



2020

HIGHER EDUCATION ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE, QUALITY ASSURANCE PRACTICE, AND TEACHING AND LEARNING IN ARTS DISCIPLINES

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HIGHER EDUCATION ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE, QUALITY ASSURANCE
PRACTICE, AND TEACHING AND LEARNING IN ARTS DISCIPLINES

By

David Mills Chase

A Dissertation Submitted to the

Graduate School

In Partial Fulfillment of the

Requirements for the Degree of

DOCTOR OF EDUCATION

Benerd College

Educational and Organizational Leadership

University of the Pacific
Stockton, California

2020

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HIGHER EDUCATION ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE, QUALITY ASSURANCE
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By

David Mills Chase

DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to Nichol Joy Chase. Her talents—mastery of craft and gift for the aesthetic—are my reasons now and forever.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Throughout my life I have been very fortunate to be mentored, educated, and encouraged by an exceptional group of scholars at the University of the Pacific.

George Lewis, former chair of the Department of Sociology, introduced me to imagining musical culture sociologically, and George Nemeth in the Conservatory of Music, allowed for that imagination to inhabit my thoughts as a musician. Giulio Ongaro and William Hipp, two of the finest administrators of music schools in the United States, provided me with motivation and mentorship to pursue my ideas at the doctoral level. Drs. Ronald Hallett and Linda Skrla served as advisors and mentors throughout my doctoral program and provided invaluable guidance and direction as I pursued my studies.

Dr. Lynn Beck Brallier, Dean Emerita of the Benerd School of Education, steadied my thoughts and contributed to the possibilities ideas can present, and gave me confidence that the path I am on is the right one. Dr. Rod Githens patiently sorted out the final stretch for me and graciously agreed to serve on my committee. I am grateful for his help, insights, and experience.

None of this work, however, would be possible without the expertise, kindness, scholarship, and wisdom of Dr. Delores McNair. I was fortunate to take several classes from Dr. McNair throughout my study, and the opportunity to re-engage with her in the efforts of completion made this dissertation possible. Her mentorship, advice, and presence in my life as I developed this work allowed me to cross the transom from thought to document. I am humbly and eternally thankful to her for showing me the way.

HIGHER EDUCATION ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE, QUALITY ASSURANCE PRACTICE, AND TEACHING AND LEARNING IN ARTS DISCIPLINES

Abstract

By David Mills Chase

University of the Pacific
2020

The purpose of this study was to explore the relationship of higher education organizational structure and institutional quality assurance practices to and the culture of teaching and learning in artistic disciplines from the perspectives of three artist-educators. The research questions addressed by this study are as follows:

1. How do participants view the relationship of the organizational structure of their institution to the provision of quality assurance practices in their disciplines?
2. What barriers, if any, do participants perceive about the implementation of effective quality assurance practice and policy, and if barriers are perceived, why do they occur?
3. What changes or improvements have been made, if any, to pedagogy as a result of the findings of quality assurance practice?
4. In what ways, if any, has the relationship of organizational structure and quality assurance affected the orientation of the participants' disciplinary culture to learning?

Quality assurance practices are central to institutional decisions about educational programs, their alignment with mission, and how resources should be allocated. The process by which quality is defined, understood, and evaluated should connect with the domain it is attempting to define, understand, and evaluate in a way that the community surrounding the domain recognizes as useful and authentic. Intended for an audience of students, faculty, staff, and administrators in higher education arts disciplines, this study provides insight into how quality assurance process and product relate to teaching, learning, and assessing learning in the

arts. Through a qualitative research study employing purposeful sampling selection, three artist-educators working at three institutions differing in size, scope, and funding structure took part in this study.

Findings emerged across a series of themes concerning artists as educators, art as an educational endeavor, the work of the artist-educator, the doing of assessment, and the politics of assessment. The experience of the participants gave rise to three primary implications; the importance of opportunity for creation and risk as curricular and pedagogical imperatives, the acceptance of a subjective ontology and epistemologies of diagnosis to connect the arts to teaching and learning in other disciplines, and a convergence of top-down and bottom-up leadership models to identify and document educational effectiveness.

This study suggests a model of artistic learning in which engagement with students is indicative of an ecology that accounts for the many factors connected to successful student engagement. This kind of holistic model, one that considers artistic learning by means of a systems approach, aligns the environment of the discipline in which the student is situated to the relationship of that discipline to a department, school, college for the purpose of student achievement and the development of artistic voice.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

The concept of quality in higher education varies in meaning according to application and audience. It has been characterized as a necessary and critical component in all functions of an institution that should undergird all of the activity on a college campus (Hersh & Keeling, 2013). It is also a concept frequently tied to educational value (Ewell, 2009). In policy arenas, the value of education is often described in terms of economic competitiveness. Former U.S. President Barack Obama argued: “We know that economic progress and educational achievement have always gone hand-in-hand in America” (McDonnell, 2009, p. 420). Quality and value have become issues of central focus for higher education in the United States (American Council on Education [ACE], 2012).

Attempts to understand, measure, document, and improve learning in an organized way have long roots and are documented extensively in other work; however, in a modern context one can find momentum gathering in evaluation and assessment policy in American education through calls for evidence of educational development in such examples as, *A Nation at Risk: The Imperative For Educational Reform* (The National Commission on Excellence in Education, 1983) and congressional reauthorizations of the Higher Education Act. The U.S. Department of Education, as informed by the work of the National Advisory Committee on Institutional Quality and Integrity, suggested that regional and national accreditation associations incorporate quality assurance practices as part of the criteria required for institutional accreditation including assessment of the processes and outcomes of education, and not just the resources and capacity institutions possess to meet their missions. These resources and capacity are often referred to as inputs to an educational system (Ewell, 2008). Quantitative and tabular methods have been

avored by accreditors and institutional administrators in early attempts at this work typified in the approach of Nichols (1989). In this study, quality assurance practices consist of learning outcomes assessment and review of programs for educational effectiveness.

Over the course of the past 30 years, teaching, learning, and assessment in higher education have made significant progress, encouraged in part by evolving concepts of the role of teaching and teaching-related research in scholarship. Ernest Boyer's (1990), *Scholarship Reconsidered*, is an early example of this kind of reconceptualization. New educational models have emerged, including online modes of delivery and competency-based models of education (a long-standing educational practice in the arts), that have gained traction and continue to develop wider acceptance.

Quality assurance practice has also matured as demonstrated by a number of faculty development initiatives for assessment; faculty-developed rubrics for assessing student learning; national initiatives, such as the Association of American Colleges and Universities VALUE rubrics; and the efforts of the National Institute on Learning Outcomes Assessment. Design, performing arts, and visual arts occupy a unique place in higher education and have until recently been outside of the mainstream of the assessment and quality assurance movement that has assumed a primary space in the higher education landscape over the last three decades (Chase, Ferguson, & Hoey, 2014). Over this time period, the theory and practice of college teaching, learning, and assessment has advanced, as has the availability of appropriate information technologies to support these advances (Suskie, 2018).

