise of the university and making its resources available to individuals of all ages.
Goal	Advance lifelong learning and provide high-quality campus and community services for nontraditional students.
Objective	Provide credit and noncredit, lifelong learning opportunities and expand professional and personal development. Address societal issues through multidisciplinary approaches. Maintain fiscal and programmatic health. Build public and institutional awareness of the divisional and institution lifelong programs and outreach services. Nurture human resources.
Strategies	Continue to provide high-quality student services. Extend the resources of the university to serve nontraditional services of all ages. Promote and strengthen the visibility of the division both internally and externally. Promote efficient administration and professional development and growth of faculty and staff. Each unit must align its annual plans and

	budget to the campus' strategic priorities.
Performance	1. Complete the transition to a state-of-the-art student services system; 2. Units responsible for academic and fiscal integrity of course offerings; 3. Practice entrepreneurial, fiscal, and program management. 4. Assess the impact of programs, services and partnerships. Use a mix of expert faculty, staff, and ad hoc instructors to achieve program objectives.

Figure 5

Mid-America Public State University's mission-*balanced scorecard*-concept emphasizing the goal outlined in table 8.



As with all the other public institutions, the stated goal for Mid- America Public fosters the four concepts of the Balanced Scorecard, their objectives and related performance measures: For customer perspective, the stated objective is to provide lifelong opportunities, which can be

measured by completing the state-of-the-art student services system already in progress. Building awareness of the division and the programs is one internal organizational process that can be measured by assessing such awareness that impacts student services. One financial [fiscal] perspective is in maintaining fiscal health, which is measured by practicing sound fiscal management. And finally, for the learning and growth objective, the idea is to nurture human resources. In doing this, there will be a resulting mix of expert faculty and staff who are ready to proffer the mission of the unit.

Strategies for improvement

The Assistant Vice Chancellor of Extension who is also the Director for Continuing Education at South Public acknowledged:

We could do some things [better], we could look at trends and needs, do environmental scanning. We need to anticipate, be proactive. When the technical sector bottoms out then we need to refocus, compound, make adjustments of efforts, reconsider variables. We need someone who can create partnership, two people to do strategic planning development and implement. We need to determine how to use resources of time and capital better. [That] means to evaluate, do more post events of outcome measures and impact. I am not content with evaluation of how we enhance life of the learner, and there are always better ways to do some things, like program audits.

In responding to the question of procuring its mission the Associate Vice Chancellor for Extension at South Public State focused on the need for improvement and alleged that:

I think we are very effective and efficient in doing that, but CE needs to continue to seek new and different ways to do this [procure its mission]. The problem is,

we do not denote resources to measure and evaluate, and this is difficult especially when you think about CE providing access, equity, and opportunity. Also we could focus on experience, strength, and resources as well as needs in this area.

The Associate Vice President for Mid-Atlantic Public in responding to the question of improvement, and where he sees that continuing education needs to improve he said the following:

What I would say, one of the things I am going to push is ‘One South University. Each of our 24 institutions has their own CE units and a World Campus and all resources need to be deployed together, every campus represents the full measure. We operate more as independently and it is a challenge to become this one south state thing. [If we did this] students can access resources from anywhere.

In responding to the question of strategy for improving continuing education, the Associate Vice President for Outreach at Mid-Atlantic State focused on sustained relationships, and alleged that, “I think the need for long-term strategic thinking about programming and the need for us to begin to develop sustained relationships with the sectors of societies that we serve. We tend to be responsive to opportunities but tend not to have long-term relationships with key constituencies that help us think ahead.”

The Associate Dean of Continuing Education at Mid-America Public declared that there are important human relations and partnering that continuing education must engage in which are essential to improvement, When asked how she believed that continuing education could improve she stated, “We need to take it upon ourselves to establish ourselves as a profession and a profession for which there are standards that are agreed upon.” And a long pause she said

almost in a whisper, “The state as a system and the university are connected and we must have excellent relationships with university partners.”

The Provost for Mid-America Public believed that continuing education should improve in the area of distance education in saying that, “I don’t believe we are positioning ourselves to take advantage of distance education.” The Vice Provost also for Mid-America Public believed that it is important for the adult students to have an academic home and that is where continuing can improve, “if I would be around here [long enough] that is something I could work on making sure this can some kind of academic home for part-time students.”

The Dean of Continuing Education and Professional Studies for Great Plains Public University implied that continuing education can improve as there are challenges to success which includes attitudes towards such success, in saying that, “Challenges to success? We’ve enjoyed a lot of success but how do you maintain balance between complacency and stability.” In addition, the Provost also for Great Plains Public sees in an increase in the attitudes towards distance learning might benefit the university. When asked how and where he sees continuing education needing to improve he said, “We do some distance learning but not like other places, but we [the university] are very careful, and we need to reexamine if we should keep it where it is or if it is time to increase offerings to distance education.”

Private Institutions

Private university’s continuing education units also portray similar strategic responses to the context of their institutions. Like the public institutions the administrators perceive that continuing education is essentially positioned to respond strategically to the challenges that their institutions face.

Continuing Education's Role and Mission

Like the public institutions, the private institutions administrators also view continuing education's role and mission as critical to serving customers and the community, in advancing educational opportunities with an emphasis on nontraditional learners. When asked to describe the mission of continuing education the Dean for the School of Continuing Education at South Private University expressed the mission as follows:

“Our primary mission, the mission of CE, is to meet the mission of the university, and we do it well!” She continued emphasizing the notions that the mission of continuing education is to serve the adult learner “I believe the university's CE is committed passionately to the mission and value of the university...to external population 1st generations, and a significant number of minorities. The mission of the university [is] acutely committed to the adult population.”

Likewise, the Provost also for South Private University expressed the mission as follows, “Well, I think that currently the mission is to help working adults get some level of training beyond high school People with degree, certificate, [will acquire] more skills, more jobs. These are three major missions.” The written stated mission outlined in the strategic planning documents reads, *The mission...of the School of Adult and Continuing Education (ACE) of [South Private] University is to promote and deliver the academic programs, credit and non-credit, developed by the faculty and administration of ACE as warranted by the student populations and other parties.* As can be surmised, the stated mission is broader than the perceived missions but it conveys the notion of serving the students and other populations.

Interestingly, the Dean for the School of Continuing Studies at Mid-Atlantic Private University quoted a part of the written, stated mission for his school and said,

“Well, our stated mission statement is to ‘enrich lives and careers.’ Our broader mission is to serve larger community, and specifically the working adult population that’s really our focus.”

The Provost at for Mid-Atlantic Private perceived the mission as three fold and expressed it as follows:

In principle [it is] making education accessible to the general public. Secondary part of the mission is being it’s the summer school for anyone who is a fulltime undergraduate here during the summer so it provides some courses in the summer that would serve the parent institution, because they run the summer program, and third is the revenue generation they are expected to do.

An analysis of the school’s strategic review for 2007-2012 shows the written stated mission as very concise and it reads as follows: *The mission of the school is to enrich lives and careers.* It then expands into the basis of this stated mission and continues with this sentence *...And is based on the provision of exceptional programs by passionate faculty and staff with world class student support services.* At a first glance it would seem that the mission as stated is contrary to that expressed by the informants, however, the focus is on enriching the lives and career opportunities of students but with an expanded objective, using various strategies.

The Vice President for the School of Professional Studies at Great Plains Private University expressed the mission of his continuing education unit as:

I would say that the mission is consistent with the university’s mission and that is to educate people to roles of leadership and service of others and that would be to educate people for responsible leadership roles in society and in keeping with the Judeo-Christian ethic of service. Service which could be defined in the way that

Greenleaf has termed: “*Servant Leadership*.” That’s just in a nut-shell there is a longer version.

The Associate Dean for Distance Education at Great Plains Private also perceives the mission as one of service and expressed the mission as follows: “Oh my unit, well the mission of the university to build leaders and service to others. Our unit is to support that goal.”

The Mission as stated and written reads as follows: *[Great Plains] University's adult continuing education programs are to provide a quality education that is convenient, flexible, and highly personalized to meet the needs of the adult learner.* And so the expanded mission is to cater to the needs of the adult learner as they become leaders through educational opportunities.

Likewise, the Executive Director for Continuing Education at Mid-America Private also viewed the mission as all encompassing of the Christian mission of service and expressed the mission of her unit in the following manner, “That bridge, I really do I think to bring our academic expertise, also our Christian mission out to the communities, but also to bring the communities here to change Mid America, to inform Mid-America, to keep it current. So she sees the mission as reciprocal process of exchange.

The Provost for Mid-America Private agrees with the Director in his response to the question about the mission of continuing education at his university, but he believed that there are ‘missions.’

Well, I think it has, I think it has missions. I am not sure there is only one. But one mission is to serve the public, serve the community we are in, and not just this rich immediately, over the mountain which is this City, but it is the city in its totality. A second mission for Metro [name of the continuing education unit] is to meet the needs of the university. And even some of these are important, bringing

a diversity to a group of the campus to help shape the campus so that is our mission: To bring those that typically who haven't been on campus, to expand the university itself, and expand our vision and then one more thing is to serve the traditional roots of the university. It is a Christian university and it is the Christian thing to do to serve people if there is any thing about the Baptist tradition is that, that is, admirable it is its history of service.

The stated mission reads: *The Mission of Mid-America University's Metro Programs is to provide opportunities for professionals and personal growth over the lifespan through rigorous academic programs and relationships in a Christian community.* Unlike the public universities, the some of the private universities' missions are steeped in traditional religious values of service that connotes service related to servant leadership. In addition, it seems to be expanded into their core humanistic values and philosophies.

The "Balanced Scorecard" Matrix

Within the private universities the concepts of the Balanced Scorecard is philosophical as the concept translates an organizational mission and strategy into operational objectives. As the administrators related to their missions and as those missions compares with the stated, written mission is can be inferred that continuing education within the majority of the continuing education units were concerned about the four perspectives outlined below.

Financial stability. The Provost for Mid-America Private sees financial stability as a strategy and as an indicator of success and said that, "I think that the division itself is extremely successful, they have profits that serve every department of the university." The Dean for the School of Continuing Studies at Mid-Atlantic Private University perceived fiscal stability and increases in revenues and budget as one indicator and as a measure of success.

Similarly, the Provost for Mid-Atlantic perceives continuing education as procuring a part of its mission when it is successful in generating revenue that supports the university. When asked if she believed that continuing education was successful in procuring its mission she replied, “Oh very successful, as I said. As I said earlier, part of their mission is to generate a surplus and that helps the operations of the parent institution.”

The Dean for the School of Continuing Studies at Mid-Atlantic Private University perceived fiscal stability and increases in revenues and budget as an indicator of success, “Thirteen years ago our budget was a \$1.5 million. There are \$7 million today.”

Customers—students. The Vice President for the School of Professional Studies at Great Plains Private University perceives increases in students’ served as a measure of success in procuring the missions of the unit, “I would say very successful in the close to 30 years that we’ve been offering this program we’ve had tens of thousands of graduates and the graduates have echoed that not only did they feel that they had quality a education, but they had a life-changing experience.”

The Dean for the School of Continuing Studies at Mid-Atlantic Private University focused on the growth in students and alumni as an indicator of success. When asked whether or not he believed continuing education to be successful, he said,

Back in 1994 there were 400 heads [students] there are 1200 today....Our alumni participation has grown exponentially and our giving has grown exponentially.

Thirteen years ago we were just here; today we have seven off-campus locations around the state that serves students. So the most objective indicators we’ve done

Ok, those indicators we’ve done Ok....have we done it all? Is there a lot to do?

Yes, but we’re on a fairly good trajectory!

Learning and growth—human resources. The Executive Director for Continuing Education at Mid-America Private sees an effective human resource as well as commitment from leadership as strategies for improvement and growth in saying that:

You know, we have a new president and I do believe that he is committed to service to the community, but I have yet to see, to know how that will support [us]. We have lots of ideas but cannot really take them forward because of lack of human resources and that is very constraining I ‘kind a hang’ in here because I do believe that our new president understands. He values what we do in the community and I feel like we’re on the brink of a change and I do hope that’s true but I, you know, do not see any tangible signs of increased support yet.

The Associate Dean for Distance Education at the School of Professional Studies (SPS) at Great Plains Private focused on learning and growth as an integral part of the strategies that are important in facilitating effectiveness in learning and teaching practices. Thus, she alluded to the need for faculty to understand ways in improving their teaching skills by taking advantage of the learning and growth opportunities within her unit and so she expressed this idea in the following manner:

What has happened, because of this unit, I have five instructional designers here, one is a PhD, two are ABD’s, and two have masters and as I go forward, I would hire PhD’s because they need to, because of the impact we are having on learning as a whole and the SPS and the school as a whole it is important to get to the point where faculty understand that there are ways they can improve their practice in teaching. To do so is to be innovative in learning and technology, to support

faculty, and to develop on line learning. I should say developed and produce, because we also do the produce part.

She also perceived a strategy for making instructional designers faculty as a means of learning and growth, advancement for such academic professionals, “There is a conversation now about making instructional designers faculty. That means that they would be academic faculty positions and they would be recognized as part of providing instructions for students which is a faculty role and that would be, I think, it is very forward thinking.”

The Dean for South Private focused on human resources as a strategy that portrays success. Team work is important for advancing the mission of the organizations and it is not only ‘hard’ skill sets that are necessary. So she said the following:

The way we function is flat team work as a unit. Flatness is a great deal.

Previously we hired for personality, like skills capacity, but now we’re into team “not stars,” but team! Leadership preparation! I know my “bread is buttered.” I can’t do anything without my people; you must put value on your people. You bet they can make or break authentic credibility of the value of what they do and we hire for that....Here at South Private there are human personal quality including people who have been here forever. We know how good we’ve got it here.

Internal processes—programs. The Dean for Continuing Education at South Private University relates to the methods and concepts that are practiced in teaching adults as a strategy for continuing education. “We practice concepts of Androgogy [Dr. Knowles’ concepts of Androgogy.] This is a very conscious modality of the way our program and curriculum are structured. I had a class with Dr. Knowles, had privilege of doing so and we take this seriously.” She also spoke about the need to reorganize budgets

and spend wisely in an effort to reserve the challenges related to fiscal resources, “Well, you need to reorganize your budget you only have so much money and you need to spend it wisely.” She also spoke about the need to market and promotion as a strategy for advancing the visibility of continuing education and so she declared, “Further, we don’t have enough money for marketing, we need to market.”

In addition, she spoke about some of the programs and strategies that her unit proffers in order to alleviate some of the social challenges discussed in chapter five. When asked to give an example of a strategy or program that demonstrates how her unit has tried to address the social issues described she stated:

One strategy is to take direct interest in your students, [think] about them. Hire advisors, not faculty advisors. This is very difficult it is one whole other dimension. We need more awareness programs, I am conscious that this is not social work, but dealing with students with psychological and social elements from a program point, this is an internal issue. There is the need for realizing social issues of mature students.

The Dean for the School of Continuing Studies at Mid-Atlantic Private University when asked to give an example of some of the strategies his unit used to assuage some of the social issues he spoke about alleged:

Well, doing very specific kinds of things, for example, advertising in minority owned papers, African-American papers, participating in events. As a matter of fact, as I mentioned Hispanic, I just had lunch with the president of the Hispanic Chamber and we have a table at the Hispanic Gala next week. We’ve done that with the African-American community and now we’ve started to reach out to the

Hispanic. We try to tackle it head on that way and develop presence, this is the most direct route. We are all involved in the community at some level so we pushed community engagement as a value among the staff at my level but also down to the middle management level. So if you want to be on a board, to be involved with that part of it, is I guess is positioning yourself in the community, truth service kind of opportunity.

He also spoke about some strategic directions regarding programming as well as internal strategies that related to internal ‘business’ decisions that will help to alleviate some of the internal challenges. The emphasis was as follows:

I mean we make business choices all the time that are not related to external forces. But they are really business choices. I mentioned four sites on our external budgets we are closing one of them they were not making any money for us, and was not a good market but we could not have known until we tried. So we’re going to close; now that is a business decision not related to external forces. In terms of societal or major force our direction is to focus on graduate education a strategic direction for us right now. We currently have two programs and we’re adding a third next year and a fourth one after that. My guess is that we will be adding a new graduate, masters degree program each year, which is a reasonable target for us as we go forward.

The Provost for Mid-Atlantic Private sees the development of quality programs as an important strategy in an effort to extinguish some of the negative nuances about the quality of continuing education programs and relates this issue to social challenges that confront continuing education, especially those dealing with the negative perception of quality and so she exclaimed:

The strategy is to develop quality program to make sure if they do a degree...it might be one course at a time but you need to make sure that they get to that point, even if it will take them [part-time students] eighteen years.... So that's internally and then externally essentially it is the same thing because if our program is exceptionally good compared to others it is still etched in people's mind who don't know that of all schools of CE around the nation, and that might not be fair.

In addition she spoke about her habitual practice of taking every opportunity to promote the values of continuing education which strategically helps to foster the mission of continuing education, in saying that:

The main thing there has been for my self as the provost, never miss an opportunity to point out the quality of the program in public, in front of other faculty. That kind of central, moral support of the School of Continuing Studies (SCS) is essential to its performance and mission is good, that it's not disrespected by us and many others will then take the cue because we are supposed to promote the quality of the institution in general and if we think highly of the SCS then well maybe....

Similarly, the Dean for the School of Continuing Studies (SCS) also at Mid-Atlantic corroborates the need for the university leaders to promote continuing education as a strategy for effectively procuring its mission. As so he alluded to the following as a strategy for alleviating some of the internal and external political issues that his unit confronts, specifically relating to the subject of quality:

You have to be relentless first of all. It comes from the top. If the President or Provost aren't carrying the value of us, if you can't sell to them CE, meaning our unit then you're lost from the get-go. It has to be, it has to come from the top.

Secondly you have to be relentless in pitching that and I mean it in terms of speaking and providing that information in every avenue you possibly can.

Whether it's finding human interest stories that make the news papers, to what you put on your website, to every other avenue that you can about promoting the quality of what you do and how you do it.

The Associate Dean for Distance Education at the School of Professional Studies at Great Plains Private University believed that her unit is successful because there is a high demand for their services, responding to the question of whether or not she felt her unit was successful in procuring its mission, and she states:

We are successful to the extent that demands for our services are pretty high.

Because they would put far more courses on line or faster if they could, but we just don't have the capacity to do that so we have to be strategic when we make decisions what courses were going to develop, what courses were going to do on line.

She also spoke about the online resources for faculty which helps to procure the mission, vision, and value of her unit. When asked if there was anything further she would like to share about continuing education she said:

There is a faculty website it is an open site for faculty teaching online. Anyone can do that mission, vision, value for unit organizational chart and internal organization. Production manager has a publication specifically for faculty to

update faculty with teaching strategy the web site is facultyonline.org. I am proud of getting acquainted with central instruction strategy.

Likewise, the Vice President for the School of Professional Studies (SPS) at Great Plains Private University one of the strategic alliances that he manages that helps to facilitate the mission of the university and of the unit. He explains that initiative as follows:

We spun off a for-profit cooperate learning called [Great Plains Private] Learning Initiative and we spun off another in conjunction with a Spanish university to create a for-profit to manage dual language programs in the United States and Latin America we currently have 1,000 students in that program in South Florida and that we also spun off a limited liability cooperation that we will offer manage specialized programs for government employees that we will be offering in Washington, DC and Virginia. So that is unique only a few have done stuff like that.

As part of the university's strategic agenda, it is important to understand what the university is going to do to show that it is honestly committed in principle to continuing education. When asked whether or not the parent university is committed to the mission of continuing education, the Dean of the School of Continuing Education at South Private University alleged the following:

I don't know, I honestly don't know. I think it is our position that the Dean of Adult Learning is honestly committed in principle, but based on current structure I don't know, I don't want to come off as vague... that is part of the strategic agenda what is the university going to look like in the long run. I am not being smart but honest I'll tell you the same thing, if it is not honest well...

The Provost Mid-America Private referred to the programs that helps to alleviate some of the social issues relative to language barriers and to reach out to non-English speakers “Well, for example, it like the health care interpreter program we have folks that Spanish health care personnel they provide a program that CE developed a program where they can teach people how to interpret in hospitals, it is a very successful program the healthcare interpreter program.” In addition he spoke about faculty initiatives, programs used to counteract social issues in saying that:

We have nothing, formally from the university, but there are faculty who are addressing these areas particularly in the areas of sociology and other arts they are very set on addressing the issue of class in education and other such arenas but it is in it an initiative at the grass roots level.

In an effort to increase interests in higher education the Executive Director for CE at Mid-America talks about her program for helping students:

Well, you know every time I get to do a speaking engagement and I share to them about the numbers and how much they can make over their life time; that they can double their income if they have a bachelors degree versus high-school diploma. Especially for a woman, I show them that for a woman it is still 60% more on the dollars than it is for a man and unfortunately it is still the same way. I try to get the word out there.

