

A third and complementary conceptual framework for University coherence and integration

By Albert Schorsch, III

The author offers a third and complementary conceptual framework for University coherence and integration: the development of collaborative partnerships grounded upon trust and fair dealing.

If the stated purpose of the proposed University administrative reorganization is to increase synergy of action in teaching, research, public service, and development across the campuses of the University, then this purpose cannot be accomplished simply by establishing an efficient top level that collects and monitors information and thereby moderates action.

Synergy can be more widely multiplied and realized when an atmosphere of trust and fair dealing is established across the entire University, when partnerships and experimentation are welcomed and protected, and when collaborative teams with specified decision-making and advisory responsibilities are trusted to act creatively.

If University leadership can establish a consistent institutional environment in which creative partnerships are welcomed and rewarded, in which the treatment of colleagues at each campus, especially in terms of policies and procedures, is totally fair, equitable, and above board, and in which resources are directed to each campus accordingly, then the social capital of the University, based upon trust and fair dealing, can grow.

This growth in social capital would require University leadership's consistent demonstration of such fair dealing over multiple decades spanning multiple administrations.

During his remarks to the Senate on 10/28/10, the President called his reorganization effort an "organic" one. If this organic restructuring can be "led from the middle" of the University by the faculty and staff--and students--then synergies and collaboration can multiply, provided that the University does not simply treat this commitment to organic integration and collaborative partnerships as a short-term strategy, but as a permanent approach fulfilling the mission of the University.

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