Creative disciplines have much to gain and much to offer in terms of how they develop and assess student competence. Faculty artists are in a unique position to observe the relationships and intersections among teaching, learning, and quality assurance in the context of

the structures that support these efforts at their institutions and the influence of these intersections and structures on the shared experience and culture of their artistic practice

Background

A steady increase in demand for information about educational quality and value gave rise to a series of ideas and practices commonly referred to as the “assessment movement” (Hoey et al., 2014, p. 350) and also contributed to the commissioning and subsequent release of a 2006 report developed by the United States Secretary of Education’s Commission on the Future of Higher Education (commonly referred to as the Spellings Commission) that investigated how well, among other concerns, postsecondary institutions deliver quality and value (Erisman, 2009). The worldwide economic downturn beginning in 2008 has been characterized as a prime example of the threat to affordability and quality in higher education everywhere and a call for colleges and universities to “become smarter and better at assessing student learning outcomes, at using the resulting data to inform resource allocation and other decisions, and at communicating to their constituents how well they are performing” (Kuh & Ewell, 2010, p. 11).

Among the findings of the Spellings Commission is a pointed concern regarding the “shortcomings” of accreditation (U.S. Department of Education, 2006, p. 15). At the heart of that concern is a lack of transparency in the accreditation process, especially with respect to different forms of quality assurance practice. The Spellings Commission recognized that while extensive government data on higher education do exist, data “rarely focus on outcomes” (U.S. Department of Education, 2006, p. 15). Three of the Spellings Commission’s six recommendations call for accountability, transparency, and quality improvement. The Commission suggested that outcomes assessment, driven by faculty and based on evidence, should be the centerpiece of accreditation (U.S. Department of Education, 2006).

There are artist-educators and accreditation professionals, on the other hand, who have expressed concern over the kinds of centralized demands and regulatory involvement in the affairs of postsecondary institutions, and on the artistic disciplines taught within them. “For the government to direct that higher education and accreditors provide specific types of information appears to threaten the responsible exercise of autonomy that higher education has long enjoyed when it comes to reviewing academic quality” (Eaton et al., 2005, p. 43). Much of the debate about the relationship of the government and accreditors with respect to quality in higher education pits the need for transparency and accountability against efforts of colleges and universities to focus on improving teaching and student learning.

This debate suggests that, as important as quality assurance may be, it ultimately serves two purposes at odds with each another. The first is accountability and the second is institutional improvement, including the quality of teaching and learning: “Because of its importance in both accountability and improvement contexts, assembling and interpreting evidence of what students know and can do as a result of their tertiary educational experience is becoming much more common and may eventually be mandatory” (Kuh & Ewell, 2010, p. 14). Others warn of the potential for a more sinister agenda quality assurance could pursue; “the power to decide what must be disclosed can easily become the power to decide what must be done” (Eaton et al., 2005, p. 46).

The burden of demonstrating educational quality and effectiveness within institutions is left to a process of accreditation conducted by independent agencies that divide schools and colleges by region (Ewell, 2008). One of these agencies, the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC) (2013) Senior College and University Commission (WSCUC), suggested that “the voluntary, non-governmental, institutional accreditation, as practiced by the regional

accrediting commissions is a unique characteristic of American education” (p. 2). It is also the primary means by which institutions are recognized as sufficient, in all respects, to offer educational programs and confer degrees, certifications, or licensure.

Accreditation has emerged over the last century as a primary mechanism for evaluating institutional effectiveness (ACE, 2012; Erisman, 2009; Ewell 2008). The Council for Higher Education Accreditation provided a definition of the process; “accreditation is a process of external quality review created and used by higher education to scrutinize colleges, universities, and programs for quality assurance and quality improvement” (Eaton, 2006, p. 3). Federal and state governments recognize accreditation as a reliable authority on academic quality (Eaton, 2006) and beginning in 1952 the federal government declared accreditation a requirement for the receipt of federal funds (ACE, 2012; Erisman, 2009; Ewell 2008).

The relationship of higher education in the United States to the regulation, oversight, and accountability of its processes is complicated. This is especially true of the teaching and learning enterprise within postsecondary institutions, and further complicated in artistic and creative disciplines. While at present there is no federally mandated system by which schools are compelled to demonstrate educational attainment or gains experienced by students, the 2006 Spellings Commission argued that: “Accreditation agencies should make performance outcomes, including completion rates and student learning, the core of their assessment as a priority over inputs or processes” (U.S. Department of Education, 2006, p. 25).

Regionally accredited colleges and universities are increasingly pursuing an outcomes-based model for assessing the educational effectiveness of teaching and learning on their campuses and accrediting agencies have placed greater emphasis on student outcomes as one of many measures of how well institutions are fulfilling their mission (Gill, 2006; Kuh & Ewell,

2010). The practice of outcomes-based assessment is a central feature in assessment and quality assurance pertaining to learning and instruction as well as in co- and extra-curricular components of the academy, including student affairs and other entities that support students and the educational enterprise alongside faculty-based instruction (Keeling, 2006).

Educational outcomes are commonly assessed in three ways: by means of a process called value-added assessment, through standardized exams, or via a method of embedded assessment (Erisman, 2009). Value-added assessment, which borrows its terminology from economics, attempts to determine if students achieve increased knowledge and skills as a result of postsecondary education by measuring performance at the beginning of enrollment, at varying points in a degree program, and at graduation (Erisman, 2009; Provezis, 2010). Standardized testing is often employed as a measurement device in value-added approaches and is also a way to aggregate and compare learning gains experienced by large numbers of students across many institutions. Embedded assessment collects and purposes student work produced as a requirement for a class as data to assess outcomes. These data are often sampled for comparative purposes (Erisman, 2009).

Conducting an outcomes-based educational model is endorsed by the regional organizations that provide accreditation to schools and colleges. To maintain accreditation schools must demonstrate compliance with this model. For example, WSCUC requires outcomes assessment in postsecondary institutions and stipulates this as an accreditation criterion for review, as such:

The institution's student learning outcomes and expectations for student attainment are clearly stated at the course, program and, as appropriate, institutional level. These outcomes and expectations are reflected in academic programs and policies, curriculum, advisement, library and information resources, and the wider learning environment. (WASC, 2013, p. 15)

Thus, outcomes-based assessment is a system of measurement employed to determine how well the teaching and learning process works in one institution, or across many. The contours and functions of this kind of system are in turn influenced by institutional mission, organizational structures, and accreditation requirements that determine how schools and colleges are governed and managed and how they carry out operational functions (Houston, 2008; Nelson Laird et al., 2008). The organization of learning at colleges and universities, from class to department to larger units, can be a determinative factor in how learning works. It also governs how quality is understood and how formal auditing of learning is designed and implemented, as well as the value these processes hold in the culture of the institution. Because of increasing demands from internal and external stakeholders to quantify, qualify, and demonstrate value in the higher education enterprise (Holyoke et al., 2012; Houston, 2008; Kuh & Ewell, 2010; U.S. Department of Education, 2006) a focus on the intersections of teaching and learning in a disciplinary context, institutional quality, and organizational structures follows as a point of departure for investigation.