Documented Strategies and Actions

As have been noted throughout this chapter, the Balanced Scorecard enables a company to determine whether or not it is making continuous improvement in its operations and quest to fulfill its mission. This concept links the perspectives of the organizational four stakeholder

groups to the organization's mission, objectives, resources, and performance measures. The following tables depict excerpts quoted directly from the various strategic planning documents obtained from the private continuing education units. I have made every effort to extrapolate those goals that most closely interpret the mission and support the concepts of the Balanced Scorecard.

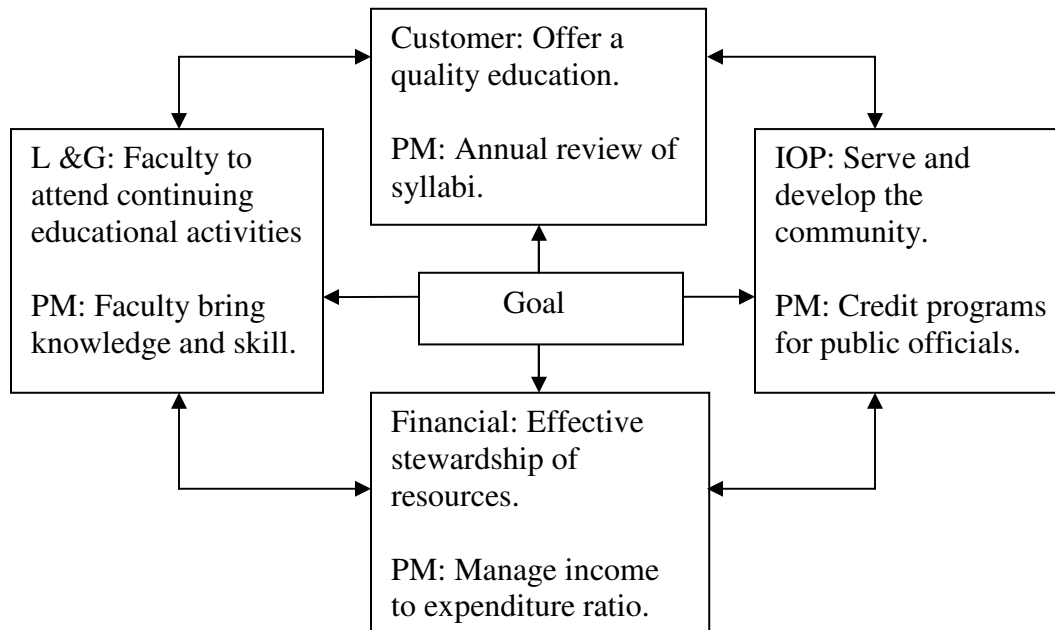
Table 9

South Private University School of Adult and Continuing Education. Annual Report 2006.

Mission	The mission...of the School of Adult and Continuing Education (ACE) of [South Private] University is to promote and deliver the academic programs, credit and non-credit, developed by the faculty and administration of ACE as warranted by the student populations and other parties.
Goal(s)	To support and deliver each of the aspect of the South Mission: quality education, community service, caring environment, and effective stewardship.
Objectives	Offer students a quality education. Serve and develop the community. Foster a caring environment. Provide efficient and effective stewardship of resources to support the mission of the university.
Strategies	Work diligently and creatively to develop and maintain high quality curriculums at both undergraduate and graduate levels. Working in the field to bring the opportunity of education into the community. Encourage faculty to attend continuing educational activities and to publish.
Performance Measures	Select faculty who bring knowledge and skills. Credit programs for police and public professionals as commitment to community. Create an environment committed to respect and compassion. Manage income expenditure ratio.

Figure 6

South Private University's mission-*balanced scorecard* concept emphasizing the goal stated in table 9.



Each of the four perspectives is represented along with performance measures that help to determine whether those goals and targeted objectives are being met. The objective for customers is to offer students a quality education. This can be measured by reviewing syllabi from which faculty facilitate the courses. In terms of learning and growth, faculty are encouraged to attend educational conferences and workshops that foster continuing learning. As a performance measure they believe that faculty will have increased knowledge and skills. The internal organizational perspective is the need to develop and serve the community, which is measured by innovative programs for example those credit programs for public officials. And finally, from a financial perspective, effective stewardship of fiscal resources, which is measured by managing income and expenditure ratio.

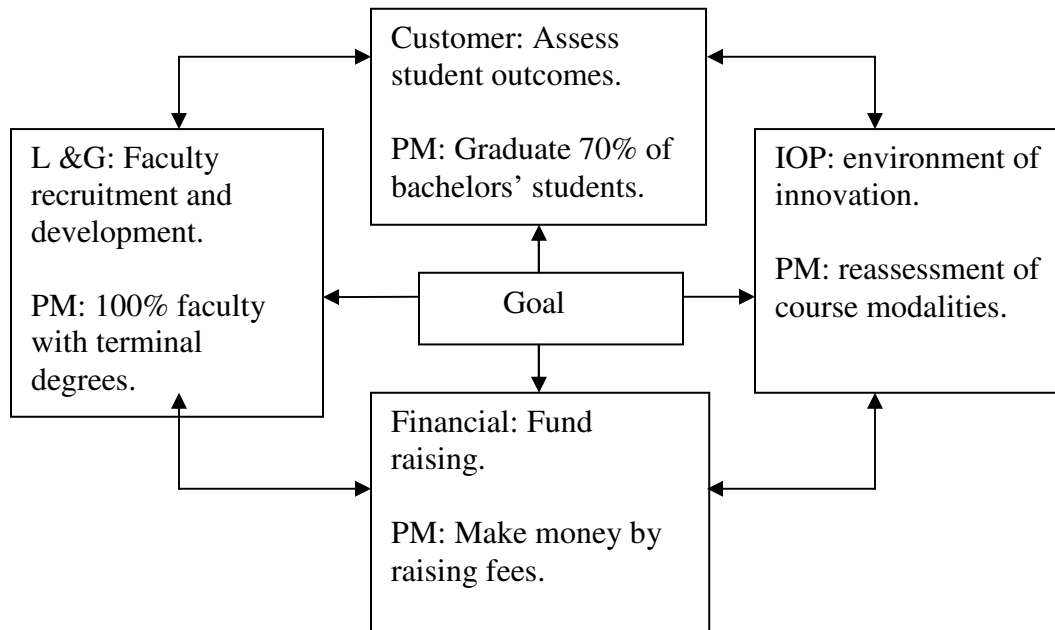
Table 10

Mid-Atlantic Private School of Continuing Studies Strategic Review 2007-1012.

Mission	The mission of the school is to enrich lives and careers.
Goal (s)	Support excellence in teaching and learning environment. Increase enrollment in graduate degrees. Increase fund raising.
Objectives	Assess student outcomes. Increase number of students from two-year colleges in bachelors programs. Explore delivery modalities to increase flexibility and enhance student learning. Faculty recruitment and development. Encourage an environment of innovation. Fund raising.
Strategies	Implement learning outcomes assessment for SACS. Understand demographics of non-traditional students at current prospective new locations. Review new and alternate modes of delivery, including online. Hire and develop additional faculty qualified to teach graduate programs and on line. Dean should be freed from routine administration to focus on fund raising. Extend range of programming and maintain growth. Compare pricing to competitors.
Performance Measures	Target 25% increase in admits from two year colleges. Graduate 70% of bachelors' students, within 5 years and 70% of graduate students within 3 years. Complete reassessment of course modalities for all off-campus programs. 100% of faculty with terminal degrees at the graduate, 10% increase at undergraduate level. Make money by raising fees.

Figure 7

Mid-Atlantic Private University's mission-balanced *scorecard concept* emphasizing the goals stated in table 10.



Each of the four perspectives is represented. The objective for customers is to assess student outcomes, which can be measured by graduating 70% of bachelors' students, within 5 years and 70% of graduate students and within 3 years. In terms of learning and growth, faculty with terminal degrees will be recruited and developed. As a performance measure they believe that they should have 100% of faculty with terminal degrees teaching graduate students and an increase of 10% in faculty with terminal degrees teaching undergraduates. The internal organizational perspective is the need maintain an environment of innovation, which is measured in this instance by reassessment of course modalities with emphasis on online delivery. And finally, from a financial perspective, fund raising was the focus of this strategic plan; they can make money by increasing fees.

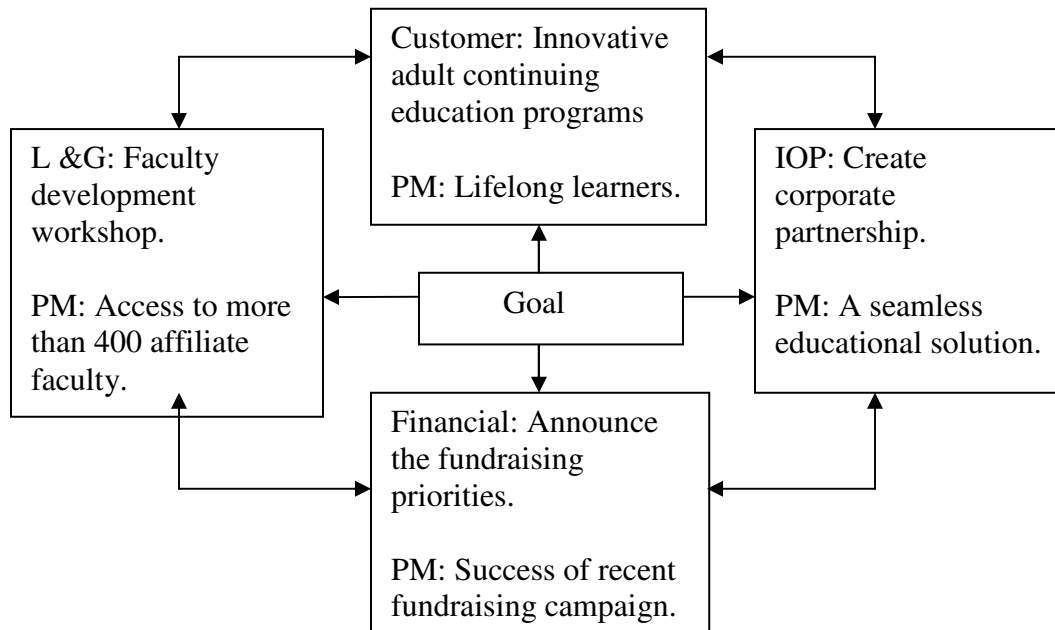
Table 11

Great Plains Private School of Professional Studies MVV Statement.

Mission	[Great Plains] University's adult continuing education programs are to provide a quality education that is convenient, flexible, and highly personalized to meet the needs of the adult learner.
Goal	Provide a quality education that is convenient, flexible, and highly personalized to meet the needs of the adult learner.
Objectives	Increase innovative adult continuing education programs. Combines the strength of our innovative academic programs with the expertise of corporate partners to bridge the education and training needs of companies. Advocacy for students in all learning formats using technology. Development workshops and seminars are designed to help faculty improve skills in the classroom and online. Announce the fundraising priorities that will be the focus over the next few years.
Strategies	Innovative adult continuing education programs are offered in accelerated formats at nine campus locations and online. Effective technology-mediated learning in all formats. Development workshops are open to any faculty member. Create a network of quality partnerships. Continue fund raising endeavors
Performance	Endeavor to make students lifelong learners. Flexibility with access to more than 400 affiliate faculty. Partnerships form a seamless educational solution for workforce and community. With the success of the recent fundraising campaign, challenges can be met.

Figure 8

Great Plains Private University's mission-balanced scorecard concept emphasizing the goal outlined in table 11.



The objective for customers is to create innovative and flexible learning opportunities, which can be measured by endeavoring to advocate for students becoming lifelong learners. In terms of learning and growth, faculty are encouraged to take advantage of developmental workshops. As a performance measure they believe that they should access to over 400 affiliate faculty nationwide. The internal organizational perspective is to create partnerships, which is measured by the notion that such partnership will create seamless educational solutions. And finally, from a financial perspective, fund raising was the focus of the presidential campaign. This is measured by success in the campaign that they believe will help alleviate the challenge with the help of alumni and friends of the institution. Funds will help the School of Professional studies to provide limited scholarships.

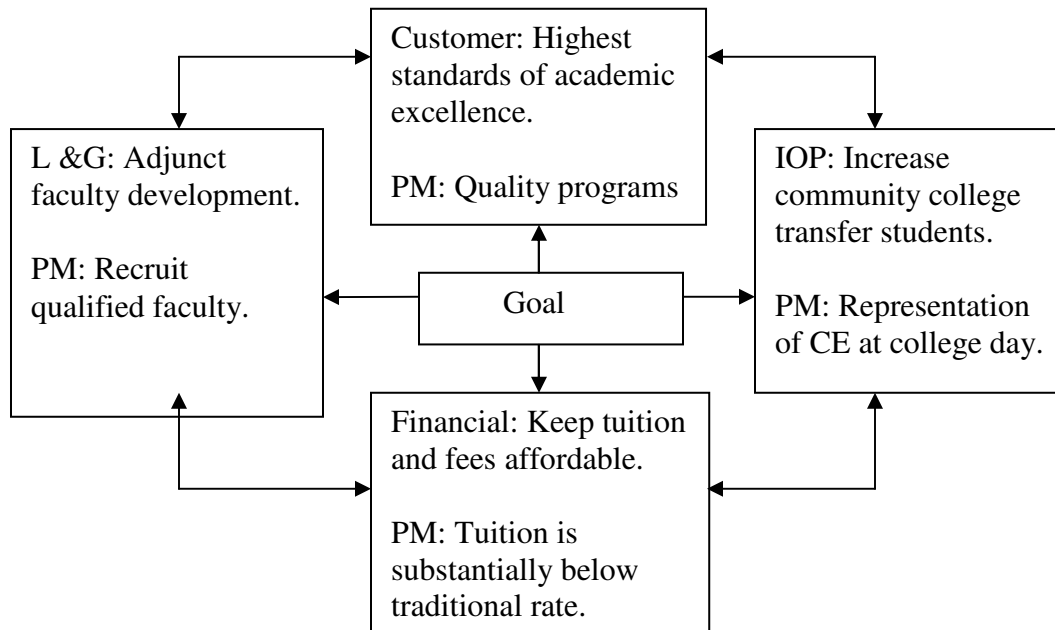
Table 12.

Mid-America Private Metro Division of Continuing Education Mission and Recruitment Plan
2007.

Mission	The Mission of Mid-America University's Metro Programs is to provide opportunities for professionals and personal growth over the lifespan through rigorous academic programs and relationships in a Christian community.
Goal	Identify and address the educational needs of the local workforce and introducing the values of the university.
Objectives	Committed to the highest standards of academic excellence. Increase the number of community college transfer students. Support our adjunct faculty with various programs. Keep tuition and fees affordable and below the regular rate.
Strategies	Develop quality programs that focus on building competencies. Perform duties with a student-centered approach, with a particular understanding of adults' learning styles. Establish relationships and articulation with community colleges. Efforts to continually improve organization programs, communities, and services.
Performance	Pursuit of learning becomes a lifelong endeavor. Awareness that continuing education is not a destination but a milestone that guides all of our way. Recruit available qualified faculty from the community. Representation of continuing education programs at college transfer day. Tuition is substantially below traditional day rate.

Figure 9

Mid-America Private University's mission-*balanced-scorecard* concept emphasizing two goals outlined in table 12.



The above figure representing the Balanced Scorecard concept for Mid-America Public shows that objective related to customers is to have the highest academic achievement possible, which can be measured providing quality programs. In terms of learning and growth, the objective is to develop adjunct faculty because the programs uses adjunct faculty this objective must be measured by finding qualified faculty from the community. The internal organizational perspective to help the community and workforce by increasing community college transfers. Keeping tuition and fees affordable is one objective related to financial plans. This is measurable by keeping tuition substantially lower than the traditional programs because the continuing education students do not usually access all the amenities offered by the campus. Moreover, this strategy helps with competition.

Strategies for Improvement

The Provost for Mid-America Private spoke about potential for improvement in the following way, and feels that continuing education should market and benchmarks as a strategy for improvement its processes:

I think that they need to improve in an area of, they are doing a good job with what they got, but if they need to improve themselves in any way it is in the area of “marketing themselves,” to show themselves on an equal level with the rest of the university. And I don’t think that is all up to them, I don’t think that they can tell *their stories* [italics added] well enough you know when you’ve got a university that wants to be Phi Beta Kappa its very hard for them to focus on continuing education. Although when you look at fine places that do have continuing education like John Hopkins, Raleigh, Richmond we can do it! But we’ve never looked at their policies.

The Executive Director for Continuing Education at Mid-America responded to the matter of improving continuing education and answered the question in a reflective manner:

I think back, one is to be more socially conscious more like we should be leading the way to improve and make societal change. Rather than be responsive to societal need we should be “chasing,” not simply responding. How can we lead the way? How can we provide, lead the way, so that people can gain social justice, social equality through education? We are struggling with workforce education versus liberal arts education. We have some good non-credit and we can use non-credit for dealing with social issues.

As a strategy for improvement the Associate Dean for Distance Education at Great Plains Private views project management as the biggest area that needed improving,

Let's see, our biggest improvement would be better project management, because that is such a big thing and when we are doing course development. It's a project and there is all kinds of people involved and it's hard to be an instructional designer and a project manager. So we probably one of the key area we could improve I want to say our capacity needs to improve. I want to say more people, we need to move faster. Software takes time and takes eighth months. The resources, the librarian, the web developer multimedia developer, and the faculty, all those people it's hard as long as faculty is involved.

When asked to discuss whether or not she sees continuing education needing to improve, the Dean for the School of Continuing Education at South Private focused on a need for flexibility in curriculum and alleged that:

I think we can do better in training and continuing education, non-credit in the midst of doing development much, much better in meeting defined stated need of our population. There is intellectual dispute going on here. Our [target] population is saying 'we want this curriculum and with the curriculum we don't want to major in philosophy, like the universities traditional curriculum.' They tell us what they want. [They say] I needed to eat; certain degrees will not land you a job.

Likewise, the Provost responded to the question of improvement in the following manner, "I don't know, I think what we need to improve is the relationship between continuing education and similar departments on main campus there is not enough

communication and discussion. I also think we have too many sites even though we are fairly successful. The Provost for the Mid-Atlantic Private felt that continuing education could improve by holding that they often act without considering the impact on the university's resources. And so she answered the question, about where she sees continuing education as needing to improve:

It might be minor, when they start new programs they could be more careful about assessing the impact on other units of the university before they move ahead but, for example, when they start something new...work load on the registrars, and the work load on the office of international education. Those offices end up with some issues because they were not consulted ahead of time and the programs are ongoing and the students are coming and they just have to deal with it.

When asked to comment on where he sees continuing education needing to improve, the Dean of the School of Continuing Studies at Mid-Atlantic Private said thoughtfully that there should be a better relationship with the campus, and held that:

I see developing and understanding of the processes and needs of the rest of the campus as I said earlier we are pushing constantly. For example, we don't want 15-weeks semester we want 5-weeks semester that start this day and end this day, and the reason why we want this is because that is what our clients told us they want. So we are constantly pushing the institutions to respond and probably don't understand the needs of the campus as we might and probably don't do enough home work to figure out how to be supportive of the rest of the campus needs

that's process I would probably say developing the relationship we need across campus, I don't see that we have done that as well as we might.

Summary of Findings for Question Two: Strategic Responses

Strategic planning takes into account the internal and external forces that influence an organization and is used to help management prioritize and direct goals. The strategic planning involves the reappraisal of the mission and vision of the organization, and analysis of the main strategic issues facing the institution. This is done by environmental scanning; analyzing what the unit does and how this relates to the economic and social frameworks of the region. Beginning with their mission, each institution is positioning itself to address the internal and external challenges affecting their institutions. Setting goals and objectives and employing the strategies to achieve those goals and objectives are important concepts that help the unit measure its performance and balance its operational goals with financial goals. The “balancing” act is measured in terms of non-financial as well as financial objectives. This concept is known as the Balanced Scorecard management system that defines a strategic based structure.

This study focused on the challenges that continuing education faces, which have been extensively identified and outlined in chapter five, and the strategic responses to those challenges which are outlined in this chapter. The strategic planning process interpreted by the balanced scorecard matrix has provided the framework for the continuing education units to clearly “articulate” how they will progress toward achieving their border mission and specific goals. Consequently, the strategies outlined in this chapter, both perceived and documented in the various strategic plans, are actions that the units are taking in an effort to counteract the challenges as perceived by administrators of these various continuing education units within the

sample institutions. Both public and private institutions share in this attitude and equally understand the importance of using strategies to counteract internal and external challenges.

The importance of focusing on strategic responses is to understand how the unit is addressing important issues that will enhance continuing education as a primary arm of the various institutions, both private and public, that supports outreach to the local and broader community within its reach. Therefore, the findings from this study show how the continuing education units are employing the balanced scorecard strategic concepts as they translate and interpret their mission, goals, and objective, as outlined in the tables and figures above, into operational objectives and performance measures. These are portrayed in four different matrices related to financial perspectives, customers—students, learning and growth; with emphasis on faculty and staff, and internal business-organizational processes. As noted in the analysis of the strategic tables and figures above, every organization's balanced scorecard will be unique to its business or operational strategies. However, because each of the four matrices or perspectives is causally linked, most organizations will benefit from developing performance measures for each of the four perspectives.