Description of the Research Problem

The movement to standardize outcomes-based assessment has resulted in the development of a great deal of form and structure as evidenced by a robust body of work detailing its purposes and methods (Allen, 2003; Banta, 2002; Bresciani, 2006; Suskie, 2018; Walvoord, 2004). There is also substantial literature on the connection of assessment to faculty work (Driscoll & Wood, 2007) and the importance of orienting an entire campus to learning (Tagg, 2003). Similarly, there are comprehensive works concerning organization theory as applied to higher education that apply theoretical perspectives to a number of issues in the academy (Bess & Dee, 2008; Manning, 2013). Questions remain, however, about the extent to

which assessment actually improves education and how organizational arrangements influence the ability of quality assurance mechanisms to improve practice (Kezar, 2012a).

A deeper understanding of the costs and benefits of quality assurance practices is necessary, especially with respect their impact on improved learning outcomes for students and improved pedagogical method among faculty. More research in this area is necessary and understanding must develop within disciplinary contexts and cultures.

Design, visual, and performing arts programs are uniquely situated to explore quality assurance, institutional organization, and teaching and learning given the primacy and immediacy of feedback to student performance (Chase et al., 2014). The way higher education institutions are organized influences the type, scope, and effectiveness of their quality assurance practices, which are in turn designed to improve teaching and learning. Examining the intersections among organization, quality assurance, and teaching and learning in a specific disciplinary context has the potential to advance the conversation around whether or not quality assurance practices are effective in improving teaching and learning, and ultimately, the extent to which higher education is improving.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to explore the relationship of higher education organizational structure and institutional quality assurance practices to and the culture of teaching and learning in artistic disciplines from the perspectives of three artist-educators.

Research Questions

The research questions addressed by this study are as follows:

1. How do participants view the relationship of the organizational structure of their institution to the provision of quality assurance practices in their disciplines?

2. What barriers, if any, do participants perceive about the implementation of effective quality assurance practice and policy, and if barriers are perceived, why do they occur?
3. What changes or improvements have been made, if any, to pedagogy as a result of the findings of quality assurance practice?
4. In what ways, if any, has the relationship of organizational structure and quality assurance affected the orientation of the participants' disciplinary culture to learning?

Significance of the Study

Quality assurance practices are becoming more important to key institutional decisions about the centrality of educational programs to institutional mission, their priority in relation to other programs at the institution, and how resources should be allocated (Dickeson, 2010). It is important that these sorts of decisions and judgments are made in an organizationally sound environment where structure is aligned with purpose (Gumport, 2000). In other words, the process by which quality is defined, understood, and evaluated should connect with the domain it is attempting to define, understand, and evaluate in a way that the community surrounding the domain recognizes as useful and authentic. The methods, terminology, and philosophy of quality assurance should be congruent with the native teaching philosophies, values, and habits of those engaged in the enterprise undergoing investigation (Ewell, 2009; Hersh & Keeling, 2013).

The results of this study are intended to be useful to administrators, faculty, staff, and students in higher education arts disciplines. All of these constituencies are regularly engaged in quality assurance practices in some way, and this research can provide insight into how process and product relate to teaching and learning. The results may be of use to policy makers as well, as their calls for great effectiveness and efficiencies in higher education outcomes have, to a great extent, engendered and helped shape current policies and practices designed to understand quality.

Theoretical Framework

Critique has been applied to what some consider a dangerous encroachment of the values of the marketplace on the values of higher education. Giroux (2002, 2019, 2020) has problematized the application of a market ideology and principles from corporate culture in a neoliberal philosophy demonstrated by higher education. In his view, these principles have corrosive effects on the more democratic aims and purposes of higher education and create conditions where “consumers do the work of citizens” (Giroux, 2002, p. 427). The market-driven discourse of neoliberalism has a tendency to “undermine the distinction between higher education and business” (Giroux, 2002, p. 433), erode academic freedom, and reduce the college experience to job training.

Neoliberal logic is of particular importance to the intersection of quality assurance, higher education organizational structure, and effective learning. Giroux (2002) pointed out that management models of decision making replace faculty governance, and in turn management becomes a substitute for leadership. An influence of neoliberalism can be seen in the preference for quantitative method in learning assessment in higher education with the idea that learning can be encapsulated in statements of outcome that are measured in terms of value. Outcome statements for learning can infer product value to the consumer when unaccompanied by meaningful inquiry into learning gains (Ball, 2015; Chun, 2016, Giroux, 2013, Phelan & Salter, 2019).

Performativity is both an idea and a process that has application to quality assurance practices in education. It provides a lens to examine how quality assurance activities and processes can become ends in themselves and obscure the true nature of what they are intended to analyze and improve. The resulting condition can be manifest in an artificial entity added on to educational process, consuming time and resources in a continual cycle of examination (Ball,

1997, 2003, 2012a). Stephen Ball's (2003, 2012b, 2015) research into educational policy analysis has also contextualized the danger of neoliberal ideology in terms similar to Giroux, classifying it as the use of "market principles as a basis for the universalization of market-based social relations" (Ball, 2012b, p. 18).

Ball (2003) characterized performativity as "technology that links effort, values, purposes, and self-understanding to measures and comparisons of output" (p. 19). His concept of performativity catalogs first and second order effects that orient work in the academy to measurable performance outcomes and away from aspects of development that cannot be measured, such as social, emotional, or moral development. In this sense he suggests that commitment to educational development is replaced with contractual obligation to specified deliverables. Inquiry into the quality of higher education in any form, from learning assessment to annual or periodic internal review to accreditation, can veer into metrics and methods that generalize the academic enterprise to a market calculus (Ball, 1997, 2003, 2012b, 2015).

The perspectives of Ball and Giroux provide a counterbalance to the efficiency, effectiveness, and outcome-driven rhetoric of learning outcomes assessment and program review and are essential to consider if there is to be a focus on improving teaching and learning in postsecondary institutions. The frame of performativity and the lens of neoliberal context can provide a structure through which the confluence of organization, quality assurance, and teaching and learning within disciplines can be analyzed and understood in an institutional setting.

Methods

This study took place over the course of several months—April through September 2020—and was affected by the circumstances presented by the novel coronavirus and COVID-19 pandemic of 2020. Research participants included three artist-educators working in three

different institutional types: a small, selective, single-purpose arts institution; a department within a private, not-for-profit multi-discipline institution; and an arts department within a comprehensive, public state-supported institution.

This study was a basic interpretive study predicated on the concept that phenomena of interest are understood through the meaning made by those involved in the study (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Through non-probability purposeful sampling selection, three artist/educators at three different institutional types were invited and agreed to participate in this study. The goal of purposeful sampling was to select participants that are likely to be rich in information with regard to the study's purpose (Gall et al., 2003). A form of maximum variation (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) served as the type of purposive sampling. The intent was to develop criteria for inclusion that captures three educators in an arts education context at institutions that differ in terms of size, scope, and purpose. The selection of institutional sites and research participants is described in greater detail in Chapter 3.