Each unit believes that its success will depend on the various strategies used in procuring its mission. These strategies include financial stability; addressing the needs of the nontraditional learner and the community at large through continuing education, a commitment to students, service; providing access to a variety of quality credit and noncredit courses, and extending the reach of the institution through a blending of in class and online and delivery formats. Moreover, the success of the unit is also dependent upon the recruitment and retention of faculty and staff who are committed to the divisions' mission in collaboration with the cultivation of strong

relationships with academic units and other institutional partners. Sound business processes are important strategies including awareness of the need for improvement.

Returns on Investments and the Value Chain Analysis

One of the major concerns for each of these continuing education units and administrators, is, ironically, also a major goal, and that is for the institutions and the public at large to recognize their impact value—that is the return that continuing education offers in exchange for the investment in it strategic responses. There is no question that there is a return on investment to the university and to the community on support invested in continuing education. In effect, it is action and reaction. By supporting its goals and strategies for achieving those goals, continuing education in turn provides unique returns to the parent institution and others.

The following sections outline the findings as they relate to continuing educations returns and impact as perceived by the informants, in their own words, and also in collaboration with documented returns, where available, as outlined in various documents provided by them. These findings are related to research question three: What do university administrators see as the return on investment of the strategic responses outlined above? These returns on investments (ROI) in the strategic procedures recounted above have profound impact and value for the institution and the community These return values are defined in three distinct matrices namely financial values, non-financial values, and sustainable outreach. I have separated these findings between public and private institutions. Table 13 is an overview of the major categories and themes related to perceptions of impact values and the value chain analysis.

Table 13 Overview of Returns on Investments and the Value Chain Analysis

Legend: X denotes that these values were prevalent within the institutional type; n/a denotes these values were not necessarily prevalent and or expressed by respondents.		
	Public Institutions	Private Institutions
Financial Values: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Success in terms or financial gains; revenue sharing, part of function • Provides new sources of revenue for academic units • Cash cow perceptions • Major contributor to university budget 	X X n/a n/a	n/a n/a Limited view Limited view
Non Financial Values: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Value chain analysis: sharing, synergies, support; win-win, with parent • Value adding activities: R&D, design, supply, production, marketing and customer service • Being administrative allows for non-biased position towards all academic units • Appendage or marginal perceptions • Central academic support • Strength of adult programs is strength of the university 	X n/a X n/a X n/a	n/a X n/a Limited view n/a X
Sustainable Outreach: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Core competencies, fostering mission of the parent institution • Procuring sustainable community outreach • Direct benefits to external audiences • Alternate avenues of access to branding • Vital in moving the campus forward • Bridge between university and real world 	X X X X X n/a	X X n/a X n/a X

Public Institutions

Continuing education within the public institutions serves various unique purposes. It contributes to the financial stability of the institution, it brings value in terms of non-financial benefits, for example increase in student enrollments in for credit programs, serves as a nexus for promoting the university. In conjunction with the mission, goals and objectives of the institutions' outreach efforts; it also serves as a catalyst for strengthening sustainable outreach and as a bridge from the university to the community.

Financial values

It is widely agreed that continuing education provides valuable financial benefits to the parent institution. When continuing education's mission is supported then success comes in the form of financial gains that are reinvested into the main university resources. For example, when asked if the continuing education-university relationship is a win-win situation, the Assistant Vice Chancellor for Extension who is also the Director for Continuing Education at South Public State said, "Well, yes it provides money and it is a link of the university to the community so definitely... yes there is revenue-sharing agreement with partners, we share losses if we do not have gains. This is a win more than lose." The Associate Vice Chancellor for Extension and Engagement who is also the Director for Noncredit Leadership Development agrees with the above statement when he responded to the question, what stands out continuing education's unique role, he declared, "We share staff and funds, this is a unique value."

Moreover, when asked whether or not he believed continuing education was a cash cow for his university the Assistant Vice Chancellor said, "Definitely not, we don't want to be looked at that way. In 2005-2006 this was a good year and a good source of revenue to enhance their efforts this is a win, win situation." He then pointed to the Center for Continuing Education

Compact Plan, 2007 and said “this is our financial impact to the community.” The plan reads, “The economic Impact to [Name withheld City] given this volume of [customers] is over \$7 million on an annual basis,” (p. 2).

When asked to talk about his perception about the values of continuing education and whether or not it was a win for the university, the Associate Vice President for Outreach who is also the Executive Director of Continuing and Distance Education at Mid-Atlantic Private alleged:

Oh, it’s definitely a win-win situation. What we do in CE is to essentially remove the financial risk of innovation from the individual faculty members and from the academic colleges and units, because on the one hand, we fund everything up front, and secondly, we generate new sources of revenues for them when they are successful, So from an administrative financial perspective the fact that we have these centralized administrative units who work across the board with all faculty allows us the scale to be able to be a sort of financier of innovation as well as a source of revenue; at the end of the day that’s really important.

When questioned whether or not he perceived continuing education as a cash cow he affirmed:

Not a cash cow, essentially we use revenues to fund all our cost for delivery of our programs and plus money goes back to our campus; this is an important part of our function. We made more than \$15 million in revenues last year, big bucks, and we returned \$3.4 million to the campus partners.

The [Mid-Atlantic] *Annual Report 2005–06*, p. 3 corroborates the above as the Financial Highlights and Achievements section reads, “\$3.4 million in external funding obtained by

Continuing Education at the campuses to serve their communities, plus \$1 million in scholarship grants acquired for continuing and distance education students.” I could not ascertain how much in terms of percentage or ratio of gross or net revenues this \$3.4 million represents because the strategic plans did not break out or specify continuing education’ portion of the total revenues for outreach. However, it is obviously significant since, continuing education is being praised for the financial values and the return on investment in it strategic positioning and its goals, hence the notification it is receiving in the financial highlights section. In addition the report stated that one strategic plan was to “Increase the return on investment to the University on support invested in Outreach from \$1.60 on the dollar to \$1.80.”

The Assistant Dean for Continuing Education at Great Plains Public University believed that one major benefit of continuing education on the campus was the fact the continuing education was very successful and self sustaining because the budget was reasonably large compared to what it had been in the past and also the fact that CE helps to fund the fall and spring semesters with revenue acquired from summer sessions and so she said, “We have been very successful financially. Our CE budget is about \$17 million and summer session is about \$17 Million coincidentally, so, in aggregate, it’s about \$34 Million and we return about \$5 Million to the campus.

The above assumptions are confirmed by the provost’s statement and perceptions of the continuing education’s position of value he alleged that:

Our summer school is very unique here, and if you don’t mind I will expound on that. It is run by CE and I see it as a win, win; win for everyone; a win for the campus, a win for CE, and a win for academic units on the campus. So as a university we rely on summer school to pay some of the bills for the fall and

spring so the way we budget is that summer school contributes pay for the fall and spring semesters.

Further analysis of the Division's budget summary (*Self Study Report, 2003, p. 14*) for the last 14 years between (1995-1996 to 2007-2008) reveal that the continuing education division's total [gross] revenues increased 56% from 1995-96 to 2001-02 from \$8.7 million to \$13.7 million. Of the \$8.7 million \$234 thousand (2% of revenue) was transferred to campus, and of the \$13.7 million in 2001, \$2.4 million (17.5%) was transferred to campus, an increase of 12.9 %. Between 2001-02 and 2007-08, the budget increased 28% from \$13.7 million to \$17.5 million gross revenues. The net revenues for 2007-2008 were budgeted for \$7.7 million. Approximately 17 % of total revenue, \$2.6 million, was budgeted to be transferred to campus for the 2007-08 Fiscal Year (*Strategic Plan FY 2007-2008*).

In summary fiscal year 2007-08 budget for Great Plains is calculated as follows:

Gross revenues	net revenues	amount transferred	%age (net)
\$17, 539, 469	\$7,682,170	\$2,595,301	34%

This is very significant since the amount represents approximately 34% of residual income that is going to support the parent institution and its mission. From a financial perspective this is a huge return on the investment in continuing education and the support of its strategic positioning and goals. Regardless of these contributions to the parent university both informants agreed that continuing education was not a "cash cow" for the university. When asked specifically if she believed that continuing education was a cash cow for the university, the Dean held, "Well, in this state we are required to keep 15% of projected revenues as a reserve, but we're not a cash cow for the university." Likewise, responded in this manner to the same question regarding the issue of continuing education being a cash cow:

From a financial stand point CE benefits the university because of the financial benefit of programs like executive MBA programs, business and engineering, for example, are offering more through continuing education. And because of its auxiliary status, CE can charge what they want [tuition and fees] it is not controlled by the legislature they would charge and then share some of the money with the units that offer the courses so it is a revenue producer for the [academic] units but I would not consider it a cash cow, because I am proud of what our CE does on this campus.

The Vice Chancellor for Mid-America also sees continuing education as a unit that contributes financially to the various academic units and to the university at large but does not suppose it is a cash cow.

You know, I don't know what a "cash cow" means in this context, they [CE] have generated revenues but those surpluses stay at the institution's academic units. We as a central division have generated excess dollars from time to time and those too have been reinvested primarily in programmatic activities creating a fund for which institutions will compete, like innovation or economic programming.

The Associate Vice Chancellor for extension and engagement who is also the Dean for the Division of Continuing Studies at Mid-America Public University doesn't regard continuing education's residual values as having a cash cow characteristic and said the following:

No, it's not regarded as a cash cow here because we have an integrated approach.

We are the central office and money flows from us to the various schools and colleges. If we make a profit we reinvest in CE or corporate extension it relates to extension in its broadest sense.

A review of the [Mid America] *Extension Annual Report 2006*, p.13 reveals that continuing education programs are supported primarily by student fees, grants and contracts which makes up approximately 77% of the division's \$76.8 million budget. Sate contributions are 22% and the remaining 1% is obtained from federal contributions. Of the \$76.8 million total gross revenues, \$70 million was allocated to other campuses to support their campus-based continuing education programs. This contribution is significant as it represents 91% of gross revenues in financial values given to the campus programs. This synopsis supports the views of the two informants representing this institution as quoted above.

Value-Chain-Analysis

Like the balanced scorecard concept the value chain analysis was not specifically referred to by the informants in this study. Conversely, I recognized their processes and actions as portraying the ideologies of the value-chain-analysis, hence, my interpretation of their returns on investments as denotes elements the value-chain-analysis. The value-chain-analysis refers to those activities within an organization that directly adds value to the product and or services offered by that organization. It is a way of defining a set of processes and support service that link together to add value to a businesses product and services (Crosson & Needles, 2008). For this study, I am using this analysis to establish the notion of continuing education being a value adding division and its activities being value adding activities. These activities include research and development, design, supply, production, marketing distribution, and customer services. Continuing education is involved in all the activities on a daily basis in one sense or the other. It also uses support services like human resources, information resources, and professional services. The following paragraphs illustrate how continuing education is creating value adding activities that are non-financial.

For example, the Associate Vice Chancellor for Extension and Engagement at South public who is also the Executive Director Noncredit Leadership Opportunities illustrated how value is created by sharing, synergy, and by the support of faculty staff in addition to sharing of fund and so he declared:

I am proud of this extension opportunity. There is a council of extension. Each college within the institution is unique, but we integrate as total institution, there is synergy with collegiate faculty. We share staff and funds. This is a unique value. Academics force you to think about concepts, philosophy, legacy, and sustainability of the university.

In addition, the Assistant Vice Chancellor for Extension and Economic Development who is also the Director of the Center for Extension and Continuing Education also at South Public University focused on the uniqueness of continuing education and the fact that it is in a valuable place because it is not aligned with any particular discipline so it is not biased towards any academic discipline and so it has an opportunity to serve it stakeholders more effectively, in effect it is adding value by researching he needs of its customers and ‘designing’ ways of responding to those needs:

CE is not aligned with any particular academic discipline so [it is] able to secure visual link to those stakeholders more open and pivotal opportunity to serve need, to identify needs, and to those who have needs. CE diffuses to other college faculty to do those academic needs of identifying and reviewing programs. The academic disciplines have a role of content they do some line of peer review as a means to help identify broad kinds of need of stakeholders and then responding to those needs. The Vice Chancellor saw the vision early in the 1990s-2001, the

need to organize and understand the commitment to Land Grant university mission of teaching and research. This position level sits at the right hand of the chancellor [with] his sight we know that there is value in this [CE] aspect of the university. There is a positive relationship with the campus community, and they are respectful of CE. It is received well by the campus and the campus sees the role that enhances their efforts.

Similarly, the Associate Vice President for Outreach and Executive Director of Continuing and Distance Education at Mid-Atlantic Public that continuing education is valuable and demonstrates the value chain concept because it is actively involved in research and development in that it devises ways and finds resources to address those issues:

We search for where the opportunities are for education, and then to look inward in the university and identify academic resources that can be used to address those problems. The faculty of the university is sort of inwardly focused on resident instruction our job is to help them see other ways of applying their expertise. I think also the fact that we structure the university the way we have, with us being an administrative support unit for all academic units, gives us a breath that allows things to happen fairly easily. If every college had to have this locally they wouldn't have the resources the scale the infrastructure to be able to do as much as we have centrally.

The Provost and the Executive Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs at Great Plains Public alleged that continuing education's value is analyzed in terms of supply—the programs that it fosters for the lifelong learning process:

Well, obviously it's continuation of the learning process for lifelong learning. 84% of our students are undergrad, about 16-18% are grad students so CE provides opportunity for our graduates to continue their education after they leave the university through CE as lifelong learning and also for our community and even for our high school students, so it's all part of learning and it's the role in lifelong learning and I think what we do is to pick up students who are still in high school, students who are still undergraduates, on the campus who take courses through CE and graduates and community. So it expands the whole spectrum of age levels. I know that other CE programs are seen as an appendage to the university and our CE; it's so much more part of our campus than what you find, and I am very proud of what CE does on this campus.

The Associate Dean for Continuing Education at Mid-America Public responded to the question of unique value that continuing education offers, and she focused on the development, customer, and support portions of the value chain analysis and alleged that:

We serve a broader range of interest. When we did our strategic planning five or six years ago, it has always been very programmatically focused, but our strategic planning exercise lead us into different directions so that we recognized the value we brought in terms of creating partnerships and also in providing services. These state wide websites [referring to websites CE developed for statewide teachers] are examples of services and we have a multiple number of partnership exercises we facilitated.

When asked specifically what is the unique value of continuing education the Vice Chancellor for Mid-America Colleges who is also the Provost for Extension focused on the core

competency of his continuing education services and said, “It has to do with the coordinating effort and in a weird way a means of projecting CE to the other campuses because the funds only come to us for that particular purpose and only flow from us to those institutions for that purpose as well.”

Sustainable outreach

The value chain analysis forces a company to focus on its core competencies. And as can be surmised, continuing education’s core competency is that of fostering its mission and the mission of the parent university within which it operates. Hence, the participants in this study unanimously agree that continuing education plays an integral role and is definitely in a position of value when it corroborates with the parent institution in procuring sustainable outreach.

Excerpts of *2003 Program Review*, (p. 1) for continuing education at Great Plains University reads: “Outreach is an important and valued aspect of the faculty and campus activity. The term outreach is used to describe the various ways in which the campus extends its expertise for the direct benefit of the State’s communities and other external audiences.”

The Associate Chancellor for Extension and Engagement for South Public alluded to this concept of outreach and how committed the university is to its mission of outreach. He also confirms the notion of continuing education being in this position of value when it supports outreach. He also related a personal story that affected his life and which confirmed his decision to be a part of outreach at the same university where he matriculated and where he pursues his current career. And so he affirmed his position and said the following:

The university is passionate about its mission of outreach, for example 4H outreach, and it is the number one. For example, they will help rural farmers and others I am passionate about it personally because I have a great 4H story of my

own. “When I was a boy, I would help my father in the strawberry patch and we needed so help with our strawberry field and we found out that a university [mid-Atlantic] State will help us, so we called and they helped us. They cared about outreach about the common person to make a difference. Because they cared, I enrolled at the university years later.

He continued thoughtfully by reiterating a question I asked him earlier and so he said:

You ask whether or not I believe continuing education and the parent was a win, win situation? And I would say yes, definitely a win, win yes, but we need to expand the level of unit and expand on this our great diversity. People want to know that the university is not just brick and mortar, the only thing they need to know is that the university cares. CE is important and has a big drive in the state. We value the exposure, how we are seen and their [CE’s] special mission; the value that is being placed on CE, I am passionate about this. We cannot be successful if [there is] no CE; the university cannot do its mission effectively without CE. That is why we need to expand federal and state unit programs including partnership with citizens and children.

The Associate Vice President for Outreach and Executive Director of Continuing and Distance Education for Mid-Atlantic likewise contemplated this position of value relative to the core competencies of outreach and said with pride:

We [CE] stand on the threshold of the university. We are to be the connector, our job is to look outward from the threshold to look outward from the university into the community and we are to identify where the problems are to be solved. I think also the fact that we structure the university the way we have, with us being an

administrative support unit for all academic units, gives us a breath that allows things to happen fairly easily. If every college had to have this locally they wouldn't have the resources, the scale, and the infrastructure to be able to do as much as we have centrally.

The Associate Vice President for the Division of Continuing Education at Mid-Atlantic Public acknowledged that continuing education serves as an alternate means of access to the university:

CE provides access to a population that would not otherwise have access to Mid-Atlantic. It's an alternate access route. So, whether that's to adults looking for another opportunity to reenter school or to enter college for the first time, or professionals who need access to academic knowledge that faculty might have or if it is usable to enter some of our sports programs, CE provide another avenue of access that these populations typically wouldn't have.

The *Annual Report for 2005-2006* (p. 2) corroborates the above statement made by the Associate Dean for Mid Atlantic and reads:

In fiscal year 2005–06, Outreach extended the academic resources of the university to audiences at all of Mid-Atlantic State's campuses, colleges, and surrounding communities through Continuing and Distance Education...and reached 32,000 adults through 3,000 programs. Continuing Education units at all campuses are increasing adult access to part-time credit programs through weekend, evening, and technology-assisted courses; off-campus programs offered in the community; and other accelerated delivery methods.

The Provost of Great Plains Public sees continuing education as a position of value terms of its outreach in helping to position the campus for the future in saying that, “I see CE as, not only integrated within the campus, but playing a really vital role in moving the campus forward.” Likewise, the Dean of CE and Professional Studies also at Great Plains said:

We need to also manage the interface of what the public wants but of our strength what the role and mission for this campus is. So, I believe we are frequently the group that manages that interface so when you walked across to our side it is in some way a metaphor for what we are about, in that technically, we are not a part of the campus.

Then she continued in jest, “At this point, you’re now on city property, so we’re bridging to the campus in an important way; helping to shape the campus, helping it to be diverse, helping it to be sustainable, and letting it figure itself out. The *2003 Self Study* report for Continuing Education at Great Plains confirms this concept of being valuable to outreach and reads:

In addition to the Division’s credit and noncredit programs, the Division supports the various outreach activities of the university’s faculty, staff and students through its outreach committee. The Division of Continuing education has provided funding for the past sixteen years to enable select audiences the opportunities to access this talent and expertise...through campus outreach...outreach programs complement the university’s teaching and research mission. (p. 17)

The Associate Vice Chancellor who is also the Dean for the Division of Continuing Studies at Mid-America Public views continuing education as vital to the campus and said the following, “Continuing education plays a vital, but not exclusive role in supporting outreach

activities on this campus. These units are moving away from the ‘episodic’ [traditional] models of continuing education, and are increasingly developing long-term partnership and curriculum.” Review of the *2006 Extension Annual Report*, (p. 9) for Continuing Education Programs, at Mid America substantiates the above statement and reads: The continuing education served 198.2 thousand customers (students) through 5, 631 noncredit programs, and a total of 45 thousand graduate and undergraduate credit students who uses continuing education primarily for the coordination of off campus credit courses.

Private Institutions

As with the public universities private universities too perceive continuing education as being in a position of value in shaping the future of continuing higher education through innovative leadership and excellence in lifelong learning, while relying on the various primary and secondary resources. As already discussed in this chapter there are three matrices relevant to this position of value financial values, value chain analysis, and sustainable outreach. These are discussed in the paragraphs below. As with the private institutions, where available I have included information from various documents to substantiate the “perceived” findings for this section.

Financial Values

Financial values are usually a measure of success within an organization and continuing education units are no exception. The informants in this study agree that in addition of to being a measure of success, financial performances such as residual income provide a valuable source of revenue to their institutions. For example, when discussing the fiscal relationship between continuing education and the parent institution, the Dean for the School of Adult and Continuing Education (SACE) for South Private University stated the following, “The fiscal history of our

CE is really interesting, and that it was a cash cow until two and a half years ago. Our challenge is still to be a major contributor the budget of the university, we're no longer a cash cow but we still contribute approximately \$1 million to the university. We can generate a great deal of money; you know if CE did not come with a cash value proposition they would not exist on most universities."