Role of the Researcher

The researcher, at the time of data collection and as of this writing, is an employee of the Western Association of Schools and Colleges Senior College and University Commission, an institutional accreditor of senior (four-year) colleges and universities. This researcher positionality, where work as a staff member of the agency serving as the institutional accreditor of the institutions at which the research participants are faculty members, was a consideration and point of attention and concern in methodology. Extra care and caution were undertaken to ensure the anonymity of the research participants and their institutions. The perspective gained from familiarity with the culture of higher education in the Western United States and deep background knowledge of the policies, procedures, and current issues in accreditation and quality

assurance added context and a dimension of understanding that was of great value in the research process.

Definition of Terms

Culture of learning: The prevailing beliefs, attitudes, activities, rituals, and behaviors in a higher education community that reflect the values of that community.

Institutional organizational structure: The arrangement and function of positions and job responsibilities in a higher education institution, and the relationship of those positions and functions to the goals of the institution.

Neoliberalism: A theory of political economy that foregrounds the operational principles of free markets as means to maximize effectiveness and efficiencies in a domain of activity.

Performativity: A technology, a culture, and a mode of regulation that employs judgments, comparisons, and displays as a means of incentive, control, attrition, and change based on rewards and sanctions, both material and symbolic (Ball, 2003). Performativity suggests that evaluating the effectiveness of a process can become an end in itself and develop characteristics of direction and control in addition to analysis and understanding.

Quality assurance: Processes and practices that institutions of higher education employ to investigate, audit, and determine the quality of the functions and structures that comprise the institution. These processes include learning outcomes assessment, program reviews, accreditation self-studies, program prioritizations, resource allocation, and project management. Such processes and practices are usually guided by the mission of the institution or that of the specific component of the institution under review.

Teaching and learning: Specific pedagogic theories and strategies designed and employed to improve the learning outcomes of students.

Chapter Summary

There are a variety of factors internal and external to higher education that are exerting pressure on institutions to demonstrate the quality and value of their activities and how they support the educational outcomes of their students. Inquiry into quality usually involves a formal process of investigation into various aspects of the organization of the institution and its functions. This study explored the relationship of higher education organizational structure and quality assurance practices and the culture of learning in artistic disciplines. Performativity was the theoretical framework through which the intersection of structure, quality assurance, and institutional culture was analyzed.

The remainder of the study includes a review of the literature surrounding organization in higher education, quality assurance, and approaches to teaching and learning in the arts; a delineation of the research design and methodology; an analysis of the data; and discussion of the findings, conclusions, and recommendations of the study.

CHAPTER 2: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Among the most important purposes of any educational enterprise is preparing students to demonstrate the knowledge and skills they gain as a result of their engagement in the teaching and learning process. Evaluating student work authentically, within the context of an academic discipline, is central to the education of all kinds of students (Driscoll & Wood, 2007; Erisman, 2009; Suskie, 2018; Walvoord, 2004).

Higher education institutions in the United States have an interest in educational practices that are effective in inculcating higher order learning skills, such as metacognition, synthesis, and integration; colleges and universities are ostensibly designed to produce these qualities in their graduates (Hersh & Keeling, 2013; Laitinen, 2012). Because metacognition, synthesis, and integration are ultimate goals for teaching and learning in any academic discipline, they are the traits that the systematic assessment of learning is designed to capture and analyze (Sternberg, 1998; Suskie, 2018; Walvoord, 2004). Practitioners of assessment, however, often struggle to develop practices and techniques to meaningfully and usefully understand how well students are learning (Chase & Hatschek, 2010; Driscoll & Wood, 2007; Suskie, 2018).

Assessing teaching and learning to determine how well that process works at the course or program level in the aggregate, in one institution, or across many, is influenced by organizational structures that determine how schools and colleges are governed and managed and how they carry out operational functions (Houston, 2008; Nelson Laird et al., 2008). Assessing how well students learn in a particular educational setting can provide a particularly rich and distinctive opportunity to understand effective teaching, which in turn can play a significant role in the organization of an institution of higher education.

It is often the case that, despite the availability of direct evidence of learning, faculty are sometimes hesitant to translate their native evaluative techniques into the language of assessment and to engage in systematic analysis of student learning (Driscoll & Wood, 2007; Hersh & Keeling, 2013). While the processes of identifying outcomes and using criteria to judge student work are commonplace in some disciplines, faculty in others resist codifying what students should know and be able to do into terminology and instrumentation designed for the purposes of assessing learning. Arts disciplines characterize this process as inherently quantitative in nature and as one that tends toward a standardization antithetical to their educational goals (Eaton et al., 2005; Wait & Hope, 2007). This line of reasoning suggests that assessment is too reliant on notions of reliability and validity more common to positivist constructions of knowledge in the natural and social sciences. All of this is often thought to be dangerous to the fundamentally interpretive nature of their work: understanding creativity and the individualized nature of human and artistic expression (Council of Arts Accrediting Associations [CAAA], 2007). Regardless of faculty orientation to assessment, there are attributes and behaviors of students in the learning process that are important to take into account with regard to teaching.

Regular student reflection and self-knowledge are valuable characteristics in higher order learning. Understanding the development of the individual, building self-regulative skills, and reinforcing the iterative process of doing the work of an academic discipline over time, are all features that good teaching takes into account (Holley, 2009; Sternberg, 1998; Yorke, 2003). Moreover, the authentic assessment of learning in any disciplinary context is designed to capture the direct demonstration of student learning that exemplifies the real work of what professionals in a discipline do, and it is a highly effective way to understand learning (Driscoll & Wood, 2007; Erisman, 2009; Suskie, 2018; Walvoord, 2004). The teaching, learning, and assessment

that take place within a discipline are subject to larger structural concerns with respect to the place of the discipline in the institution.

The organization of learning at colleges and universities, from class to department to larger units, can be a determinative factor in how learning works. It also governs how quality is understood and how formal auditing of learning is designed and implemented, as well as the value these processes hold in the life of the institution. Increasing demands from internal and external stakeholders to quantify, qualify, and demonstrate value in a higher education enterprise are intensifying the focus on the intersections of teaching and learning, institutional quality, and organizational structures (Holyoke et al., 2012; Houston, 2008; Kuh & Ewell, 2010; U.S. Department of Education, 2006).

The line of inquiry throughout this literature review is designed to answer the following question: What is the impact of higher education organizational structure on the orientation of an arts disciplinary culture to learning? While there are complex relationships among organizational structure, teaching and learning, and quality auditing, there are other factors, including political and epistemological considerations, overlapping with these areas (McDonnell, 2009). Individually and in combination, these factors and relationships determine the contours of educational experience both in and beyond the academy. Student affairs and co-curricular learning are of significant concern to the success of college students, however, the view of campus culture and learning presented here is limited to academic affairs.