Review of the *Statement of Revenues, Expenditures and Transfers for the Period ended 7/21/2006 excerpted from the SACE's Annual Report 2005-06*, shows that total revenue for the ACE was \$19.7 million and net surplus was \$7.1 million. Therefore the \$1 million transfer represents approximately 14% of net surpluses which is a moderate amount compared to some of the other units already discussed above. This position does not necessarily support the notion of being a cash cow, however, there would need to be more analysis done to see whether or not this amount is considered "material" in terms of its overall impact on the parent institution's budget, which is beyond the scope of this study. Nevertheless, the SWOT Analysis section of the *2006-10 Strategic Plans* (p. 8) reads, "ACE generates significant revenue for the university. [The action] is to contain costs through efficient use of resources so that increased revenues result in gains in net revenue for the university and enhancement of stakeholders including staff."

When asked whether or not she believes continuing education provides any unique financial benefits to her institution, the Provost for Mid-America Private said very derisively:

What's unique about it? Well [there's] nothing unique about it. The School of Continuing Studies, I guess it's typical of any CE unit that its surplus, [net revenue] every year contributes to a small portion to the entire operations of the parent institution. It's nothing that may not be much more than a few hundred thousand compared to the entire operating budget of the university which is \$160

million, but every bit helps but it's not like they are supporting the entire university.

I followed up with a question whether or not she believed that continuing education was a “cash cow” for her university and so she said,” No, it is not. I answered that, they [the university] get some bottom line, but it is not a cash cow.” The Dean of Continuing Studies also for Mi-Atlantic Private corroborates the Provost's allegations and said that:

At the end of the year we're somewhere around \$7million in our gross revenue and our contribution is somewhere around \$700K so it about 10% contribution. That is a funny number, but it is because we don't pay rent. But we do pay for half a position in the registrar's office, half a position in the library, half a position in the career development, and in the information services, and one other that I am forgetting. We are actually paying for the staffing and benefits and support service which are built into our expense budget. So our total contribution, I would probably count, include those personnel costs. If you ask again I would say that total contribution is significantly more but pure unadulterated profit contribution is about 10%.

An analysis of the budget for fiscal year 2006-07 reveals that the net revenue for the School is \$3.2 million. Hence, the contribution of \$700 thousand—10% of gross revenues—represents 21% of the net revenue. This contribution of 10% of gross revenues is not very material from an accounting perspective given that the university's overall budget is \$160 million. It is only 0.04% or less than half of one-percent. Consequently, The Provost's views that continuing education's contribution is not very significant is warranted, but as she noted “every

bit counts.” I specifically asked the Dean whether or not it is his opinion that continuing education is “cash cow” for the university. He said,

“No, I worked at three universities where that was the case in all of those cases the expectations for contributions were significantly higher [than 10%] in terms of their contribution to overhead.”

The Vice President for the School of Professional Studies (SPS) at Great Plains Private views continuing education’s position values as one of financial strength and said that, “The strength of the adult program division is the strength of the university. The majority of the tuition dollars come through the adult learning division. There is overall about 16,000 unduplicated heads of the university with the School of Professional Studies having 12,000 or more.” He continued discussing the parameters of the financial mechanisms and contributions and declared that:

We do a lot of internal budget analysis and management we attend to financial mechanism, profit and loss and net margins status like that of profit entities. We have about 45 gross and 35 net, which is tuition fees less the amount of all of the school indirect [costs] for example, my office, the dean’s office, and the director’s office.

When asked to verify that he meant that the gross revenues were 45% and his net revenues were 35% on each dollar of revenue he said:

Yes, we then return \$0.35 cents on each (35%) goes to pay for the president’s salary, registrars office, and profitability to the university, some can be turned back to CE, but that would be one of two situations: If there is surplus dollars required when we are looking at developing new projects. We do a pro-forma

[like a budget] to see how much capital we will need from the university to do these projects.

I deliberately decided not to address the “cash cow” question with him because he had already implied it in an earlier response. When I asked him whether or not there was any thing he would like to share about CE that I had not specifically addressed, he surprised me when he addressed the issue of “cash cow,” in the following manner without my prompting:

Higher education for adults is really divided into two camps: those run by not-for-profit institutions of which there are thousands in the country and those managed by the for-profit institutions. And what is kind of sad in that a lot the not-for-profit institutions haven’t been able to create mechanisms to be able to sustain those [CE] programs and has predominantly looked at them as cash cows. And when the cash stops they basically “send the cow to the slaughter house” they haven’t created sustainable structures for adult programs for universities to achieve their basic mission and have often looked at continuing education more as a profit structure, as a temporary profit structure rather than looking at it as a sustainable outreach for the university and for the community. And I think that is kind of sad because many of the for-profits have stepped in and have basically done a marvelous job where the not-for-profits, both public and private, universities could be doing very well!

The Executive Director for Continuing Education at Mid-America Private responded to the question of value in a very satirical way implying that the overarching value that continuing education provides was a financial one and declared that, “Well, hopefully we provide service to the community but that bridging function and all that implies I think it is important broadly, in

terms of funding.” She then sarcastically said, “You know actually I said there was revenue sharing but, no there is not any revenue sharing or allocation, because everything goes back to the university through the provost’s office. I don’t know if the provost gets to spend it or what.” She paused for a moment and then said thoughtfully, “It’s just understood that I give back to the university; it’s pretty obvious that we’re a cash cow for the university this isn’t, shouldn’t be the case but in reality it’s always been about money!” Here again, I was surprised that she addressed this topic without being prompted about this subject of being “cash cow.”

Likewise, the Provost Mid-America Private responded in a similar manner when asked whether or not he perceived continuing education and the parent university as a being in win, win relationship. And so he alleged:

Well, it provides a revenue source that traditionally we wouldn’t have had, by serving a different population and by providing certain programs.

I think it should be in a better position of value recognition, but at this point in time I do not think that it is. I don’t think that CE is getting as much of the university as it should get, as a result the university is not getting the return.

I deliberately probed him on the subject of being a cash cow to which he responded, “Within CE the dominant factor is finance but certainly not the dominant factor within a traditional humanities course. It seems like a “cash cow!”

Value Chain Analysis

As already discussed the value chain analysis focuses on those activities within the institution that creates values in the making of a product or in offering services. For this study, quality education construes the product or services offered by continuing education units to its

students. This concept places continuing education in a defined position of adding non-financial values to their institutions.

The Dean for the School of Adult and Continuing Education at South Private University sees continuing education and the parent university as having a relationship that is a win for all and with special regards to the students it serves. And so she declared that, “Yes, I see this relationship a win, win, without question! I’ll tell you why, our portfolio is important; we apply programs that are unique. I honestly don’t think that the university knows what it has.” She then used the semantics of the value chain analysis already explained above, to talk about the need for the universities to research and develop, and produce the programs and believed that:

They need to analyze it for the development process; hence, you know what you know; so, now you got it, how to produce it and to continue our portfolio. If and when the university really understands to promote this [continuing education programs], it is a market advantage. Our organization capacity, if you run it as well as any other organization, it is a good entity; we can generate a great deal of money! CE generates a body of learning that universities cannot afford to ignore and I think if they do ignore it the traditional universities are going to lose hold. And that is a problem, needs, wants; dreams must be met with changes. The irony of Education is to change dreams...now I am going to be afraid of [procuring] it? What an irony? You can tell I am passionate about this, the minority is majority here.

A review of the school’s *Strategic Plans 2006-01* confirms the ideas of expertise in programs development and it reads, “ACE has a didactic expertise in the content development and delivery of adult education, an expertise that is both internally and externally nationally

marketable” (p. 9). In addition to the development and production point of the value chain analysis she also alluded to the socio-economic value of the customers that continuing education service and allows access to and said:

The concept of resources, future donors, the alumni of continuing education is a rich resource...there is as “bet” with traditional population, we have the secret enrollment: CEO’s, VPs etc, they do not want others to know they are enrolled in CE programs or in adult education as students, going back to school, but they are future alumni, and a good source of investment in that they can in turn give back to the university, they are our future donors.

The Provost of Mid-Atlantic Private notes that continuing education is important for the image and reputation for the university. Implying that it is valuable and alleged that, “We [the parent university] are committed, the school is one of five schools in this institutions and it very import in terms of our image and reputation.” On the contrary, the Dean for the School of Continuing Studies also for Mid-Atlantic Private when specifically asked whether or not he believed that the university was committed to continuing education’s mission, vision, and values said very austere, “The answer is no! The expectation is almost in the reverse.” When asked to expound on the statement he explained, “Well, in the sense that our [the university’s] core mission is traditional 18-year old residential undergraduates.”

And so he continued with “a dialogue” he is having with the university ‘the question’ he would like to ask of the Parent University and that is, “What can you do to assist us with our goals. He then answered his own question rhetorically, “Well, you can be revenue neutral or revenue positive; you can work on relations when we can’t; you can gage the local community in the campus in ways that we don’t have the time or the energy or inclination to.” He then said

very sarcastically, “I will reverse that and say that, it is our role and the expectation that we will do whatever we can to support the university in anyway we can.”

Consequently these two seemingly opposing views technically validate each other’s position of value in the sense that the Provost identifies continuing as ‘valuable’ in preserving the reputation of the university. Possibly to negate the already negative reputation or image of being ‘Lilly White’ as was referred to in chapter five. Conversely, the Dean sees this position of value as qualitative in the sense that it is implicit, not openly rewarded, but is nevertheless expected.

The Associate Dean for Distance Education for the School of Professional Studies at Great Plains Private University views continuing education as valuable because continuing education acts as a catalyst for procuring the mission of the university’s distance learning attributes. She explained her views in the following manner:

Because we have studied so much, and that you have, I am sure, we do understand learning theory and how technology impacts learning and what capabilities and technology are best used in what kind of teaching situations. Those things are so important, so as we work with faculty on an individual basis or as a group really, because it’s really a collaborative effort, to build a course here, I think our key contribution is actually an increase in effective learning across the board. Of course we’re concentrated in distance learning programs that are both in the classroom and on line, and because faculty typically don’t go through an instructional design class and they have to think through their courses so intensely; they have learnt so much from here and they get so excited. That’s the most important part, that’s the contribution.

The Executive Director for Mid-America, while convinced that continuing education's position is one of recognizable value, is perturbed by some of the nuances surrounding continuing education's counter-perception of value and remarked that:

I think that CE often times feels like it's marginalized, but yet a lot of what we do can improve the university as a whole. A part of the challenge is finding a way that the expertise that CE brings to the table to be recognized. But is it tough the vision and things we do in CE in a liberal arts school just doesn't have the understanding of the entrepreneurial bit, so our administration and provosts cannot see how they can value us and this is frustrating. Regarding the framework that I can bring, I know I could add some insights if they would listen.

Sustainable Outreach

The Dean for Continuing Education at South Private perceives continuing education as a valuable socio-economic resource to extend outreach to the broader community and declared:

We connect the university with the real world, we don't need to wait for students to graduate and go out there. They are already "out there" they bring back to the university; they bridge the point between the university and everyday, real existing world exceptionally well. We develop the capacity to problem solve and to imagine and to integrate knowledge from new learning, from the community, keeping it from dissolving in economic, social, and emotional poverty. We oversee the university's 'societal back and forth' which is generated by the external world. The ivory tower, brown notes don't do it anymore. While the world has gone on, in many cases the university is just beginning to understand what's happening here.

The Provost for Mid-Atlantic Private also believes that continuing education is providing valuable services in linking the community to the university and said:

I think it's an arm of the university that touches our local community in ways that our parent institution does not. Most of our traditional undergraduates come from other areas of the country about 90% of our fulltime undergraduates live on campus and only about 16 % from a very small fraction from this area and the general area; where as continuing studies is an evening school and again...it opens the university's doors to our local population it's a great outreach initiative.

The Dean for the School Continuing Studies at Mid-Atlantic also agrees with the Provost on this subject of outreach and the issue of access to nontraditional students. He asserts that as a liberal arts university continuing education is one of the three ways the local and minority students can have access to this university's branding:

Well, this is one of very few ways that community can access the university and it is one of only the academic ways that people, community can access the institution. We are the door in a local community; kids come from all over the country, all over the world to go to school here. As a highly selective fundamentally Liberal Arts College we do not have a lot of local participation it is somewhere about 10% of our students come from our state in the traditional program that is. So, this is one of the three ways you can gain access.

A review of the *Strategic Plans for 2007-12* (p. 20) for the School of Continuing Studies reads, "99% of our students are from this state...undergraduate degree programs are most popular 52% of our students are pursuing degree programs, followed by post- baccalaureate certificate (27%) and 10% of our students are pursuing graduate degrees." After a while, the Dean at Mid-

Atlantic said lightheartedly, “Well, you can go to football or basketball games or attend arts centers or hear speakers. These are the non-academic ways one can access the university, but our role is to be that face in our local community.”

He continued with a topic that seems to be of great concern, that of diversity although not in the traditional essence of ethnic or diverse populations, but diversity in the sense of variation which indeed transcend the regular value adding activities of a traditional setting and so he expound on this diversity in the following manner:

Of course at Mid-Atlantic, CE brings a lot to the campus in terms of diversity and I don't mean that in the traditional way, although that is certainly a part of it, but what I mean is we bring diversity in terms of curriculum which can be used by the rest of the campus to supplement the education that can be provided elsewhere. We bring diversity in instruction. We are teaching two degrees totally online, teaching dozens of courses totally on line, we bring blended models, accelerated models, week-end model and all kinds of diversity in how you achieve learning outcomes, instead of learning outcome. We bring diversity of age and experience whether it's in instructional core or whether it's in students, no matter which dimension, I think its one of the great strength that CE offers. Figuring how we get the rest of the campus to pay attention to understand that and value that is one of the greatest challenges, but I am enjoying the challenge of helping to building something great!

The Vice President of the School of Professional Studies and Strategies at Great Plains Private also sees continuing education as a position of valuable outreach to the community and asserts that:

It's the predominant outreach to the older adult populations of the university the average age is about 36 years of age we have a significantly large population of adult learners in excess of 12K. Close to 50% of our students take their classes in the online format and we have probably 8 graduate degrees and maybe a similar number of undergraduates majors for degree completion available entirely in the online format. Our students tend to be in all 50 states and multiple countries around the world. I would say that makes us somewhat unique.

The Executive Director for Continuing education at Mid-America Private sees continuing education making a real connection, again bridging the university to the broader community and said the following:

I think we provide a very real connection to our city and the wider community, not just the city because we draw sort of upon a five county area we have people coming from the northern part of the state. We provide a way for people who might never have seen themselves as part of Mid-America Private and then they do whether they come here to do their undergraduate degree and then they send their children...there is all sorts of connections, community relations. How we portray ourselves as a community, determines the kind of community leader are we and I think we bring value to the community. We are beginning to do outreach as well to our alums the ones who live here through our non-credit programs.

The Provost for Mid-America Private thinks that continuing education is providing much value in undergraduate studies, and asserts that:

Well, I think one of the most important roles is what we've done in our undergraduate studies program and general studies, offering people who typically

would not have a chance to come to campus, an opportunity to come to campus. It reaches to a very different demographic than the university typically serves, it brings diversity.

Summary of Findings for Question Three: ROI

Fiscal stability and financial returns are usually a measure of the value proposition that continuing education proponents and skeptics alike perceive as the fundamental returns of continuing education with a university. Continuing education units are usually profit centers—generating revenue, but are also responsible for cost analysis and cost control. However, findings from this study show that continuing education provides much more than financial resources, and has esteemed itself as a unit of distinguished value that impacts its parent institution both quantitatively and qualitatively.

These returns were discussed on the basis of the *value chain analysis*, a managerial concept that focuses on those set of activities that are value-adding in terms of research and development of programs, providing quality courses for student—customers, developing and maintaining human resources and pursuing other operational strategies that are linked to performance values. These value adding activities are all linked to the financial and non-financial objectives and strategies discussed in the findings section for strategic responses in collaboration with the balanced scorecard concepts of performance measures.

Continuing education provides intrinsic values that are both internal and external. From an internal perspective its intrinsic values include but are not limited to support for nontraditional students, undergraduate degree-seeking students, and students who are hoping to transfer into degree seeking and graduate programs. It is also supporting the academic program shift from the historical noncredit training and short-term courses to undergraduate and graduate degrees for

part-time students. It is also an avenue of value for faculty support and development, providing fiscal resources for the university's overall budget, helping to streamline the university in terms of diversity while protecting the university's image and reputation.

Externally, continuing education provides valuable outreach opportunities that inevitably support the mission of the parent university. It offers visibility to the university, service to the community, and links to employers and industry in an effort to support workforce development. Continuing education acts as a bridge between the university and the community, identifying and addressing the educational needs of our local workforce and introducing the values and meaning of University to those with whom they connect. Continuing Education's current efforts are to foster the [Educational Ideas] of the university include funding outreach and diversity programs through various initiatives...and will extend the resources of the university to serve nontraditional students of all ages, offering opportunities of the university's prestige, branding, and credentialing.

In this section I have highlighted the findings related to the positions of value that continuing education epitomizes as it returns direct and indirect 'economic' value on the 'support and resources' that the institution devotes to the unit and on the actual qualitative worth that the institution places on continuing education. In essence, continuing education returns value to its parent university and its community when its mission, goals, and strategic responses are supported by those of the parent university. These are the positions of value that that administrators hope to highlight, and which are often not recognized by those in higher education who see continuing education as only a fiscal capital advantage, and who rely on the theories of academic capitalism and entrepreneurialism within higher education to support their premise.

CHAPTER VII

SUMMARY, DISCUSSION, AND IMPLICATIONS

Continuing education is an amalgamation of programs that are not clearly defined anywhere else in a higher education setting. It is a very complex structure comprising of credit, noncredit, distance education, community outreach, summer sessions, nontraditional students, traditional students, graduates, undergraduates, weekend colleges, and more. Continuing education is caught up in the higher education quandary that is described by the theorists (Slaughter & Rhoades, 2004) as *academic capitalism*. The purview of which is to promote the public good versus being a “fiscal capital enterprise” for higher education. Yet, essentially, continuing education serves as a corroborator and catalyst, linking needs to stakeholders and programs. This study has revealed that numerous variations exist among and across continuing education settings; hence, there is not a single continuing education division or unit that is a mirror image of another. Moreover, continuing education administrators often have a difficult time defining their units, programs, and structure.

Public and private universities alike have continuing education divisions, and although there are intricacies that are fundamental to each institutional category, the essence of continuing education is analogous to both types of institutions. For example, both public and private institutions suffer from similar internal political and policy challenges; both are affected by external social and economic challenges. However, continuing education in both institutional types fosters strategic responses to the challenges, and maintains a position of value within their individual institutions although not in exactly the same way. The objective of this final chapter is to encapsulate the findings, present a discussion relative to the literature espoused in higher education and continuing education, speak to the implications for practice and research relative

to the study, and make recommendations for future studies that can enhance what has already been done in higher education literature. Finally, I offer a personal reflection of the experiences and lessons learned from this endeavor.

Overview of Findings

The purpose of the study was to identify continuing higher education's (CHE) strategic response to the political-economic context of higher education. To meet this objective I used a qualitative methodology to gain an understanding from leaders within higher education and continuing education. Seventeen interviews were conducted with administrators of eight public and private universities and along with documents served as data. The findings from this study relate to the body of literature within higher education that discusses the challenges affecting higher education in an historical context (Bok, 2003; Breneman, 2005; Gieger, 2004; Zemsky, Wegner, & Massey, 2005; Shapiro, 2005). There is also much written about the incursion of commercial, market, and entrepreneurial activities in higher education (Bleak, 2005; Clark, 2001; Slaughter & Leslie, 1997, Slaughter & Rhoades, 2004). Consequently, there is natural progression of this body of literature towards continuing education as it is considered "entrepreneurial" within higher education (English, 1992; Newman, 2002; Perce, 2002; Pusser, 2005; Pusser, Gansneder, Gallaway, & Pope 2005; Shannon, 2003).

Although this body of literature which focuses on entrepreneurialism as a strategic response to the higher education's current climate exists, the few studies specifically related to continuing higher education including those listed above, focus on leadership, student concerns, programs offerings, demographics, and enrollment. What is missing from the dominant discourse and the literature is a conversation about continuing education as an organization with its intricacies and inherencies that are unique to such divisions within a dominant and traditional

cultural contexts. Specifically, conversations about the explicit and implicit strategies and responses that continuing education proffers in an effort to mitigate the challenges they face within the context of a traditional organization are missing. Moreover, conversations that lead us to understand continuing education's position of value is also missing from the dominant, contextual discourse in higher education. Consequently, the following questions guided the study:

1. What do university administrators see as the current political, social, and economic challenges facing continuing higher education?
2. What is the role of continuing education in responding strategically to the current challenges facing their institutions?
3. What do university administrators see as the return on investment of those strategic responses?

Question one focused on the challenges both perceived and documented that university administrators see as facing higher education. Findings reveal that these varying challenges can be categorically construed as internal and external. The internal challenges are under the overarching umbrellas of the internal politics and policies that the organization confronts on a daily basis. They are of two dimensions and must be addressed in order for continuing education to make progress toward identified goals. These two are: (1) organizational capabilities and (2) operational processes. These two dimensions can be further categorized into three distinct types and are expounded on below.

First, these challenges encompass the unit as a whole and include: (a) policies related to program and structure, (b) administration and management nuances, and (c) the organizational culture within which the unit operates. Continuing education as a division of a major public or

private university must adhere to the policies and cultural context of the institution which often poses a problem for operational efficiency and effectiveness. Secondly, there are challenges and issues related to the academic relationship between the division and the parent university. For example, (a) the issues of the adult learner paradigm shift, (b) issue of maintaining quality in academic programs, and (c) the issue of affiliate faculty. These issues are wrapped up in the ideology of securing quality and maintaining institutional branding, while catering to nontraditional students.

Thirdly, there are challenges related to institutional governance. These are politically ingrained challenges because; continuing education is engrossed with the administrative activities that do not necessarily include having its own full-time or tenured faculty who traditionally share governance with university administrators. The issue of delivery and long distance learning opportunities which is not yet fully embraced by traditional higher education is linked to institutional governance. However, the overarching issue relative to institutional governance is that of fiscal and entrepreneurial attributes, because the notion of continuing education being entrepreneurial within higher educational institutions often poses a political and cultural conflict with its operational stance and the need to acquire revenues to self-support and to support the parent institution.

The external social and economic challenges that continuing education is being asked to address have four dimensions: These include (1) a new national focus on continuing education engagement, (2) a movement toward serving the public good with fewer public resources, (3) assessing and meeting the needs of adult learners, and (4) addressing changing demographics and the needs of citizens and communities. The study reveals that administrators confront issues of lack of financial aid for the students they serve, and the need to satisfy, as it were, industry needs

by providing educational opportunities that foster workforce development. Further, they face issues of competition within the current educational market as many companies and educational providers are vying for the nontraditional students' dollars. In addition, there are profound social challenges including fulfilling the needs of the adult and nontraditional learners, dealing with population diversity and attitudes towards higher education and, various other barriers to educational attainment. Participants agree that it is indeed overwhelming for continuing education administrators to withstand such challenging matters and still remain effective in their efforts.

Question two focused on the role of continuing education and the strategic responses that these divisions employ to mitigate those challenges identified in question one. The findings determine that each division deploys its own strategic plans which begin with a defined mission. This mission is used as a platform for determining the goals that are set. Those goals are to be achieved by determining stated objectives, actions that will be taken, and related performance measures that will be used to evaluate if, and when, those objectives are met.

Inadvertently or not, the strategies that are being employed by these units—this setting of goals, objectives, and actions—are encased within a managerial concept known as the *Balanced Scorecard*. This concept includes four interrelated matrices: financial, customer, learning and growth, and internal organizational processes that show how managers within organizations focus on setting goals, and objectives that are measured by certain activities and performance in an effort to pursue their stated missions. Each of the units has defined goals and stated objectives that specifically relate to their stated mission. Moreover, most of the official strategic planning documents; strategic plans and mission-vision-goal statements specifically show that the

strategies were needed in order to fulfill the mission of the divisions and the institution and to ensure success.

Question three focused was on the position of value that continuing education holds within the organization. Continuing education within a public or private university is perceived, though differently, as having socio-economic values. These positions of value can be construed as returns on the investment that is placed in continuing education's strategic response. All participants within the public realm perceived continuing education's returns as adding value to the institution through revenue sharing activities with academic units; through serving as a resource for the parent university, helping it to achieve its mission. This assertion was validated with a review of documents provided by the participating units. The participants from the private institutions also perceive continuing education as having an economic position of value; however, the attitudes were not unanimous. Some of the respondents within the private institutions view this position of value as negatively connected to continuing education as being a "cash-cow" for the institution.

Likewise, there are those qualitative positions of value, social capital, that are internally related to continuing education's mission of service to nontraditional customers: such as providing alternate avenues of access to adult learners and other nontraditional students, assisting with faculty development, and providing a link to degree objectives. Additionally, there is the overarching position of value related to outreach. Continuing education provides an enormous value in bridging the gap between the university and the community. This concept is especially notable within the private institutions that usually carry the stigma of being elitist and "Lilly white." In essence, continuing education promotes diversity, and provides social capital in otherwise non-diverse, elite private and public universities. What transpires in continuing

education organizations on a daily basis, the challenges they face, the responses they propose, and their valuable academic positioning within their traditional setting, is the crucial “story” of continuing higher education!

Conclusions and Discussions

The following paragraphs discuss four major conclusions that have emerged from this study. I note instances where I agree or disagree with the literature and where I find that there are gaps, contradictions, or inconsistencies in the literature relative to a particular theme. For example, while evidences of academic capitalism exists within the constraints of academic governance and culture relative to continuing education’s administrative positioning, continuing education is a major capital advantage to universities; a major “resource,” using the terms in the broad sense, to the parent university and higher education in general.

Consequently, contrary to the popular higher education literature and discourse, the theory of academic capitalism which served as the theoretical framework for this study, does not conclusively support the notion that departments, like continuing education, are entrepreneurial in neither the *classical* sense nor that they are simply cash-cow for universities, as the literature posits. Rather, the theory suggests and supports the findings of this study that such units are *capital advantage* to their parent institutions, in effect, an asset to the parent institution given their positions of value.

The theory of academic capitalism (Slaughter & Rhoades, 2004), declare that, “Departments and fields that are close to markets...have some built-in advantages, given the importance of these fields to the new economy. However, the proximity of a department or program to the market does not always predict how it will fare in terms of institutional resource allocation or ability to generate external revenues” (p. 27). Nevertheless, the current promotion

of entrepreneurialism within higher education and continuing education, delineated by the notions of the *entrepreneurial university*, tends to be related to the crisis posed by the restrictions of public funding, and the need for universities to acquire alternate sources of funding (Pusser, Gansneder, Gallaway, & Pope, 2005).

Academic Capital Advantage

There is non-monetary as well as monetary capital advantage to continuing education. It has a big impact on the university's budget; it offers a range of solutions to help universities serve traditional as well as nontraditional students. Continuing education offers an integrated approach that helps students matriculate into higher education with the goal of acquiring degrees that are offered by various departments within the university. Further, it helps the university address diverse issues while procuring other frontal means of university to the community, serving the underserved in the university. Moreover, continuing education helps universities develop strategies to achieve their overall objectives and goals. These strategies are designed to assist higher education in making the most of their financial and non-financial resources through faculty, research, academic managerial techniques, and other long-term focus—but they are always motivated by higher education's mission. Hence, within the context of the current educational climate, continuing higher education offers “customized” operational processes, within an academic managerial sense; using strategies like the balanced scorecard, and value chain concepts to address higher education's unique mission and goals.

The four major conclusions that have emerged from this study are:

1. Continuing education is an academic capital advantage, providing greater returns to higher education than the investment made in supporting its strategic position.

2. Entrepreneurialism, as a strategy within continuing education, is limited in classical applicability and scope relative to higher education's traditional cultural-context.
3. Continuing education units are disenfranchised with respect to shared governance. These governance constraints are meant to "protect" the parent institutions' cultural values and branding.
4. Continuing education units' organizational processes identify several political, social, and economic challenges that must be addressed strategically, if they are to achieve their mission.

Academic Capital Advantage as Returns on Investments (ROI)

The study first concludes that continuing education is an academic capital advantage, providing greater returns to higher education than the investments made in supporting its strategic position. Specifically, continuing education is not utopian, but does have positions of value that higher education cannot ignore—it is a capital advantage, an asset—with socio-economic present values that are not easy to estimate. Both public and private-not-for-profit continuing education divisions have an impact on higher education that esteems a position of value as a return on the capital and other resources invested in these units. The literature is encumbered with varying negative notions about continuing education, for example, continuing education became “the academic stepchild for higher education....was seen as a profit center first and as an educational center second” (Embree & Cookson, 2002, p. 131); continuing education was considered marginal or peripheral (Brademas, 1990; Donaldson, 1991; English, 2002) to other areas of the university.

The literature doesn't focus on the more positive aspects of continuing education; yet, studies like the national survey research sponsored by the Lumina Foundation, noted that “eighty-nine percent (89%) of the Carnegie Doctoral-research universities...offered continuing education....and that public institutions seventy nine (79 %) were more likely than private

institutions (41 %) to offer continuing education” (Pusser, Gansneder, Gallaway, & Pope, 2005, p. 30). I do agree with these findings because all the public universities participating in this study were doctoral research universities. Two of the private universities were also doctoral granting universities and two were liberal arts (masters) universities.

The literature, however, fails to emphasize continuing education’s social capital and other non-economic positions of value although, as this study shows, they serve a very important role in advancing the institutions’ mission of outreach and auxiliary service; in helping society to meet their needs; to increase the access and accessibility especially to nontraditional and adult students; in fostering workforce and human capital development and training for industry; in alleviating some of the social barriers to educational attainment via its programs, courses and institutes. Informants agree that education should not be perceived as the “great equalizer,” as is often said, but that it provides greater opportunities. Education should not be about making money, getting a better job, but should be viewed in a manner that people with degrees, every student that graduates, become a more educated citizen. It’s about how they participate in their community, about being more culturally active, more socially conscious, more environmentally conscious, and yes, maybe graduates make more money, but they become a valuable commodity in their community in terms of what they give back. So it is not just investing in a private good; every student that matriculates and graduates via continuing education becomes part of a collective public good, but higher education and the literature have not “sold” that idea as much.

More erroneously, is the “value” that the popular higher education literature “bestows” upon continuing education, that of being a “cash-cow” for universities. For example, the following is the “perception” of continuing education and that is common in the literature: Since the early 1990s continuing education has been gaining attention and is increasingly becoming an

arena of focus, partially because there are new political pressures to promote the ideology of lifelong learning and resulting economic development (Gose, 1999; Haworth, 1996), and partially because continuing higher education is considered the cash cow for many universities (Gose; Nicklin, 1991). The literature also asserts that as higher education institutions began feeling the financial and budget crunch, they began to (re)examine the role of continuing education in their overall strategic planning (Breneman, 2005).

Referring to academic capitalism (Slaughter & Leslie, 1997), Breneman (2005) notes that public universities are finding and competing for new means of support and that “*academic capitalism* [is used] to describe the new direction in higher education support” (p. 4). Edelson (2006) in his memoir of life in private continuing education units notes that back in 1991, he tried to “come up with unconventional ways of viewing continuing education,” and that part of his motivation was to provide alternatives to the all-pervasive marketing model that emphasizes revenue to the exclusion of other factors” (p. 3). He asserts that “successful programs or cash cows are milked to keep the continuing education afloat...the so-called *cash-cow* wherein viability is an outcome of registration-generated revenues” (p. 3). Entrepreneurialism is also used by proponents of higher education as an alternative phrase that similarly describes the market like patterns within academia that academic capitalism proffers or addresses. Pusser, et al (2005) notes that, “The word *entrepreneurial*...is also used to describe activities that might better be described as revenue-seeking behavior” (p. 28). Hence, as can be surmised both entrepreneurialism and academic capitalism are used to describe this revenue-seeking behavior or implications of the cash-cow metaphor alluded to by Edelson and others.

Findings from this study disagree with this negative view of continuing education’s position of value because although continuing education provides revenues for higher education,

all nontraditional and traditional programs provide revenues for higher education, so this return of capital (excess revenues) is not unique to continuing education. For example, Slaughter and Rhoades' (2004) theory of academic capitalism found that, "As colleges and universities integrate with the new economy professional groups within them will develop strategies for how they will position themselves....that some departments find niche markets that allow them to generate external revenues" (p. 27). However, they also note that, "Often, the external revenues brought in by these market revenues allow such departments to continue to deliver the standard of education they think appropriate to their fields" (p. 28). Consequently, for there to be a solid basis for "establishing" continuing education as "primarily" a cash cow, there must first be substantive studies to show that this is indeed true, there must be empirical studies that compare the proportionate ratios and returns from continuing education to those of other departments within the parent institutions. Moreover, the findings reveal that surplus revenues that continuing education generate and that were transferred to the parent university's budget were not, in most cases, materially significant amounts to warrant the stigma of being "cash-milking-cows."

More than 85% of the informants from both public and private universities in this study disagreed that their divisions were primarily cash-cows. Conversely, they detested the fact that their units were being perceived in this manner. None of the participants from the public universities indicated any likeness of their units possibly being cash cows. As one participant indicated "all our revenues are put back into the outreach functions, the state mandates that." However, three of the eight participants, from the private universities, believed that continuing education units could still be construed as cash-cows. And that was essentially because they believed that in many private universities, not necessarily those in the study, higher education focused only on the monetary values of continuing education. Moreover, only two of the same

three participants from the private universities currently felt that their continuing education units were still marginal, or that it could be perceived as a cash-cow. However, I will point out that both participants were from the same institution and that the tone and other evidences show that those views might have been for personal reasons and where investigating would be beyond the scope of this study.

It is incumbent then on the literature to make a distinction among providers that do see or value continuing education as simply cash-cows, and those that value its socio-economic advantage. It is not responsible to generalize and stereotype all continuing education units. Neither is it responsible for the literature to simply allude the notions of entrepreneurialism or academic capitalism, in a generic sense, to continuing education's revenue generating activities without further investigating these theories relative to continuing education. Academic capitalism is a political and social system that has been espoused to academe; hence, the term academic capitalism. However, the theory of Academic Capitalism (Slaughter & Rhoades, 2004) supports the findings of this study that continuing education is a capital advantage—an asset to higher education organizations. Rhoades (2003) declare “that academic capitalism is (a) cultural system, (b) a mode of production, and (c) a mode of management” (p. 1). Nevertheless, proponents of academic capitalism and those who criticize higher education in light of this theory must carefully note what the theory proffers, the assumptions it makes, and the conclusions it draws.

For example, according to Slaughter and Rhoades (2004) “The academic capitalism knowledge regime values knowledge privatization and profit taking in which institutions, inventor faculty, and corporations have claims that come before those of the public” (p. 29). The above statement does not reflect the mission, role, or goals of continuing education, which is

quite the contrary. The missions of the units in this study all sanctioned the public good as being of utmost importance to them and their institutions. Nevertheless, as said by Slaughter and Rhoades, “academic capitalism also has an unacknowledged side....academic capitalism has not replaced the public good knowledge regime” (p. 29). They further acknowledged that, “Because the burden of our book is depicting and explaining the academic capitalist knowledge/learning regime, we concentrate heavily on demarcating it from the public good...but we understand that the regimes coexist” (p. 30). Consequently, I relied on various *purchases* of academic capitalism as a conceptual framework for this study. The theory posits that knowledge and skills contribute to a country’s economic growth which is in fact the role of university academics who contribute directly and indirectly to the economic growth in society. Findings from the study lead me to believe that this is indeed true and I do agree with the theory in this respect. As this study shows, continuing education provides cash flows, excess revenue (capital returns), for the universities, but it also provides valuable qualitative and social-capital returns in its effort to foster the mission of the university, and to promote the public good. Both social and financial capital returns inadvertently transfers to our societies at large, in helping to encounter the social and economic challenges of our societies, and to foster the competitiveness of our local and global economy.

Both academic capitalism and its counterpart-alternative, entrepreneurialism (Clarke, 1998, 2001) are strong in supporting the notion that although continuing education *was* historically the service arm of the university, most public and private-not-for-profit universities are currently using continuing education as a catalyst for their profit and market-like behaviors. Implicit in both theories is the notion that continuing education is important because it is close to the market, but only if it were a relatively low investment type of continuing education, able to

generate a lot of revenue in return for relatively low investment on the part of the parent institution. I disagree with this notion because this study concludes that continuing education is very important, but without the stigma of being a “low investment type of continuing education.” All the continuing education units participating in this study were very sophisticated divisions within very fine universities, and many other such units [89%], are equally sophisticated. Data from a national Lumina Foundation survey and reported by Pusser, et al. (2005) shows that, “Eighty-nine percent of the Carnegie-classified Doctoral/research Universities...offered continuing education (p. 28). Moreover, although continuing education generates revenues for the parent institutions the surpluses gained by the majority of the units were not very significant to justify perceptions of being cash cows for their parent institutions.

Academic capitalism also purports that the academic capitalist regime and the public good coexists and that the public good knowledge regime has not been replaced by the academic capitalist regime nor have entrepreneurial revenue streams replaced the prestige of research associated with the public good, but conversely, they intersect at the point where money, in exchange for research, becomes entrepreneurial sources of funding. The theory also acknowledges that, “Although colleges and universities are integrating with the new economy and adopting many practices found in the corporate sector, they are not becoming corporations” (Slaughter & Rhoades, 2004, p. 26). The above statements refute what many critics of the higher education (Bok, 2003; Gould, 2003; Rhodes, 2001a; Washburn, 2005) have been espousing in the recent discourse: That academia is becoming more corporate. I certainly agree with the above notions of academic capitalism because this study shows that continuing education retains a position of value and that each student that graduates from programs offered by continuing education “becomes part of a collective public good.” So while continuing education is being

labeled *capitalistic*: entrepreneurial, with simply a revenue-seeking objective, they are graduating citizens who are contributing to the socio-economic wellbeing of their societies. Nevertheless, findings from the study show that the participants unanimously agreed that continuing education deserved more attention and investment in its mission, strategies, and infrastructure than what is currently being received from the parent university or higher education.

Entrepreneurialism

The second conclusion drawn for the study is that entrepreneurialism, as a strategy within continuing education, is limited in classical applicability and scope relative to higher education's traditional cultural-context. This conclusion is based on the nuances related to the governing structure of traditional higher education and the limited participation of continuing education's units in the governance of the institution. Nevertheless, in the current literature the notion of entrepreneurialism is primarily linked to the financial pressures that are afflicting the academy. This pressure is common in continuing education because it is one segment of higher education that is close to the market and that has portrayed entrepreneurial activities in its program offerings (Breneman, 2005). A dominant theme in higher education's current fiscal discourse is the need for higher education to raise revenues independent of the state and federal governments. According to Breneman (2005) continuing higher education at the cutting edge of education will pay the price of these fiscal and financial trends as they are considered entrepreneurial, often "forced to earn a surplus (ideally) or at least break even in their operations" (p. 7).

These sectors of higher education are more market driven, and most must generate the majority of their budgeted revenues from tuition and fees (Agbo, 2000; Berg & American Council on Education, 2005; Breneman, 2005; Gardener, Csikszentmihalyi, & Damon, 2001;

Gose, 1999; Nicklin, 1991; Pusser, Gansneder, Gallaway, & Pope, 2005). This concept collaborates with the issue of the entrepreneurial university—entrepreneurialism within higher education—(Bleiklie, 2005; Clark, 1998, 2001; Etzkowitz, Webster, Gebhardt, & Terra, 2000). Yokoyama (2006) in her research on entrepreneurialism within Japanese and UK Universities stated that, “The introduction and promotion of entrepreneurial activities in the universities tend to be related to...the university’s crisis notion in terms of funding and management and its consequences” (p. 527). Because discovery and innovation are at the heart of entrepreneurialism, as purported by Clark (1998, 2001), proponents of entrepreneurialism posit that it is good for the university, an innovative effort especially for those divisions like continuing higher education that receive little funding from governments (Breneman, 2005; Clark, 1998, 2001; Offerman, 2002; Whitaker, 2001). In addition, Pusser, Gansneder, Gallaway, & Pope, (2005) observed that:

While not a new phenomenon, such entrepreneurial nonprofit vehicles as continuing education and contract education programs...constitute more effective pathways to degrees and training....the continuing education programs we are referring to as entrepreneurial are innovative, competitive, and revenue seeking, but they are also at some risk, as they often receive fewer subsidies than programs in their parent institutions. (p. 28)

In addition, as already discussed, the notions of entrepreneurialism are commonly linked with the theory of academic capitalism to describe economic notions of academe (Deem, 2001), and, specifically related to this study, continuing education’s revenue seeking behavior. The literature posits that “academic capitalism” (Slaughter & Leslie, 1997) and the alternative “entrepreneurial university” (Clark, 1998) are both terms used to describe industry funding of university activities. Nevertheless, should industry funding of university activities occur it is

usually in an oblique way, and industry would demand what the university has to offer, but is willing to pay the cost for that curriculum. Consequently, according to Slaughter and Leslie's, (1997) and Slaughter and Rhoades' (2004) theory of *academic capitalism* the encroachment of the profit motive into the academy is decidedly negative and opposed to the partnership discourse that pro-entrepreneurialism activists like to convey when describing the inclusion of corporate privileges into academia.