This literature review investigated teaching and learning, quality auditing, and organizational structure in higher education in the United States. Understanding the orientation of the culture on any particular discipline to learning is predicated on the conditions, processes, and connections among these areas. There are also significant critiques that suggest a deleterious

encroachment of market-based ideologies on the entirety of the higher education landscape.

When taken into account with respect to learning, auditing, and organization, these critiques call for an integration that balances improving programs and student learning with the need for accountability.

Teaching and Learning in Higher Education Arts Disciplines

This section details pedagogy that has been employed in service of developing higher order learning that is particularly relevant to artistic disciplines. The several methods presented here all have application to college and university settings. Further sections explore the connection of pedagogical method to practices designed to assure quality and organizational structure in higher education.

Domain Expertise and Expert Performance

Because artistic disciplines are designed to provide an experience that inculcates complex knowledge and abilities of a high order of skill, understanding what is known about the conditions under which expertise is developed is useful toward understanding what is effective in arts teaching and learning. Ericsson and Charness (1994) described the conditions under which expert performance is developed and described how, within a particular domain, expertise is obtained. In this context, a domain is defined as a discrete performance-based activity, such as performing in a particular sport, playing a musical instrument, typing, or playing chess. This characterization of domain expertise has clear application to teaching and learning in higher education. Ericsson and Charness (1994) suggested that it is unlikely that changes in the structure and skill of human behavior are limited to traditional domains of expertise, and that the application of techniques employed in the development of expertise “should be expected in many everyday activities, such as thinking, comprehension, and problem solving” (p. 745). In this

regard, the content and boundaries of an academic discipline are analogous to Ericsson and Charness' characterization of a domain, and as such, there is potential for the study of domain expertise to inform arts teaching and learning in higher education.

Deliberate Practice

According to the work of Ericsson and Charness (1994), practicing a skill in a deliberate way over time is central to becoming an expert. While conventional wisdom might likely suggest this to be an obvious and elementary observation, a line of research has established a sophisticated understanding of developing expertise and the role of deliberate practice. In a foundational article on practice and the development of expertise, Ericsson et al. (1993) developed the theoretical framework that explains expert performance in terms of lifelong regimens of effortful activities (what is meant by deliberate practice) toward the goal of optimizing improvement. Attributes that had heretofore been ascribed to talent are identified as the result of intense, deliberate practice over the course of time (10 years as determined through research). The authors "argue that the difference between expert performers and normal adults reflect a life-long period of deliberate effort to improve performance in a specific domain" (Ericsson et al., 1993, p. 400). Moreover they identified the value of this line of inquiry to understanding the most desirable conditions for learning in an educational setting. This body of work has found a significant audience in education and is a major component in understanding the development of expertise in a variety of professions across a wide array of human endeavor. As such, it can be highly useful as an approach to effective pedagogy in postsecondary teaching and learning.

In a later work, Ericsson (2008) provided the contours of his research on the acquisition of expert performance through deliberate practice for an audience of medical practitioners. By

this time, a redirection of research had been established that moved from understanding superior performance on the basis of the opinions and assessment of socially recognized experts to the study of reproducibly superior performance in a laboratory setting. Ericsson described the scientific study of expert performance using examples from chess, typing, and music. He concluded that “complex integrated systems of representation for the execution, monitoring, planning, and analyses of performance” (Ericsson, 2008, p. 993) are necessary for superior performance. These systems are predicated on the consistent application of deliberate practice. The entire body of work in expert performance and deliberate practice provides opportunities to develop and enrich postsecondary teaching and learning in all disciplines and combining these theories with an understanding of how students monitor their own learning can be of great benefit.

There is a body of psychological research that underscores the importance of metacognition as a human ability and discusses its role in developing expertise as a student, arguing that metacognition converges with other attributes linked to success in school and as part of a construct of developing expertise as a student (Sternberg, 1998). In an attempt to integrate the literature on abilities with the literature on expertise, Sternberg (1998) suggested that these bodies of work may be referring to the same underlying ideas, and that metacognition is a part of the concept of developing expertise. Sternberg differed, however, from the work of Ericsson and others in suggesting that deliberate practice in service of developing expertise negates the causality of differences in individuals, rather suggesting that deliberate practice leads to expertise, and that the satisfaction of expertise leads to more deliberate practice. This line of thought is useful in understanding nuances in the literature about expert performance and metacognition, especially with respect to teaching and learning in higher education

environments. It is possible to apply techniques used by expert performers, including intentional, deliberate practice, to improve learning.

Constructivist Learning

Deliberate practice, domain expertise, and metacognition demonstrate relationships that are important to teaching and learning in the arts. Instructional methods and constructs are also in use that are effective for learners and add value to the teaching and learning process. In a meta-analysis of research surrounding discovery-based instruction, Alfieri et al. (2011) distinguished direct learning instruction, as exemplified by the traditional recitation lecture format from constructivism, where students are engaged in a context where they are to actively participate in the discovery of ideas. Two analyses were conducted: the first compared unassisted discovery learning with more explicit instruction and a second compared enhanced discovery-learning with different sorts of instructional conditions. The findings suggested that unassisted discovery does not benefit learners, whereas feedback, worked examples, scaffolding, and elicited explanations, do. Constructivist discovery-based instruction is conducive to deep learning, requires metacognitive skill of the learner, and is useful in higher order learning skills, such as synthesis and integration. It relies on the use of authentic tasks in a pedagogical context, and also calls upon engagement in social participation, scaffolding, and the use of tools or mental models to support complex cognitive activity (O'Donnell, 2012).

There are implications here for pedagogy, in that active engagement and regular practice is central to the success of the learner and thus should be central to instructional technique. This research also establishes a connection among the three bodies of literature that relate to effective instruction in higher education: teaching and learning quality assurance, higher education organizational structure, and approaches to learning in arts disciplines. The findings underscore

the need for structures that support discovery-based teaching and learning in arts education, to which quality assurance and organizational structure are linked.

The idea that acquiring knowledge and skill as an artist is embedded in the mutual influence of environment and artist is at the core of dialectical constructivism, as is the idea of a scaffolded individualized approach to teaching on the part of the instructor (Moshman, 1982). Constructivist principles are central to inquiry-based education as well, a practice that includes techniques that are designed to promote synthesis and integration as students encounter and navigate the contours of knowledge and skill acquisition and direct their own improvement and artistic development (Hoey et al., 2014).

Teaching Creativity

Approaches to teaching creativity play a significant role in teaching and learning systems in arts disciplines. Cunliffe (2008) argued for the importance of dismantling what he calls the “tension view” of creativity, particularly endemic to some artistic instructional points of view that suggest a dichotomy between creativity in art and creativity in science. The argument is that this is a false dichotomy, and as such an alternative and complementary view of knowledge and creativity is necessary. This work is critical to a philosophical underpinning for many artists that creativity and artistic work can be assessed at all, which is a significant debate among artists and teachers in fine arts disciplines (Wait & Hope, 2007). This line of reasoning suggests a change from instruction responsible for summative judgment to the evaluation of student capacity and demonstration of metacognition and self-diagnosis.