Regardless of the semantics, both *theories*, entrepreneurialism and academic capitalism, describe the incursion of market or market-like behavior, and the blurring of lines between the university and the market. And so, if the dominant literature espouses these notions or theories to continuing higher education settings (Breneman, 2005; Pusser, 2005; Pusser et al., 2005) the supposition then is that continuing education is being supported by industry funding, which doesn't necessary hold true. Findings from this study support the contention that continuing education divisions generate more than 85% of their budget revenue, but do so from tuition, fees, and other program revenues; it is the students and other training customers who pay for course and programs, not industries, grants, or other corporate interests.

As a result of the findings of this study, I conclude that the commonly held belief that these divisions are entrepreneurial in a classical, corporate, or market-like sense is a misleading notion. Entrepreneurialism within such traditional organizations is defined by the culture of the organization, hence, is limited in scope and applicability. Yokoyama (2006) concluded that the "ideal" type of the entrepreneurial university is characterized by: (1) full financial autonomy, and self-reliance, 100% funded by external funds, "with no dependence on public funding;" (2) "has clear risk sharing and responsibility among actors involved in the entrepreneurial activities;" and

(3) “integration of entrepreneurial and academic culture, and managerial and collegial culture ...with no conflict between them” (p. 530).

I agree with the findings from Yokoyama’s (2006) study because entrepreneurialism is an adjective that describes something or someone who undertakes risk, organizes, manages, and assumes all responsibilities for a business or other enterprise—meaning an undertaking—especially one of some scope, complication, and risk, and it is the emphasis of risk. Consequently, it denotes the abilities to utilize resources and strategies to solve problems and make decisions. The three areas discussed above by Yokoyama are an anomaly within continuing education units as explained below.

While findings from this study reveal that continuing education administrators seek to use resources to solve problems and to address the needs of students and other customers, they are doing so using the capital and resources—infrastructure, name branding, and other non-capital resources—of the parent institutions, but not independently. Further, in terms of funding issues, which the literature primarily uses as their focus for alleging that continuing education is entrepreneurial; the findings show that fiscal policies, funding issues, and budget allocations are all under the control of the parent institutions. Moreover, none of the continuing education divisions in this study were 100%, fully financially, autonomous. All the public continuing education divisions in this study receive some funding of its budget from the state, ranging from 5% on the low end to 20% on the high end, in one instance.

Further, in this study, there were no profound evidence of clear risk sharing or taking by the actors within the divisions, because programs or other “undertakings” that continuing education pursue are still within the control of the parent university. For example, the informants unanimously agree that the parent university controls capital resources, controls how the budget

of continuing education is managed, how surplus funds are distributed, and even how much money can be spent on hiring of faculty and other administrators. As one informant said, “Continuing education functions depending on the interest of the chancellor at that institution at that particular time, CE is often at the mercy of the Chancellor.” There is even more control in how marketing is done for these universities and especially with regards to the private universities which are controlled by *Title IV* Federal restrictions. As noted above, this concept of pursuing certain marketing trends is another notion of entrepreneurialism, which the literature relies on to define entrepreneurialism within universities.

In addition, the findings suggest that conflict between full-time academic faculty, the parent university administration, and continuing education administration exist. Informants conveyed instances where there were always tensions between continuing education and the academic units. For example, sometimes the academic unit is competing with continuing education for programs and wanting to do “things on their own rather than work through CE.” Conflicts also arise when continuing education “pushes” the university for flexibility in program delivery and for reexamining the *Ivory Tower’s* perception of flexibility. Those major challenges “attack” the academic side of the institution and that is when administrators perceive that they encounter “strongest resistance” and the most powerful people to confront. These conflicts diminish the spirit of entrepreneurialism.

The literature also suggest that it is a great idea for continuing higher education to pursue arenas of entrepreneurship (Newman, 2002). Entrepreneurship is generally characterized by some type of innovation, a significant investment, and a strategy that values expansion; but entrepreneurialism is a process. Subsequently, ideas are refined through this process and in order to insure that all typologies of *capital* are well spent, this process has to be valued and exploited.

Continuing education's true academic value is yet to be "exploited" and advanced by higher education administration. While findings from this study suggest that continuing education's strategic initiatives and innovations are somewhat valued, the majority of the informants agree that continuing education is primarily an administrative support function for the parent university, much like that of the registrar or other administrative units. Therefore continuing education has limited control over its program policies, and most importantly, has limited involvement in the governance of the university; this is especially true within the public-state and land-grant research universities.

I will point out that for the private not-for-profit universities participating in this study, some believe they are somewhat entrepreneurial because they are for the most part, autonomous, "schools of continuing education," they run their own budgets, but they do have similar "idiosyncratic adherence" to the parent university. The parent university still controls surpluses and they must also adhere to the university's fiscal policies. One informant from a private institution substantiated this finding in saying that, "Continuing education can only do what the university *allows* them to do." The university also controls the hiring of full-time faculty, although they are not as dependent on the parent for administrative hiring or for hiring of adjunct faculty. I believe part of the "problem" is that the literature has been very focused on entrepreneurialism within the current commercial educational market, emphasizing competition, (Breneman, 2005, Newman, 2002; Offerman, 2002) or on the criticism that higher education is being taken over, as it were, by the values of the private sector market place (Bok, 1982, 2003; Gieger, 2004; Gould, 2003; Washburn, 2005).

Additionally, there are the ideologies of private for-profit universities which are engaged in educational pursuits, but exclusively with a profit motive in mind. In essence, this focus is

based on the incursion of market and corporate ideals into the academy, which was the fundamental conceptual frame of academic capitalism offered by Slaughter and Leslie (1997). Consequently, critics of continuing higher education and the proponents of entrepreneurialism, who also rely on academic capitalism to support this entrepreneurial notion of higher education and the academy, should be mindful of what Slaughter and Rhoades (2004) acknowledge in their *new* theory of academic capitalism, which forms the conceptual framework of this study. In this *new* theory Slaughter and Rhoades held that, “More and more departments are becoming active in educational initiatives designed to generate external revenue through new programs...departments develop various strategies to articulate with opportunities presented by the academic capitalist knowledge/learning regime” (p. 202). In addition, they also note that the conversion to entrepreneurialism is not yet developed within higher education and stated the following:

Department heads seemed willing to reshape their fields to integrate with the new economy...In short, then, academic capitalism has penetrated into basic academic departments....However, the transition to an entrepreneurial culture is very much incomplete, uneven, and even contested, which is evident in some units more than others. In contrast to what the literature might lead us to believe, it is perhaps most contested in regards to an ongoing commitment to traditional conception of academes role in conducting fundamental research. (p. 203)

This study’s findings corroborate the above statement and suggest that the notion of entrepreneurialism in a continuing education context should not be used in the milieu of capitalism or revenue seeking as the common literature alleges, but should be espoused as *one strategic response* or position of the organization relative to its operational effectiveness and

efficiencies. For example, the strategic plans for Mid-Atlantic Public reads, “Our strategic plans leads us to the outreach values that will guide our work including people, learning, innovation, *entrepreneurship*, [italics supplied] diversity, collaboration, flexibility, integrity, fiscal stewardship, and disciplined responsiveness.”

Unsurprisingly, entrepreneurialism goes far beyond program administration and marketing which this study suggests is principally what continuing education units do. Accordingly, continuing education managers and leaders are not necessarily entrepreneurs as the literature likes to suggest. The entrepreneur is often quite different in *mindset* from a leader or manager, who displays certain characteristics of creative and adaptive leadership or who is generally charged with using existing resources to make an existing business efficient and effective. While the roles of entrepreneurs, leaders, or managers are not necessarily incompatible, entrepreneurs are seldom “patient” enough to be good managers because they are always finding ways to be innovative, forward thinking, and to engage in new enterprises or ventures. A better word to describe continuing education and its leadership might be intra-preneurial, because “continuing education in nature is not entrepreneurial, but intra-preneurial,” as one informant agreed. I guess he is making this assertion because intra-preneurialism, mimics some characteristics of entrepreneurialism. Intra-preneurialism was first used by (Pinchot, 1985) to describe managers, intra-preneurs, who display some of the philosophies of the entrepreneur, but likes moderate departmental risk, and see little personal risk, even if they were to be fired.

What the literature fails to present is that continuing education, although a part of higher education and while displaying some modalities of entrepreneurialism, is immune to true entrepreneurialism in the classic business sense. Within these sectors of higher education, true entrepreneurialism is nebulous or tenuous because continuing education is constrained by

traditional higher educational ideologies. Innovations and ideas cannot move forward without much rhetoric and conflict within such traditional settings. Moreover, a division that does not have control over its own governance cannot be entrepreneurial as it is defined earlier. In addition, the findings from this study suggest that continuing education tries to respond to public needs and desires rather than to shape the public or commercial markets. Continuing education might be entrepreneurial oriented in displaying some entrepreneurial activities, introducing some managerial concepts, having market oriented institutional policies, but with evidence of conflict between academic culture and entrepreneurial values.

Shared Governance

The third conclusion of the study is that continuing education units are disenfranchised with respect to shared governance. These governance constraints are meant to “protect” the parent institutions’ cultural values and branding. The findings suggest that continuing education although a major sector of higher education and although positioning itself to help higher education respond to the needs of society, is often not enabled in its efforts. The biggest gap in the continuing higher education literature lies with the understanding the ideologies and *interrelationship* of shared governance, culture, and fiscal policies which is one of the biggest political challenges that continuing administrators hope to portray. Essentially, the literature fails to adequately address that the issue of funding is politically and intrinsically linked to the internal relationships between governance, management, and leadership. While there is a body of literature that focuses on governance (Hirsch & Weber, 2001; Rhoades, 2003) the more recent and general focus is consistently within the realm of entrepreneurialism (Clark, 1998; Yokoyama, 2006), on academic capitalism (Slaughter & Leslie, 1997; Slaughter & Rhoades,

2004) or on criticism of higher education's focus on short-term academic functions like continuing education (Bok, 2003).

Conventionally, governance within higher education has historically been a prerogative of two stakeholders: higher education administrators—presidents, provosts, and their counterparts—plus faculty. Today, governance within these institutions still lies with only *three* stakeholders within higher education namely: faculty senates, governing boards, and administration, simply a semantic change, and all three are needed to have an effective governance system (Hirsch & Weber, 2001). However, this study finds that governance as it relates to continuing education is nonspecific at best because the problem lies, as this study shows, with the unit being first and foremost an auxiliary unit, supporting the academic functions of the university; this is especially true within the public realm. Secondly, continuing education engages with academic units when they administrate for part-time, nontraditional students who are seeking credit courses and degrees. Thirdly, only a few of the continuing education deans served on faculty senate or deans' council or vice president on governing boards. So here we see continuing education being disenfranchised with respect to intuitional governance.

This shows that continuing education employs many support professionals who do instructional designs, collaborates with faculty in program structure and design. According to Rhoades (2003) these managerial professionals “are increasingly involved in conducting academic work, including teaching; some are involved in evaluating or developing faculty's instructional activity and...transferring faculty's scholarly work into marketable products” (p. 14). Yet, this study finds that these professionals are encased within faculty and higher education. Consequently they and many administrators within continuing education are not involved in the decision making processes, because they are professionals *without a voice* in

governance. Paradoxically, continuing education is being asked to be *entrepreneurial*, market driven, flexible, and innovative; responding rapidly to shifting demands of the economy and the community. While not delimiting the colossal authority and powers of faculty or higher education administration, and or governing boards, each of the above strategies require managerial decision-making and input from those construed, as academic managerial, professionals, because they are the ones directly involved in the day-to-day management and efficiency of the unit and or in collaboration with academic faculty to ascertain that programs are effective.

This above notion is supported by academic capitalism. Rhoades, (2003) declared that, “patterns of governance in contemporary U. S. higher education are being shaped by patterns of academic capitalism” (p. 1), and that capitalism, academic style, is reshaping the focus and forms of academic production and governance. He contends that academic capitalism is cultural, is a mode of production, and a mode of management and that thematically, they together affect governance. This study shows that culture affects governance and so I agree with the above assumptions. The new theory of academic capitalism (Slaughter & Rhoades, 2004) perceives the university as a complex institution with many interrelated and interconnected sub-units, for example the participating continuing education units in this study.

The theory also perceives leaders, administrators, and faculty as actors within this complex network, and analyzes the notion of the new economy and its relationship to managerial forms of administration and governance in higher education. I do uphold this purchase of the theory as this study supports the notion that continuing education is as an “enabling” function and as the old adage goes, for governance to occur “you must first enable it to control itself.” However, it is understood that governance, leadership, management, and funding are dependent

upon the power relationships between the center of the university and the units. Findings from the study show that the power still lies primarily with faculty. Informants noted instance of constant negotiations as a result of faculty's perception of their academic freedom as "they still have academic authority." Additionally, informants believed that academic title of continuing education leadership determines how much involvement there is and how much enabling continuing education is offered by the parent institution. For example, informants alluded to the ideas of dual titles of research and outreach and observed that those dualities may not have equal emphasis on outreach or service with respect to governing advisory boards, but that deans will usually grant equity, while titles like VP will have opportunity to sit on the governing board of the institution.

While continuing education does not want to be alone and needs to be an integral part of the university it needs to have some self-enabling and participation in the entire governance of the parent institution. Moreover, the majority of the informants agreed with this notion that the institutions were not committed to shared-governance between continuing education and the parent university, because they needed to protect themselves from the "second tier" service orientation and the lack of quality control image. Informants from the public institutions acknowledged that continuing education has less leverage than the academic world, because it's not a level playing field, but that they "get used to it." Others agreed that the service piece of which continuing education is a part, is the second tier, and so, they believe that the university is less likely to share governance with the second tier, and that is was intrinsically tied to the issue of the "quality and control thing." They further implied that some of the mechanisms through which their mission can be engaged would be through affording greater flexibility to managers

and non-faculty academic professionals, to involve continuing education leaders in decision making. These concepts haven't been adequately explored in the continuing education literature.

Challenges and Strategic Responses

The fourth conclusion is that continuing education units' organizational processes identify several political, social, and economic challenges that must be addressed strategically, if they are to achieve their mission. This study used interviews and documents to determine what administrators see as the challenges that are of grave concern that affect higher education, and the strategies they employ to mitigate those challenges. Both public and private universities are affected by similar political, social, and economic challenges as outlined below. Conversely, due to their cultural contexts and dynamics, some challenges are more prevalent within one institutional type than the other. In light of the literature on higher education and the emerging literature in continuing education, the following paragraphs discuss the major challenges highlighted in the study, and contextual strategic responses to those challenges.

Political and Policy Challenges

Political challenges are internal for the most part while some policies are both internal and external. For example the issue of quality is one of the most profound political issues, while financial and affordable issues are both political as well as policy driven. The classification of higher education institutions is also becoming a issue for continuing education.

Quality. Brennan's (2005) study of entrepreneurialism in higher education, lead him to conclude that paradoxically, leaders and administrators of CE divisions "operate within the tensions of being a profit center, while not embarrassing the university by offering low-quality or low-status courses" (p. 6). This issue of quality became more of a concern when the higher education literature began to espouse entrepreneurialism to higher education contexts. As a result, scholars question whether or not the pursuit of profits and the ambitions of

entrepreneurialism will have profound effects on quality of teaching (Bok, 1982; Offerman, 2002). Notwithstanding what the literature says, this study's findings suggest that the issue of quality is an issue for higher education institutions; quality is important for effectiveness in supporting the missions of the university and of continuing education. But it is more an anxiety of perception than a concern of reality.

Findings imply that quality is not much of an issue for the public research universities as it is for private universities, and there are several reasons for this: First, most of the degreed, credit courses administered through continuing education at the public universities are taught by regular full-time tenured faculty of the parent university. Continuing education within universities like those represented in this study are primarily administrative, auxiliary, support functions so they are not concerned with the perception of quality here, as the onus is on the academic departments to promote and retain quality programs and courses. I disagree with the literature and feel that the concerns should be alluded to in the area of noncredit and not to the main core competencies and degree courses. The participants affirm that students who seek credit through courses administered by continuing education get the same quality education as traditional students. They sit in the same classes and have access to the same faculty; therefore, there are no distinctions made. Second, the informants for the public institution hardly focused on quality and were not overtly concerned with that, as an overarching issue. Moreover, noncredit courses which typically are short non-degreed courses and are usually used for reason of training and or workforce credit are taught by affiliate faculty who are often professionally qualified—they are professionals within the fields, with knowledge of the core content of these courses.

The study also finds that most of the private universities are having a harder time “shaking” this misperception of poor quality because it is established (Edelson, 2006) that they tend to use a higher concentration of affiliate (adjunct faculty) (Pusser, Gandneder, Gallaway, & Pope, 2005). Nevertheless, some of the private universities do have their own full-time faculty who teach in credit, degreed courses. But when this occurs, the full-time faculty also serve as administrators and so they have dual roles, which also becomes an issue. The concern is whether or not faculty who have dual roles can effectively support quality teaching with “so much on their plates.” Therefore, the misconception is qualitative as one informant implies, “How can they have quality courses while using adjunct faculty who might not make the efforts to procure quality in teaching and content, like a full-time tenured faculty might?” She notes that the above statement replicates the general feeling towards continuing education programs by those who do not understand that the university promotes quality.

The theory of academic capitalism expects cost to be transferred to students, and would expect students to pay most of the cost of their education, but assumes that curriculum might be of less quality because continuing education is market driven. I do agree with this assumption of the theory because in most instances students pay the full amounts for tuition and fees, because they receive no scholarships or grants, and the majority of the budgeted revenues for these divisions are generated by tuition and fees. In addition, academic capitalism demarcates some winners and some losers. For example, the idea surrounding this notion would be that students who have been given less, or gained less, [less quality] and who pay more out of pocket for tuition would be losers. I disagree with this assumption of the theory because findings from this study show that continuing education does not offer less quality, on the contrary, students who matriculate through continuing education get the same quality education that traditional students

get, and also get the same name branding, but often pay less tuition and fees. This is more notable for the private universities, their tuitions and fees in continuing education are often less than those of the traditional programs. Likewise, the theory posits that skilled-permanent faculty who earn little would also be losers. I also disagree with the theory here and would offer that the affiliate faculty employed by continuing education often pursue these part-time positions to maintain an intellectual connection to the academy, as well as for making some extra money. Others teach because they like to be engaged in stimulating activities that help in their everyday vocation.

In addition, the findings reveal that private universities experience much pessimism from accrediting boards. But I should acknowledge that the administrators within private universities felt that regional accrediting boards are “becoming more accepting, more positive towards continuing education programs as they have implemented more rules limiting the use of adjunct faculty,” as one informant remarked. This is particular related to degreed credits and courses. But there is still a concern about the disciplinary areas the “most notable, the ‘old boy’s network’ of business schools” to quote the words of one administrator, the AACSB (Association for the Advancement of Collegiate Schools of Business), who have consistently discriminated against the use of part-time faculty in most programs (AACSB Standard 10).

What the literature fails to address is the fact that, from a larger perspective, most universities use their quality system based on their “inputs,” inputs from students based on higher SAT (Edelson, 2006) or ACT, GRE, and GMAT scores, inputs of faculty based on their PhD’s or other equivalent terminal degrees, and as a benchmark of quality, they have not focused on throughputs or outcomes. Therefore, the accrediting boards, especially the disciplinary ones, also focus heavily on similar inputs. As one informant said, “they believe we (CE) cannot do

quality if our students do not have a 1300 SAT.” But continuing education focuses on output and throughput. “Our students are remarkable and will ‘kick butts’ and are just as good as those traditional students,” he continued. Edelson (2006) speaking about his experiences in a private continuing education setting, said, “Quality and its semantic cousin excellence are two of the most overused and imprecise words in higher education....excellence in continuing education must be approached somewhat differently from that of the campus...the principal frame of reference for us in the institution not the field or accrediting agencies” (p. 138-139).

Both public and private informants bemoaned this misconception and dismissed it as an *allegory*. Their view is that most responsible higher education institutions epitomized quality as a big part of their core competencies and mission. I believe the literature is somewhat indulgent with the convoluted *educational market* which is clouding the mission of institutions like those participating in this study.” Hence, the incoherence in the literature lies in the fact that there are no clear distinctions being made between the various providers. Currently, there are many continuing education providers who “do education” but are not concerned with quality. One informant said, “It is not fair for us to be perceived in this manner because we have excellent quality education here.”

Fiscal Policy and Affordability. Much of the research on continuing higher education naturally parallels higher education’s focus on the current financial crisis, rising costs, and fiscal policies (Gessner, 1987; Leslie & Fretwell, 1996; OECD, 2001). The same body of literature focuses on the issue of affordability, access, and financial aid and notes that, traditional and nontraditional learners, who are unable to pay for their education, should be able to get tuition and other financial assistance (OECD, 2001). The literature also focuses on the ideologies that students in general must be afforded tuition assistance in the way of scholarships and Federal

assistance. But the findings of this study reveal that Federal policies for financial aid regarding nontraditional students including, part-time and adult learners, are different than those for traditional students, and still needs to be defined, hence, the literature falls short in making this distinction. The concern is, should the current financial trends continue, in a few years millions of Americans will be denied higher education because “policies that control resource allocations to universities and colleges have remained unchanged since the last century” (Rand 1997, p.13) and Federal and state budget cuts are also affecting higher education across the board.