De La Harpe et al. (2009), who are art, architecture, and design faculty, reviewed the literature in their field and asserted that evaluating student work should focus on three dimensions; the production of good work, the process involved, and development as a person.

The iterative nature of learning and skill development in design studios lends itself to feedback based on established criteria, and “assessment of the processes of learning simply requires that students’ thoughts be made accessible in a more explicit way than normally happens” (De La Harpe et al., 2009, p. 46). There is a relationship here to the work of Cunliffe (2008) in the suggestion of the importance of unpacking process in the relationship between student and instructor and emphasizing cognitive and metacognitive skill development as well as self-efficacy. As with Cunliffe, there is application to teaching and learning in higher education more broadly, in addition to assessment practice and institutional structure.

Kleiman (2008) also focused on understanding creativity and its assessment in higher education. He pointed to trends in higher education pedagogy, including enterprise, entrepreneurship, and innovation. Following a series of definitions of creativity, Kleiman described the development of what amounts to a heuristic device or concept map representing conceptions of creativity gleaned from interviews with academics from a variety of disciplines. This device was generated by means of phenomenographic research and yielded five main categories for describing the focus of creative experience including constraint, process, product, transformation, and fulfillment. The utility of this research lies in the application of creativity to teaching and learning in a range of academic disciplines and as a way to qualitatively identify and describe creativity as a phenomenon in an educational context. Helping students to develop and monitor their own creative development requires communication and opportunities for frequent feedback.

The one-on-one private music lesson studio has been employed as a unit of analysis to find that within individual applied music lessons, criteria-based feedback improves the specificity of faculty expectation of student performance (Parkes, 2010). This sort of feedback

represents a valid and reliable way to measure what can sometimes be seen as a subjective discipline. This suggests that instruction in all disciplines can benefit from ideas used in criteria-based feedback, which includes improved communication among faculty that can foster a desire to remove the secretive or subjective nature of assessments, developing willingness to embrace new methodologies, and testing and refining the effectiveness of pedagogical techniques. Consistent with other work in arts assessment, Parkes (2010) highlighted the benefit of a broader conception of teaching and learning that can work in other disciplines to inculcate effective teaching and learning.

Sternberg (2006) put forth two other theories that are of use in understanding creativity. First, the investment theory of creativity suggests that creativity requires a confluence of six distinct but interrelated resources; intellectual abilities, knowledge, styles of thinking, personality, motivation, and environment. Second, the propulsion theory of creative contributions suggests that creativity can be of different kinds, depending on how it propels existing ideas forward. Different kinds of creativity, ranging from minor replications to major redirections of thinking, can be developed. Eight types of creative contributions are divided into three major categories, including types of creativity that accept current paradigms and attempt to extend them, types of creativity that reject current paradigms and attempt to replace them, and a type of creativity that synthesizes current paradigms. These theories have significant implications for teaching and learning in higher education. Approaching the construct of creativity from a theoretical perspective can be applied to a variety of academic disciplines.

Developing the entrepreneurial skill of college students can also be linked to instructional strategy (Ward, 2004). Generating novel and useful ideas and recognizing opportunity have long been cornerstones of entrepreneurial education. Ward (2004) applied what he called creative

cognition as a theoretical framework for understanding the thought process of entrepreneurial invention. He discussed the process by which people access and manipulate their knowledge. An example of this is how, in using analogy as a tool, information about experiences is stored in organized knowledge structures that can be accessed in future tasks, thus mapping knowledge from a familiar to an unfamiliar domain. He also suggested that conceptual combination, where separate ideas are merged into a new idea, is an essential skill of entrepreneurial thinking. When considered in the context of effective approaches to teaching and learning, Ward's models overlap with research about metacognition and creativity, and when employed as a formative assessment technique, creative cognition has the potential to substantially benefit pedagogy in higher education.

When assembled as a cohesive body of thought about teaching and learning in arts disciplines, it is clear that there are concepts and practices that have utility in improving conditions for learning. Deliberate practice in service of developing domain expertise, combined with the development of metacognition, has been demonstrated to improve knowledge and ability over time. Moreover the techniques employed in constructivist learning and research about the nature of creativity in an educational context have shown that higher order learning can be facilitated in an environment intentionally designed to develop these skills in learners.

Quality Assurance Practices in Higher Education

Learning Assessment

Assessing learning is a process of inquiry into what students know and can do as result of their engagement in an educational enterprise. Stakeholders in higher education in the United States have developed an interest in assessing student learning over the past 30 years (Kuh & Ewell, 2010; Suskie, 2018). The higher education community, consisting of faculty and staff,

students, accreditors, and policy-makers at the federal, state, and local levels, has an interest in the effectiveness of colleges and universities (Bresciani, 2009; Erisman, 2009; Kuh & Ewell, 2010; U.S. Department of Education, 2006). Accordingly, there is a growing body of knowledge about assessment philosophy and practice.

In a study conducted by faculty at California State University, Long Beach, a faculty development program consisting of assessment workshops was conducted. It was designed to provide the opportunity for faculty to develop skills in program assessment, re-conceptualize the use of data from teaching and learning for program assessment purposes, and to ensure that assessment efforts are led by faculty rather than driven by compliance (Haviland et al., 2010). Using an instrumental case study design, the research team used pre- and post-workshop surveys, evaluations, and interviews to understand the impact and effectiveness of the program. They found that ongoing, focused faculty professional development coupled with visible administrative support can positively influence faculty-led assessment efforts. Because assessment activity at the program level can be driven by the need for accountability and compliance, this research addressed the need for institutional teaching and learning quality auditing practices to work effectively within higher education organizational structure in order to focus on improvement as opposed to compliance. There must be a lever for this sort of collaboration to be effective, and leadership is critical in maintaining a focus on improvement.

Adrianna Kezar, a leading scholar of change and leadership in higher education, has developed a body of work connecting studies of leadership, institutional culture, and organizational theory. Her research about conditions and processes that influence the implementation of student learning outcomes assessment in postsecondary institutions has pointed to the need for a more systematic approach to learning assessment from an

organizational perspective (Kezar, 2012a). Following a review of the literature on organizational culture, leadership, and organizational policies and practices, she found that an improvement of the research surrounding definitions, theoretical frameworks, and methodologies is necessary toward the goal of understanding the extent to which learning outcomes assessment improves education (Kezar, 2012a). She suggested that, due to the heavily practical and operational nature of outcomes assessment inquiry and the methodology of existing studies, little is known about how organizational conditions shape and influence the improvement of outcomes assessment practice, and that more study is needed in this area. This work suggests that connecting theories of higher education organization structure to institutional teaching and learning quality auditing practices is important, and it also points to areas that are in need of further research.