These positions are echoed in this study since continuing higher education is an integral part of higher education; however, this body of literature has not specifically zeroed in on continuing education and so their positions are very “generic.” For example, continuing education although providing an alternative means of access, as well as allowing traditional students to pursue courses that are administered by their divisions, primarily caters to those who “can pay.” As one informant suggest, “Only those who can pay, will play.” Moreover, the study shows that continuing education units generate, in most cases, 85% or more of their budget via tuition, fees, and other program revenues, not from state or federal funding and this has been the case for a long time. Continuing education provides financing to their parent university via surplus revenues, but little or no money is allocated for scholarship for those with needs.

The study suggests that in most instances, private university administrators are particularly concerned about the rules that the department of education makes with respect to *Title IV* of the Higher Education Act (1965), specifically regarding Federal Stafford Loans and its effect on adult learners, especially distance learners. From the original enactment of the Federal Higher Education Act in 1965, federal and state student aid and institutional financing policies have been designed primarily for traditional students. Funding formulas that are based

on fulltime enrollment equivalency is prejudiced towards those institutions that have mostly full-time, traditional students, and dishearten improved attention to the needs of students who are working adults. The informants unanimously agreed that today's financial aid systems do not serve the growing proportion of postsecondary students who follow alternative paths toward a degree or who receive their education through alternative delivery systems. However, the literature has not focused as it should on Federal fiscal policies regarding continuing education and other adult programs which are quite different from those for traditional programs.

The literature also focuses on using outsourcing, technology, and other distance learning techniques as strategies for cutting cost (Gardener, Csikszentmihalyi, & Damon, 2001; Gessner, 1987; Kaganoff, 1998; Leslie & Fretwell, 1996; OECD, 2001; Reindl, 2004). This study shows that *traditional* higher education, although not opposed to technology, is very slow to adopt the use of technology to advance distance learning and distance education. As one informant puts it "Distance education for a traditional university is foreign, but important as we move forward." In addition, outsourcing activities are costly and so, on the one hand, the suggestion is to cut cost while incurring cost, and this sounds pretty ironic, and counter intuitive.

Carnegie Foundation. This study has found that the Carnegie Foundation's classification of higher educational institutions could potentially be a problem in the future. The administrators for the private universities were very concerned that the recent Carnegie Classifications might grossly affect liberal arts universities that offer continuing education. Because the large numbers of part-time students is computed in the number of full-time-equivalent (FTE) and thus will change the parent university's classification. These changes in classification potentially impose a negative effect on funding statues for those universities. This situation then becomes abysmal for continuing education as its growth will be thwarted, because the parent university will likely

pose a restriction in the number of students it can admit. The problem then becomes a cyclical one with many ramifications, for example, limiting access to nontraditional students, revenue reduction, and further limitation on scholarships and endowments funds for such programs. However, the literature has not yet addressed this issue as it relates to continuing education.

Social and Economic Issues

There are many social issues and challenges that higher education seeks to address in their communities as well as globally. However, while there are other external issues related to diversity, attitudes towards higher education, and others the issue of access is one of the most profound. Yet among the greatest issues facing higher education is the ability for institutions to provide the necessary resources to concurrently support all the needs and activities of lifelong learning while remaining accountable to all stakeholders. And the market competition is compounding this economic challenge.

Issue of Access. The higher education literature indicate that access (Ayer, 2005; Dickinson & USA Group Foundation, 1999; OECD, 2001) is currently among the most prevalent of the challenges facing higher education. Analysis of admissions, continued enrollment and completion in an academic program, as well as equal access [equity] related to minority students continue to be an issue (Goodchild, Lovell, Hines, & Gill, 1997). This study concludes that these issues of access and affordability remain a concern for higher education. However, what the literature fails to show is how continuing education is providing an alternative means of access, by offering lower tuitions and fees, and less stringent admission requirements. This study found that students who might not have had the optimum or mean admission requirements to gain access via traditional means have the opportunity to matriculate via continuing education, often entering with a lower admission standard and often paying a lower tuition rate. These students

earn degrees bearing the elite university branding and prestige like those who enter via traditional means. This is true for both public and private institutions, but it is even more notable for the private institutions as most of these are considered elitist, catering primarily to traditional students of majority and non-ethnic background.

Demographics and other issues. With regards to external challenges, the higher education discourse and literature posits that demographic trends (UCEA, 2006; Yankelovich, 2005; Richardson & King, 1998) will be an issue for higher education for the long-haul. Subsequently, the more recent focus of education has been on lifelong learning, emphasizing the phenomenon of social, economic, and cultural change. Higher education scholars conclude that this focus will continue to be the prevailing core of educational issues globally (Foth, 2002; Jarvis, 2000; Pearson, 2002; Richardson, 2002). Yet, there are citizens with unenthusiastic attitudes about the importance of higher education in advancing our social and economic position nationally and globally.

Findings from this study support the literature as the participants reflect on such external challenges that affect continuing education, including demographic trends, diversity issues, growing high-school attrition rates, and other barriers to higher educational attainment. Universities today have a growing enrollment of nontraditional students. For example, older returning adults, as well as younger adult learners—students who attend part time, and migrants with varying language barriers. Whitaker (2001) notes “that we [continuing education] serve as experts in designing curricular for adults” (p. 41). Yet potential students are not taking advantage of these opportunities of access because they are unable to see or appreciate the value that higher education offers. This study agrees with the literature in respect to these social issues, believing that these trends are going to continue for a long time. However, the literature falls short in that it

does not proffer an understanding of the strategies that continuing education will employ in an effort to diminish these stresses; rather, there is much criticism that higher education is leaving behind the adult learner (Meziro, 1991; Pusser et al., 2007).

Market Competition. The issue of competition is “hot” in the literature (Breneman, 2005; Jarvis, 2001; Newman, 2002; Whitaker, 2001). One of the things that continuing education prides itself is that it has the ability to offer timed-honored and valued credentials and is an advantage over boutique consulting firms, training companies, and for profit companies offering continuing education. However, continuing education administrators are “not content, for we no longer have a monopoly on expertise,” (Whitaker, 2001, p. 40). And Newman (2002) argues that “if the market is coming don’t we have to worry a lot about the dangers that the market brings?” (p. 38). “Only time will tell whether the new world of competition and entrepreneurship will produce better outcomes for citizens of the state” (Breneman, 2005, p. 9). Findings suggest that the public university administrators were not as concerned with competition as were the private universities, because they do have advantages of lower tuition, the credentialing they offer, and their esteemed quality education. On the other hand, competition and the current educational market are a huge concern for the private universities, because they have a higher tuition structure and are having a harder time competing and justifying their tuition for students who are underserved or non-traditional. One informant notes, “It becomes an ethical issue for us, when we have to charge so much.”

Consequently, one of the biggest concerns for the private institutions was the competitive threats that are being posed by community colleges. Administrators from the private institutions believed that community colleges have abandoned what they are supposed to do, that they have “forgotten their mission.” The view is that, in some states, the community colleges are

misdirected in their mission and have begun to offer continuing education, and four year degrees, and that they have lost sight of their historical mission of providing an avenue to higher education especially for adults and those who sought associate degrees, GED courses, training and workforce development. Cohen and Brawer (2003) in their research on community colleges concluded that, in contrast to universities which provided continuing higher education via university extension or via distinct continuing education centers departments or schools, the development of the junior and community colleges during the 1960s was with a unique, distinct but also practical mission: that of workforce development, training, retraining, and vocational education which altogether and contextually constitutes continuing higher education. Here again, there are no substantial conversations in the literature about these issues.

Strategic Responses

Based on the findings from the study, I conclude that the external and internal challenges serve as a context for continuing education's strategic response in meeting their goals and objectives that transfers to their overarching mission, that of fulfilling the mission of the university at large. I agree with Koepplin and Wilson (1985) that the mission of the university has not changed over the decades, but has evolved. It is still to provide public services, but the creation and dissemination of knowledge must remain central to its value system. However, in order to fulfill this mission, strategic planning must take into account the internal and external forces of politics, policy, and social-economic impact on the organization. Continuing education's strategic planning is designed to help management prioritize and direct goals, reappraise the mission, and analyze the main strategic issues facing the organizations.

Higher education literature gives much emphasis to mission and the public good (Bok, 1982, 2003; Geiger, 2004; Mezirow, 1991, Rhodes, 2001; Shapiro, 2005; Slaughter & Rhoades, 2004). And the findings agree that higher education administrators are concerned with and are

cognizant of their mission, yet struggle with understanding how to fulfill that mission. Therefore, both public and private continuing education administrators are concerned about “ethos, logos and, pathos” as they relate to mission. These three terminologies are engrossed with the ideas of mission pursuits and strategies. Ethos: “Are we doing the rights things?” Logos: “Is it logical, effective, and efficient, in a business like manner as an institution?” Pathos: “Are we passionate about *the barefoot boy* in the strawberry patch?” Time will tell if we have pathos if we do this.” The above statements were borrowed from one of the informants in this study in his attempt to portray the passions that continuing education administrators have for their mission. Therefore, they procure strategies that are measured by accountability and performance. And this is where the literature to date has failed to concentrate on: the strategic efforts that continuing education is engaged in to assist higher education in meeting its broader mission.

Although by the 1990s, there was a growing interest among state political leaders in performance indicators and *report cards*, it was with an emphasis that would provide information for the public and prospective students on both institutional and system performance, rather than the internal “improvement” or effective focus of many strategic initiatives. At the backdrop of increasing tuition, students, parents, and the greater public are demanding proof that students are getting the benefits they are paying for (Newman & Scurry, 2004). Hence, emphasis on performance indicators was primarily to assure external audiences that institutions are committed to performance and productivity with respect to higher education’s specific missions of research and service (McGuinness, 1997). The focus was on quantity and quality of service, based on government’s demand for accountability in the expenditure of public funds and for faculty productivity (Goodchild, et al., 1997). These performance measures were only applicable to public institutions because they have more accountability to the public and to state legislatures.

The private universities like those represented in this study, although not immune to performance measures, are not subject to such public or stated qualitative requirements, and scrutiny, as are the public institutions, but are required to file 501C-3 tax required documents.

This study shows continuing education's specific strategic responses using the *Balanced Scorecard*, a managerial, concept and emphasizes an understanding of the way they are *balancing the scores* of their short and long-term strategies and goals in an effort to help higher education meet the daunting challenges of the 21st century. For example, the issue of quality is being addressed by hiring more qualified faculty, promoting scholarship with faculty, and measuring their performance, paying close attention to their syllabus and their scholarly production. Addressing the financial issues would involve maintaining a balanced budget, by increasing tuition or programs and or cost cutting measures. Finally, involving academic professionals (non-faculty) in governance as well as partnering with other departments and faculty would alleviate some of the tension between the parent university and continuing education. The balanced scorecard concept would represent this under the matrix of human capital or resources development and would respond with prudent internal business practices.

The literature has been primarily focused on the financial aspects of continuing education (Embree & Cookson, 2002; Nicklin, 1991; Breneman, 2005) that they have lost sight of the fact that continuing education provides much more than revenues, more than economics but doesn't have all the utopian solutions to societies' social and economic problems. While some proponents believe that entrepreneurialism should be a strategy for higher education, most critics of higher education see entrepreneurialism as simply a market like concept with revenue generating motives. Those same critics view academic capitalism in a similar manner as both theories espouse market or corporate activities to higher education. This study shows

entrepreneurialism in higher education is tenuous, and that continuing education's strategies indicate an entrepreneurial-managerial orientation rather than true entrepreneurialism.

Academic capitalism support the views that, its not simply the financial structure of continuing education that matters, but that a substantive, cultural and institutional commitment to a democratic public good for all stakeholders of higher education values much debate. And that varying strategies are needed in higher education to face the challenges of this era. Nevertheless, one major difference between the notions of entrepreneurialism and academic capitalisms is the fact that entrepreneurialism sees a win-win situation for all in higher education, while academic capitalism sees some winners and some losers. I agree with entrepreneurialism based on this concept as it supports my premise that continuing higher education is still a vital sector of higher education's discourse and is becoming even more so as the conception of lifelong learning becomes a catalyst for workforce, human capital, and economic development in the United States and globally.

Implications for Practice and Research

This study is important for higher education and specifically continuing higher education. It explored continuing education within the context of higher education. Before embarking on this study there were no studies that address the specific strategies and responses of continuing education leaders to the current political-economic context of higher education. I believe this study has met its objective. This study finds that continuing education's initiatives foster the mission of the parent institutions they served. It also finds that although continuing education units encounter various challenges they procure their missions via the strategies and goals they pursue in an effort to diminish the effects of those challenges. Further, the findings show that those strategies as well as investments, and resources that the higher education institutions

expend on continuing education result in a cyclical, though paradoxical phenomenon as continuing education in turn offers greater position of valuable returns—capital that are both quantitative and qualitative—than the investment made in its strategic position. This paradox leads to the implications that I present as a result of this study.

The implications relate to higher education, the practice of continuing education, leadership within continuing, and social and economic sustainability. Conversely, not only are the findings of this study contributing largely to the literature in higher education and continuing education, but the findings are also transferable to studies in organizational theories, adaptable to the literature in contemporary organizational studies, and to the experience of leadership within nonprofit organizations. The strategies that are outlined in the findings, for example, the balanced score card concept and the value chain analysis are transferable to other nonprofit, service related organizations as these organizations can also benefit from the various matrices: financial mechanisms, customer relations, human resource management and internal business processes, and performance measures espoused by these strategies. It behooves all such organizations to practice the ideologies relative to these managerial concepts as they are theoretically appealing to decision making and they solve problems of organizational control and coordination. In addition, I suggest future research that can advance this and similar studies in the field of higher education.

Implications for Higher Education

The first implication relative to higher education, concerns the importance of the political power of institutional culture and governance that they are inexorably linked. Political and policy interchange and challenges are magnified in the traditions of a socially and historically complex organization like higher education institutions. Hence, these concepts must be given careful

consideration when developing structures for sub-units like continuing education. For example, the assumptions, beliefs, policies, and procedures of the parent institution must be in harmony with those of the sub-units, so the idea of a “good fit” is important. In exchange, the sub-units must be engaged in the overall governance of the institution, in the shared influence of power, and decision-making between faculty, academic professionals, and administration, depending on their unique expertise, abilities, and skills. The need to make decisions quickly, the need for flexibility, and to respond rapidly to changing demands and challenges allow continuing education and similar units to be administered via academic managerial initiatives (Rhoades, 2003). Academic managerial initiatives are related to corporate managerial and decision-making strategies and activities which transferable and adaptable to an academic context.

However, this study shows where managerial initiatives are opposing to inclusive governance within this traditional culture. Critics of traditional governance mode of managing academia notes that traditional shared governance processes are not suited to these new challenges. Nevertheless, Slaughter and Rhoades’ (2004) theory of academic capitalism, agrees that the new shift in academic towards a market like model requires a shift in governance. In other words, higher education needs to foreground the public good dimension with accountability and participation from all within academia. I suggest that it is time for a new shift in governance in academia and that continuing education and its academic and non-academic professionals must have “a position at the negotiating table;” they should be a part of governance. They should be equally accountable for the mission of higher education, but not in a superficial way. Continuing education professionals should be afforded power through the application of informed, professional expertise, advice, and policy development. They should have autonomy and control over delimiting sets of functions and a range of activities. According

to Rhoades (2003, p. 28), “Mechanisms of shared governance and strategic planning need to find ways to incorporate the inputs of these other professionals, these experts in educational and other matters.” This concept will change the current views of shared governance to include a broader range of stakeholders and constituents than are currently considered.

The fact that continuing education doesn’t share in the two-party system because it doesn’t have full-time faculty, for the most part, is unsubstantiated because, as already discussed, many of the professionals in continuing education are already responsible for academic activities, including curriculum development. Shared governance and accountability is a strategy for moving the academy forward into this new millennium, and should be included in the strategic plans of the institution, because creative tensions and innovative ideas that can come out of deliberations embedded in shared governance can be quite strategic. Should the status quo remain, the current push towards entrepreneurialism within continuing education becomes an anomaly because advancing the concepts of innovation and vision is often mitigated by institutional culture and a traditional governance structure. Consequently, a structure that champion inclusiveness will help to facilitate the entrepreneurial spirit that higher education and specifically continuing education wants to espouse. Continuing education should defend its quest for shared governance as a strategy for improved parent-division-relationship and for promoting a needed voice within academia, which parallels its positions of value. Like the old adage goes, the body can only function effectively when all its members are at their optimum. Consequently, higher education cannot function at its best, cannot promote its mission effectively without continuing education. As one informant remarked, “Higher education needs continuing education.”

Higher education should make opportunities to promote continuing education as an academic value added capital advantage, not only recognize these units for their fiscal values, but the social values as well. They should invest more resources in continuing education's infrastructure, should lead and support the strategic efforts of the unit with respect to students, human resources, fiscal structure, and other organizational processes. Promoting the balanced score card concepts as a model strategy which helps to foster and measure the effectiveness of the goals and objectives of the units should be an aim for higher education. Creating a rather nontraditional model through quite a traditional process of purposeful change, marshalling the resources to persuade faculty that continuing education's efforts represent a rational, political, social and economic opportunity for the university is imperative of higher education and its leadership. In addition, continuing education can also serve as a [the] strategy for higher education's quest to address the current discourse in higher education and the adult learner needs. This is relevant to responding to the educational needs of the adult learner as their success is the key to the nation's future (Pusser, et al., 2007). Hence, continuing education represents an antidote to higher education's *academic paralysis*—those traditions in higher education that are paralyzing, as it were.

Implication for Continuing Education—the Organization

The implication regarding continuing education as an organization within higher education has various dimensions. For one thing, continuing education represents a solution to higher education's *academic paralysis*. It represents the contemporary modalities and ability of higher education's engagement in the new world order, in fostering flexibility, simultaneous change, and a new vision. For example, continuing education touches millions of lives each year; it is a very important part of higher education's mission in forming educated citizens. Yet

implicitly for continuing education, the concepts of academic capitalism are dominant as continuing education continues to be a low capital investment versus a high return division within higher education. It is included in the notion that, “the expansion of academic capitalism ...and joint efforts by faculty and academic administrators are driving colleges and universities to the generation of institutional revenue and pursuits of short-term institutional economic interests” (Rhoades, 2003, p. 28). The problem is that continuing education is susceptible to the perceptions of being “the second tier,” a cash-milking cow for its parent institution. Without clarity, definition, and a change in attitude on the part of higher education’s administration, the economic values attributed to continuing education are in danger of outweighing or overshadowing the academic or societal values. There is a necessity and an economic dimension to continuing education’s role but economics alone should not be the focal point on which continuing education hinges, nor should it define continuing education’s greatest aspirations, value, or purpose.

Because the majority of continuing education units are not endowed with the name “school of” or “college of,” they are not autonomous in terms of academic programming and structure. In order to promote continuing education’s academic value, the lack of autonomy over program structure is a strategic predicament of organizational status, and should be revisited and restructured. Continuing education must also anticipate and prepare to address predictable contentions that arise due to its non-autonomous situation. These contentions include innovations against turf issues, profitability versus quality issues, and entrepreneurial orientations in opposition to academic credibility. Subsequently, continuing education must find and sustain means of partnership and collaboration that fosters its viability, legitimacy, and its internal mission.

While it is imperative to remain astute and cognizant of the awesome responsibilities in fostering the mission of the parent institution, continuing education should promote its internal and external legitimacy and position of values by maintaining efficiency and effectiveness. In doing so, continuing education should continue to improve upon the strategies already in place. For example, mastering the balanced score card concepts as a model strategy for improved efficiency and effectiveness. Those units that are not currently espousing the use of the balanced scorecard concepts should implement this model managerial strategy. It facilitates a methodology for keeping track of, evaluating, and measuring the unit's performance in meeting its goals and objectives, in essence, leveraging the old and the new.

Meanwhile, continuing education cannot afford to "rest on laurels" remarked one informant, but, it seems to be "sacrificing itself on the alter," as they are fraught with negative perceptions of offering poor quality. This is especially true for the private non-profits as the trend within these institutions is to engage a high percentage of affiliate faculty. It is imperative that continuing education improve this imagery of poor quality or mediocrity, by offering a proactive strategic approach. Among other strategies, institutions should limit the use of affiliate faculty when possible, take advantage of excess revenue, and use a combination of initiatives and resources to attract, hire, support, and retain academically qualified faculty; improve relationship with full-time faculty; strive for improved relationship with accrediting bodies especially, the disciplinary ones. Moreover, continuing education should differentiate its *branding*, as it were: showcase its programming and professional stance as a unit oriented towards all *willing* learners. Finally, avoid the complexity of competition by offering quality courses and programs.