In an overview of the state of learning assessment in the United States, Kuh and Ewell (2010) summarized current efforts in undergraduate student learning outcomes assessment. The main findings come from a survey of chief academic officers about assessment activities at their institutions and how assessment results were used. Faculty cooperation and engagement in outcomes assessment and elements of campus culture, in this case contextualized in institutional selectivity with respect to admitting students, were reported as significant to progress with outcomes assessment. Accreditation was found to be the major impetus for conducting outcomes assessment, as well as the locus of concern for the use of assessment data for improvement in teaching and learning or for accountability purposes. Several recommendations were suggested for more productive use of assessment data to strengthen higher education in the United States (Kuh & Ewell, 2010). Due in large part to the policy focus of some strands of assessment scholarship, the findings speak to a different thread of the outcomes assessment literature than the work of Kezar (2012b) and are intended to improve policy and practice. Institutional

teaching and learning quality auditing practices must be informed by perspectives on the current state of outcomes assessment and the use of data from the process. They should also be informed by an understanding of where and how, in terms of student development, assessment can be of greatest benefit.

In a line of research on the value of assessment at different points in the educational experience, an argument has been made that formative assessment is of paramount importance to student learning (Yorke, 1993). Yorke (1993) further suggested that at the beginning of the 21st century there were pressures on higher education that were detrimental to the implementation and regularization of formative assessment, including emphasis on the summative nature of outcomes assessment, higher ratios of students to instructors, and the dominance of social efficiency and scientific measurement in evaluating the effectiveness of higher education. The features of formative assessment, including regular feedback of student work and an emphasis on inculcating metacognition, is consistent with research about effective teaching and learning models in higher education, as well as with research on the role of deliberate practice in developing expertise and pedagogic strategies for creativity. This reasoning builds upon earlier work suggesting the possibility of theorizing formative assessment. There are implications here for both the design and delivery of curriculum, as there is for assessing learning at different levels of an educational institution; course, program, and the institution itself.

Program Review

Research about program-level quality auditing practices has developed alongside research about learning assessment. The process of self-study and external review for the purpose of regional accreditation formed and stabilized over the course of the 20th century (Ewell, 2008). The fundamental components of accreditation, self-study, and external review are

designed to reinforce a peer-driven investigative standard for quality and integrity in higher education, which has also served as the benchmark for scholarly inquiry that has served the academy for centuries (Bresciani, 2006). For sub-units within an institution, known by a variety of referents including divisions, departments, and programs, the process of program review has developed as the mechanism for quality auditing and assurance (Bresciani, 2006; Suskie, 2015).

Research and best practice in program review is incorporating learning outcomes assessment as a central feature in understanding the quality of academic programs (Bresciani 2006, 2009). The process of collecting and analyzing data to inform decisions for the continuous improvement of academic programs has been defined and described at length (Allen, 2003; Banta, 2002; Bresciani, 2006) and regional accreditors are requiring its use in institutional accreditation (WASC, 2013). Program review is evolving into a process that foregrounds learning outcomes over traditional inputs in academic systems (faculty qualification, student qualification, and resources). Work evaluating the efficacy and viability of outcomes-based program review highlights effective practice (Bresciani, 2009) and identifies barriers to implementation (Bresciani, 2009). The emerging thought is that institutional quality must have evidence of student learning at the center in order to demonstrate programmatic and institutional quality and improvement.

Disciplinary Context

Houston (2008) echoed many others who identify the core tension between compliance and improvement in quality assurance practices. This tension is the locus of concern between efforts to understand and improve conditions for learning and student development and the need for accountability. This need is most often manifested in compliance with demands from quality auditing (Blaich & Wise, 2011). Houston (2008) suggested a critical systems approach to

contextualize “quality problems” (p. 75) at a more local level where faculty manage programs, department, and curricula. Research has also connected organizational learning to quality assurance (Senge, 1990) and suggested that academic departments must respond to change and emerging internal and external demands for the academy to evolve to meet new challenges (Holyoke et al., 2012).

Cost Effectiveness

Recent research about the effect that financial resources have on issues of quality has connected expenditures, efficiency, and effectiveness in higher education in the United States (Powell et al., 2012). This is consistent with the 2006 Spellings Commission report pointing toward a demand for data concerning the joint consideration of efficiency, productivity, and quality for postsecondary institutions. Rising costs and calls for accountability are increasing the necessity for this sort of data (U.S. Department of Education, 2006). Through structural equation modeling, data from large national educational datasets were analyzed, and a benchmarking system developed: the Benchmark Model for Institutional Efficiency and Effectiveness. This benchmark links institutional characteristics, expenditures, efficiency, and effectiveness allowing for a method to improve efficiency, effectiveness, and accountability. Revenue and student retention and graduation rates serve as the basic inputs and outputs of higher education in the benchmark, and expenditures for instruction, academic support, and student services are stratified into levels of effectiveness and efficiency (Powell et al., 2012). This approach is likely to become increasingly common to understanding core functions in higher education, and as the study is novel in the field, it warrants attention in understanding higher education organization. Moreover the link of resources to quality is one that merits careful attention at the intersection of learning, quality auditing, and organizational structure.

Performativity Critique

There are critiques to the quality assurance and assessment movement in higher education that have significant influence and are of vital importance to understanding the landscape of notions of quality in higher education. Stephen Ball's (2012b) research into educational policy analysis has contextualized neoliberalism as one such critique; the use of "market principles as a basis for the universalization of market-based social relations" (p.18). Ball (2012b) also established another critique, performativity, as a "technology that links effort, values, purposes, and self-understanding to measures and comparisons of output" (p. 19). His discussion of performativity catalogs first and second order effects that orient work in the academy to measurable performance outcomes and away from aspects of development that cannot be measured, such as social, emotional, or moral development. In this sense he suggested that commitment is replaced with contract. Auditing the quality of higher education in any form, from learning assessment to annual or periodic internal review to accreditation, can veer into metrics and methods that generalize the academic enterprise to a market calculus (Ball, 1997, 2003). The work of Ball (2003, 2012a, 2015, 2016) and that of Giroux (2002) provide a counterbalancing perspective to the efficiency, effectiveness, and outcome-driven rhetoric of learning assessment and program review. These perspectives are essential to a focus on effective teaching and learning in postsecondary institutions.

Organizational Structure in Higher Education

Leadership and Processes of Influence

Kezar's work on leadership in higher education has informed questions about quality assurance, learning, and organizational structure. She conducted instrumental case studies at several colleges and universities to study the convergence of top-down and bottom-up

approaches to leadership as part of a study intended for an audience of those interested in postsecondary leadership and change (Kezar, 2012b). Employing the conceptual frameworks of tempered radicals and distributed or shared leadership, her research team investigated how leadership can emerge from the bottom-up, how it interacts with a top-down management style, how strategies are employed at different levels of the organization, and how challenges are inherent to convergence. The cases studied provided an understanding of what convergence of top-down and bottom-up leadership looks like and how experiences on the campuses studied lead to different outcomes including effective change, mixed results, and compromised change opportunity. Kezar's (2012a) convergence of bottom-up and top-down through the lens of tempered radicals or distributed leadership models is a new area of research and is particularly instructive to the intersection of organizational structure, quality auditing practices, and teaching and learning in higher education.