Implication for Leadership and Faculty

Faculty, administrative leadership, and staff are the greatest resources that continuing education has. Consequently, there are natural concerns about leadership and faculty at the parent level as well as at the unit level. There is the concern that the short length of tenure for presidents and chancellors negatively affects continuing education because as one informant said, “Continuing education is often at the mercy of the president or chancellor.” When these presidents are hired they often come in with their own ideas and agenda for continuing education that poses a set back for the units. Often they need to “start over” as it were, and innovation and vision are thwarted due to leadership’s aloofness. Aloofness on the part of the parent institution’s leadership can signal illegitimacy for continuing education. But direct involvement and overt support by the president and provost is imperative for continuing education’s legitimacy and advancement. In addition to the changes in administration in the parent organization’s leadership, the seemingly high turnover in continuing education’s leadership and the dual roles of management also pose a setback for continuing education.

High turnover in leadership is counter-productive; when this occurs there are many periods of transitions that mitigate efficiency and effectiveness. Moreover, administrators are subject to burnout due to complexities of their dual roles. These administrative roles leave little time for scholarship or research. Yet, leaders in continuing higher education must be able to embody these roles in order to support their institutions' missions and creatively meet academic and organizational needs through research and scholarship. This study finds that in addition to longer periods of tenure, an attitude of professionalism, and an academic leadership title promote a better relationship between the unit and the parent organization, as leaders serve as a strategic

liaison between both. Leaders within continuing education should have vision, and an attitude of professionalism; they should identify themselves as professionals, which they often fail to do.

Furthermore, when leaders are endowed with more prominent hierarchical titles, like vice president or dean, they have more presence, more voice and can effect more dominance and legitimacy to continuing education's mission, and outreach. Leaders and staff who develop professionally, are lifelong learners, and are competent effect greater efficiency and a more effective organization. Hence, effective management, learning and growth, and promotion of human resources, one of the balanced score card matrix, is imperative for decision making and problem solving.

The proliferation of institutions of higher learning, along with the diversified student population entering into post-secondary classrooms, has created the need for new models of higher education leadership. transformational, adaptive, and competent leaders, who offer longevity, and vision, and who display confidence are necessary in fostering the spirit of entrepreneurialism within continuing education. These leadership models require leaders to perform strongly in the traditional roles associated with the operation of complex organizations as well as the skills and disposition of an educational researcher. Leadership strategies require partnership, collaboration, continuing learning, practice, and recognition that all elements have a *quantum view*, a natural orientation to connectedness, helping the whole system achieve organizational vigor and wholeness.

Finally, continuing education is not only at the mercy of the parent organizations' leaders—presidents, chancellors, and provosts, but is also at the mercy of “the power of faculty.” Faculty stance and display of power, often pose issues of contention for advancing continuing education within the parent organization. Faculty are essentially “keepers of the flame,” they

create cultural norms, academic products, and standards. Consequently, the relationship between continuing education and the parent institution can be improved if faculty attitudes towards continuing education were improved. Faculty has the power to promote or demote the legitimacy and quality of continuing education. According to (Whitaker, 2001, p. 45), “Power within a university is usually negotiated by *controlling process*, and the power of process is usually used to ensure that something doesn’t happen. That is the essence of the power of most faculty senates.”

Subsequently, academic capitalism advocates that a democratic and representative range of faculty is needed to have greater efficiency and effectiveness. It not only full-time, tenured, propertied faculty, who have knowledge of the organization, nor should faculty feel that they are the only ones with expertise and knowledge about instruction or academics. In this new era of managerial-entrepreneurial orientation within higher education, other categories of faculty are precisely where there is growth in new appointees. Those who have knowledge of the organization and who promote diversity by initiating expertise and knowledge about distance learning, distance education, technology, and innovation promote continuing education and course delivery mechanisms throughout the academy and society. I suggest that higher education promote the importance of other faculty and non-faculty to include instructional designers, curriculum and technology managers and other professionals, therein is the essence of these professionals’ social compact with society and which promotes the socio-economic impact of continuing education’s mission.

Implications for Political, Social, and Economic Sustainability

Continuing education offers social and economic capital in the way of workforce development, human capital development, and increased economic and industry growth when

each student it graduates becomes a part of the public good. Continuing education serves millions of adults who are eligible to vote and thus will affect national politics, and policies. Academic capitalism (Slaughter & Rhoades, 2004) acknowledges that the academic capitalist and knowledge learning regime and the public good can all coexist. Consequently, politicians and policy makers should recognize that continuing education provides social and economic sustainability that helps industry needs and the community.

Subsequently, there needs to be an improvement in government policies, such as those relating to financial redistributions, and financial aid for nontraditional students and adult learners. There needs to be significant policy adjustments or even a bill equivalent to the GI Bill (1944) that will address the extenuating need for financial aid for nontraditional and adult learners. Alternately, state legislatures should consider redistribution of income, which is, increasing tuition for those who can pay and redistributing some of that excess into need based financial aid pools for those who cannot pay for education. In exchange for these measures and initiatives policy makers should hold continuing education accountable for producing quality courses and programming, for fostering democracy, and for promoting diversity in higher education.

Finally, we are living in an era when the literature and critics are scoffing at higher education's revenue generating focus, while nostalgic about its lack of funding from public sources; promoting or refuting the need for entrepreneurialism within higher education, and lamenting or espousing the notion of an academic capitalist regime in higher education. This convulsion creates an opportunity for continuing higher education to (re)emphasize higher education's role in contributing to and shaping the public good. Academic capitalism supports the idea that, it's not simply the structure of higher education that matters, but it's also the

substantive cultural and institutional commitment to a democratic public good. Within this environment, continuing higher education has the opportunity to showcase as its “bottom line,” an enhancement of society: educationally, socially, culturally, politically, and economically—essentially answering the question, why does continuing education matter, what is its deepest purpose?

Implications for Future Research

The ongoing debate in higher education should be focused on the contextual importance and supporting role that continuing education plays within higher education. Consequently, there is a need for further research on issues pertaining to the many political issues raised in this study.

Governance. The political issue of governance deserves more attention since it is of such importance in moving continuing education forward. Further studies focusing on the mechanisms for and the influence of continuing education’s inclusiveness in governance are needed. For one thing, the majority of the political issues like faculty tensions and culture are intrinsic and user-facing, but decisively connected to governance. But, the larger context of the traditional system moving to or embracing a contemporary nontraditional system needs a solid platform for circumventing the governance structures of higher education, with specific emphasis on the role continuing education plays in the governance structure of the parent organization. Questions that should be explored are (1) is a resistance to shared governance an issue of cultural incompatibility? (2) would self-governance of continuing education ruin congruence with the parent institution? (3) what acceptable degree of shared governance would promote a win-win situation?

Leadership and faculty. This study found that there are contentions and issues regarding faculty’s view of continuing education and their willingness or lack thereof to partner with

continuing education. The study also found that faculty mind-set can endorse or devalue congruence between continuing education and the parent organization as faculty retains authority over credit-bearing courses and degrees administered by continuing education. Given the overarching importance of faculty in the academy, further research is needed that will support or refute this finding. The following questions could be asked: What are views of faculty towards continuing education? Is there evidence of actual resistance of faculty to collaborate with continuing education?

Continuing education is being asked to be visionary, entrepreneurial, innovative, contemporary, and strategic among other such nuances. These requests are perceived as the broad strategic umbrellas that positions continuing education to deal with the challenges within higher education. More than ever, leadership within continuing education is of utmost imperative and although there are many studies related to leadership and the many typologies of leadership models, there is still the need for a solid grasp of what it takes to be a leader in such a contemporary or not so contemporary entrepreneurial-oriented unit like continuing education. It seems that the practice of leadership in continuing education requires something more than the ordinary. Questions that still needs exploring are: (1) do leaders in continuing education need a different view or outlook than leaders within other divisions? (2) is continuing education over-managed, but under-lead? (2) of the various typologies of leadership strategies which is or are the most adaptable to continuing education settings? Such questions should be explored if we are to have a greater understanding of the “something more” that should define leadership in continuing education.

Financial mechanisms and policies. Should there be a breakthrough in the political issues within higher education which is the 1st frontal level, the 2nd front level, the systematic issues and policies regarding financial mechanisms and the funding for not-for-profit universities becomes a concern. First, the current financial policies relative to the accountability of and other mechanisms established to support not-for-profit-universities, by the Federal government, the Financial Accounting Standard Boards (FASB), and the Government Accounting Standards Board (GASB) needs investigating. The effect of these financial bases and mechanism, are not readily available or fully understood, so further research needs to be done in this area. In addition, the issue of *Title IV* in the Higher Education Reauthorization Act as it relates to adult programs needs to be explored. Its effect on increasing or decreasing accessibility needs to be understood. This related Federal student financial aid policies disadvantage working adults; students who tend to use continuing or distance education as a means to accessing a college degree; those who struggle to balance the conflicting demands of work, family, and college enrollment. Federal education loans are available only to students attending half time or more. Although a recent legislation, the Higher Education Reconciliation Act of 2005 eliminated the 50-Percent Rule, there is still much to be done to assist those nontraditional (adult) students who use continuing education as a means to access. Originally implemented in 1992 the 50-Percent Rule limited the participation of distance or online learning institutions in Federal Title IV financial aid if its distance learning courses exceeded 50 percent of the total classes offered (www.mnscu.edu/media/publications/pdf/fed05highered.pdf). With the removal of the 50 percent restriction, higher education institutions can expand their online programs, and students enrolled in accredited distance learning degree or certification programs are now eligible to receive aid from Title IV programs.

However, there is still the concern whether or not this reauthorization is fair to adult learners and continuing education programs especially in the areas emphasizing the rules relating to marketing of educational courses and the “safe harbor,” what can be done safely within those guidelines, questions, and answers. The 2006 Commission on the Future of Higher Education noted that its aim is to “develop a comprehensive strategy for postsecondary education that would better serve Americans and address the economic and workforce needs of our nation’s future” (p. 3). And according to Secretary Spellings, higher education funding in this country has “yet to successfully confront the impact of...an increasingly diverse and aging population.” In order to complete an educational program while juggling work and family obligations, adult learners require not only more flexibility in how educational programs are offered, but increased access to financial aid funding. Federal and state financial aid strategies that do not acknowledge the mounting need for such educational alternatives like continuing education will ultimately leave millions behind. Hence, over the long run, research must focus on how current and future federal and state policies will address those critical needs.

Model strategies. Continuing education needs to procure model strategies to counteract challenges within various settings; strategies that will propel the division’s goals and mission, that are adaptable, user-facing, and interfacing with existing systems. Strategies like the balanced scorecard and value-chain-analysis. Although the participants did not specifically or explicitly refer to their practices as employing the use of the balanced score card or value chain analysis, my analysis of the data supports an interpretation of their actions as elements of these various concepts. This study finds that the balanced scorecard concept, a managerial, concept is an adaptable strategy that can be used to further *institutionalize* continuing education’s function within the academy. It also finds that the value-chain-analysis is a concept that analyzes the links

between the set of value adding activities to the mission of academy. Future studies relating to the use of other managerial strategies for example, responsibility budgeting, is also theoretically appealing. As an academic managerial strategy, it is a strategic allocation of resources, where the process involves everyone. Responsibility budgeting promotes accountability, responsiveness, and documentation. It is widely practiced in the corporate sector because it solves problems of organizational coordination and control as they arise while pursuing goals and mission. Responsibility budgeting is a process that will also support the mission and vision of the academic institution.

The *new* theory of academic capitalism (Slaughter & Rhoades, 2004; Rhoades, 2003) as well as proponents of entrepreneurialism (Clark, 1998, 2000) supports the adaptation of these various business managerial concepts in academia. Because various departments are seeking ways to acquire additional funding mechanisms they will need to proffer various strategies for doing so. For example, being more responsive to students' needs, being willing to market themselves to attract and retain students, as well as being more efficient in their daily operations of the business. Academic capitalism supports the purview that higher education is no longer solely about research, while that is still important, but that higher education needs to get into the "mind-set" of the new economy and the new ways [that of utility] that education should respond to their communities. Units participating in this study were for the most part within *elite* institutions; therefore, future studies, are needed in an effort to substantiate or generalize the findings of this study to other *non-elite* continuing education units that are struggling with their own self-image, their perception of value, or the image of simply being a cash-cow for their institutions, which are the majority of cases in the realm of continuing education.

Epilogue

As I complete this study it is with great anticipation and pride that I reflect on the many months I spent traveling to the various locations, conducting the interviews, gathering supporting documents, meeting many new prospective colleagues, and creating collegiate friendships. Following these site visits were the transcribing, coding, summarizing, and the analyzing phases—interpreting the data so that I could make meaning of its implications. Finally, I came to the point of writing *the story* so that others could benefit from this study and I hope those who read this dissertation will learn as much as I have from the study because it was an overwhelming yet enjoyable process. And although I went into the study with some basic assumptions garnered during the literature searches, I learned that continuing education is endowed with positions of value, notwithstanding the challenges these units face. They foster strategies in order to procure their mission of helping societies advance politically, socially, and economically.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A

Letter of Introduction

My name is Sandria Stephenson, Doctoral Candidate at the Lifelong Education, Administration, and Policy (LEAP) department of the University of Georgia's College of Education. I am getting ready to pursue my dissertation study of continuing education divisions and this email is intended to introduce myself and my research and to invite you or an assistant Dean whom you could designate and whom will be willing to participate in my dissertation study entitled: "Politics, Policy, and Socio-economic impact on Continuing Higher Education." This is a qualitative study and is under the direction of Dr. Ronald Cervero, Chair of my committee and chair of the LEAP. I have attached a letter and consent form for your review which outlines the requirements.

In addition to meeting with you or your designee, I will also need to meet with someone in administration at the parent institution who might be willing to participate in the study as well. This person needs to be a VP, Provost, or some other administrator of academic affairs or at the parent university who knows much about CE. The objective and requirement for this second participant is to evoke a parallel view and response to CE from the perspective of the parent university administrators. This interview with the VP or Provost should be no more than 60 minutes. This is a qualitative study and I am hoping complete data collection by the ending of June 2007, so I am open to your time and convenience. Time commitment for the CEU is outlined in the official IRB approved invitation letter I have attached for your review.

My proposal is to visit the campuses for a day or night over trip depending on travel arrangements when you have decided on a date that is conducive to all to do the interviews and to collect copies of any document about CE that you are willing to share (strategic plans, budget, financial statements, mission statements etc.) I am flexible with Dates in the months of May or June.

Thank you for your willingness. I am looking forward to your reply and to discussing this with you further.

Thank you,
Sandria Stephenson, CPA
Doctoral Candidate
Lifelong Education, Administration and Policy
University of Georgia
678-480-1059

Appendix B

IRB Consent Letter

I _____ understand that I am invited to participate in a dissertation research project which will be conducted as part of the requirements for graduation for the Ph.D. program at the University of Georgia's Department of Lifelong Education, Administration, and Policy (LEAP) Program in Adult Education at the University of Georgia (706) 542-3343. This study will be conducted under the direction of Dr. Ronald M. Cervero, Chair, Department of Lifelong Education, Administration, and Policy, University of Georgia (706) 542-2221.

The title and purpose of the study are as follows:

Title: "Politics, Policy, and Socio-economic Impact on Continuing Higher Education."

Purpose: The purpose of the study is to identify continuing higher education's (CHE's) strategic responses to the political-economic context of higher education.

By signing this consent form I _____ am agreeing to the following:

1. To participating in an interview with the investigator. **This interview is expected to last 60 minutes;** will be audio-taped and later transcribed.
2. Allow the investigator to obtain necessary non-confidential documents including: (Annual reports, Budgets, Mission, Vision, Value statements, Strategic planning documents, Meeting memos, brochures, and other documents) that will allow the researcher to answer questions pertaining to the study. **Providing access to these documents should take approximately 30 minutes.**
3. Although pseudonyms will be used in the study and participants will **not** be identified, I am also agreeing to my rights to review the research study analysis and documents for verification of any direct quotes the investigator might use in the study analysis and report should I so desire. **This review should be approximately 30 minutes.**
4. Assisting the investigator with arrangements for an interview with a representative from the parent university. This representative can be the President, Any-Vice President, Vice Provost, Provosts, Chancellor or any other member of the administrative team who is willing to participate in the study and is capable of giving his or her insights about continuing education. Note: **only sections 1 & 3 will apply** to the representative from the parent university.

I am aware that there are minimal risks expected from my participation in this study. However, the following precautionary procedures will be taken to ensure confidentiality: (1) The final report for the study will use pseudonyms for my name and that of my institution; (2) Generic descriptions will be used to identify the city, state, and location of my institution (e.g. State University located in a rural southeastern state); (3) The audiotape with the interview responses

will be stored in a locked filing cabinet accessible only to the researcher. Upon acceptance of the final report by the research committee, the audiotape will be destroyed. **“I understand that my participation is voluntary. I can refuse to participate or stop taking part without giving any reason, and without penalty. I can ask to have all of the information about me returned to me, removed from the research records, or destroyed.”**

I understand that the objective of the study will be to demonstrate how continuing education program leaders within public and private not-for-profit universities position themselves to respond to the current technological, economic, and social changes that are both global and local. I and or my unit will benefit from the study in that I will be able to contribute to an understanding of leaders' perceptions, attitudes and processes within continuing education settings and to contribute to the understanding of the challenges they face and the strategies they use to sustain, reinvent, and redefine continuing education within a larger university setting. Finally, I will have an opportunity to share the exceptional “*story*” of CHE as we procure our mission, vision, and values to all stakeholders of higher education, despite the challenges we face.

I understand that I am agreeing by my signature on this form to take part in this research project and understand that I will receive a signed copy of this consent form for my records.

I also understand that the investigator will answer any further questions about the research, now or during the course of the project, and that I am free to withdraw my participation at any time should I become uncomfortable with it.

Sandria S. Stephenson

Name of Researcher

Signature

Date

Telephone: 678-480-1059

Email: sanshawn@uga.edu

Name of Participant

Signature

Date

***Please sign both copies, keep one and return one to the researcher.**

Additional questions or problems regarding your rights as a research participant should be addressed to The Chairperson, Institutional Review Board, University of Georgia, 612 Boyd Graduate Studies Research Center, Athens, Georgia 30602-7411; Telephone (706) 542-3199; E-Mail Address IRB@uga.edu

* Signatures will be obtained upon the researcher's visit to the campus

Appendix C

Interview Protocol

Introductions and Preliminaries

A. Will you briefly describe your title, your role (responsibilities) at the university?

B. How long have you been in this role?

C. What are your connections and responsibilities to CE?

Relationship between CE and the Parent Organization

1. Briefly describe the **structure of your CE** unit for example, its organization, operation, and program structure.
 - Is the CE unit centralized, decentralized or entrepreneurial within the university?
 - What stands out as CE's unique role and value to this university?
 - What do you believe is the mission of your CE unit?
 - How successful has this CE unit been in procuring its mission, vision, and values to stakeholders of higher education?
 - Is the university committed to the mission, vision, and values of CE? What are the university's specific plans for assisting CE in positioning itself to procure its mission, vision, and values to stakeholders of higher education?
 - Do you see CE and this university a win-win situation? And why?
2. Can you describe the **academic, and governance relationship** between the university and CE unit?
 - What principles are taken into account when making decisions for CE? Are these the same principles considered in decision making for the university at large?
 - Can CE take significant actions regarding curriculum/program planning without consulting the university administration or governing boards?
 - In your opinion, is the university administration committed to shared governance between CE and the parent university?

3. Describe the **fiscal relationship** between CE and the university.

- Who decides the allocation of the budget for CE? How much of CE's budget is funded by the university? How does this measure up to other departments? Is CE on a fixed controlled budget? Or is there flexibility on the part of the CE unit regarding the budget?
- Is CE required to cover all costs? Is CE required to return a portion of surplus to the university? Who control budget surpluses? Who is at fault if there is a budget shortfall?
- What unique financial benefits does CE provide to the university? Are funds from CE allocated to other divisions for other outreach programs?
- What about the universities financial policies benefit CE and what about them doesn't? In your opinion, is CE a "cash cow" for the university?

Politics, Policy and Socio-Economic Issues Impacting CE

4. What institutional political and policy issues, or challenges, do you see facing your CE unit?

A. Can you give an example of a strategy or program that demonstrates how this CE unit tried to address those issues?

5. What local, regional, or national political and policy issues, or challenges, does your CE unit face?

A. Can you give an example of a strategy or program that demonstrates how this CE unit tried to address those issues?

6. What are the local, regional or national economic issues, or challenges, do you see facing your CE unit?

A. Can you give an example of a strategy or program that demonstrates how this CE unit tried to address those issues?

7. What institutional social issues and challenges, do you see facing your CE unit?

A. how has this CE unit tried to address those? Can you give an example of a strategy or program that demonstrates that?

8. What local, regional or national social issues and challenges, do you see facing your CE unit?
 - A. how has this CE unit tried to address those issues? Can you give an example of a strategy or program that demonstrates that?
9. What specific changes in higher education policy or structure both locally, regionally, and nationally do you anticipate will be the greatest challenge to CE in the short term? In the long- term?
10. Where do you see your CE unit needing most to improve?
11. Is there anything else you would like to share about CE that I have not specifically Addressed?