Collaboration and Interdisciplinarity

Research on interdisciplinary teaching and learning and organizational change in higher education provides insight into the connection of organizational structure and learning. In a case study of research universities designed to understand how interdisciplinary knowledge is facilitated, transformative change was employed as a conceptual framework to examine interdisciplinary activity (Holley, 2009). The deliberate, intentional nature of successful change in higher education is foregrounded in the findings, as well as the conceptualization of interdisciplinary initiatives as behaviors emblematic of transformational change. Changes were more likely to occur in one organizational unit of campus or be less pervasive across the entire institution. Holley (2009) also found that transformation occurs over an extended period of time and requires support from multiple stakeholders and at differing organizational levels.

This work, when considered with Kezar's (2012a) observation of leadership efforts and the work of Ericsson, Sternberg, and others with creativity, expertise, and deliberate practice, provides a bridge from literatures about higher education organizational structure to approaches to effective teaching and learning in arts disciplines. A collaborative, intentional effort is necessary to influence the culture of a campus with respect to learning. There are, however, concerns about the nature and changing purposes of organizational structure in higher education and the extent to which it is being altered to serve other agendas.

Neoliberal Critique

In addition to his career in the academy, Henry Giroux is an influential cultural critic and public intellectual. In an extended essay, he captured the dangers of corporate culture and neoliberalism to higher education and their corrosive effects on democratic principles where "consumers do the work of citizens" (Giroux, 2002, p. 427). The market driven discourse of neoliberalism has a tendency to "undermine the distinction between higher education and business" (Giroux, 2002, p. 433), erode academic freedom, and reduce the college experience to job training. Neoliberal logic is of particular importance to the intersection of quality assurance, higher education organizational structure, and effective learning. Giroux pointed out that management models of decision making replace faculty governance, and in turn management becomes a substitute for leadership. As with the work of Stephen Ball, an understanding of neoliberal principles and performativity in higher education is essential to a full understanding of how campus cultures are oriented to learning.

Chapter Summary

The line of inquiry throughout this literature review is designed to explore the relationships among higher education organizational structure and quality assurance practices on

teaching and learning in arts disciplines. Although these relationships are complex, there are other factors, including political and epistemological considerations, that overlap with these areas to determine the contours of educational experience both in and beyond the academy. In essence, quality assurance must connect to teaching and learning in meaningful ways and should allow for effective teaching and learning practices grounded in research and with evidence of success to form the basis of best practice in the academy. The relationship of inputs to outcomes from the higher education enterprise must also have effective teaching and learning as an intentional anchor.

As these issues are extrapolated to more complex levels of organization, a concept of quality emerges that is reliant upon systems that connect quality assurance to teaching and learning in a meaningful, authentic way. A balance must be struck, however, so that compliance with quality assurance is not driven by a market calculus capable of creating an environment where process added on to institutions to investigate quality develop primary, and not secondary, importance to learning in higher education. “The power to decide what must be disclosed can easily become the power to decide what must be done” (Eaton et al., 2005, p. 46).

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

The previous two chapters discussed teaching and learning, quality assurance, and organizational structure in higher education in the United States. Bodies of work surrounding teaching and learning in the arts were connected to organization, and the frameworks of performativity and neoliberalism in higher education were introduced. Examining intersections between institutional organization and teaching and learning in arts disciplines may advance an understanding of whether higher education itself is improving as a consequence of quality assurance work by artist-educators. This chapter turns to the issues of methodology, research design, data collection and analysis, and limitations of this study.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to explore the relationship of higher education organizational structure and institutional quality assurance practices and the culture of teaching and learning in artistic disciplines from the perspectives of three artist-educators.

Research Questions

The research questions addressed by this study are as follows:

1. How do participants view the relationship of the organizational structure of their institution to the provision of quality assurance practices in their disciplines?
2. What barriers, if any, do participants perceive about the implementation of effective quality assurance practice and policy, and if barriers are perceived, why do they occur?
3. What changes or improvements have been made, if any, to pedagogy as a result of the findings of quality assurance practice?
4. In what ways, if any, has the relationship of organizational structure and quality assurance affected the orientation of the participants' disciplinary culture to learning?

Approach

Qualitative inquiry focuses on meaning in context (Creswell & Poth, 2016; Merriam, 2009). Because teaching and learning is carried out within the context of a particular institution, qualitative methodology is well suited to exploring the meaning ascribed to it by artist-educators who are part of that institution and who contribute to its practices and culture. Merriam (2009) further described qualitative inquiry as the process of “uncovering the meaning of a phenomenon for those involved” (p. 5) and “how people interpret their experiences, how they construct their worlds, and what meaning they attribute to their experiences” (p. 23). Barriers to implementing effective quality auditing practices have been investigated qualitatively (Bresciani, 2011; Hutchings, 2010) and it has been suggested that an understanding of the impact of organizational structure on quality auditing is needed and should be conducted in such a manner as to penetrate more deeply into the issue (Kezar, 2012b).

A basic interpretive study design was employed as the method of investigation for this study. Merriam & Tisdell (2016) described this as qualitative research where the “researcher is interested in understanding the meaning a phenomenon has for those involved” (p. 24). This approach allowed for a rich understanding of the choices made by individuals in the context of opportunities they perceive to be available to them at a specific institution, and the analysis of multiple sources of information assisted in identifying and understanding the consonances and dissonances among organizational structure and quality assurance practices as they connect to teaching and learning.

The concept that meaning is embedded within the context of a phenomenon is particularly useful when there may be either overlap or opacity in how the phenomenon is situated in lived experience. This conceptualization is particularly useful in an environment

where there is a great deal of information available from many sources. Convergence in data was achieved through triangulating multiple sources of evidence that all speak to elements of the experience of the participants.

Basic qualitative research can thus link theoretical propositions to the phenomenon of interest in this study; the orientation of disciplinary culture to learning in an institutional context. It accounts for the influence of context and setting to which performativity (Ball, 2013) can be applied as a theoretical framework. An interpretive study is conducted to understand a phenomenon (Gall et al., 2003) and as such institutional quality assurance practices, where teaching and learning is investigated in a specific institutional structure and context, is well suited for inquiry via this methodology. Qualitative researchers “are interested in understanding the meaning people have constructed, that is how people make sense of their world and the experiences they have in the world” (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016, p. 15).

Description of the Research Design and Participants

In this study, individual faculty within arts disciplines in particular institutions of American higher education are research participants. In determining whether a specific person is situated to effectively contribute to analysis, Merriam & Tisdell (2016) suggested considering how finite data collection can be in terms of interview potential and time for observations.

In order to appropriately explore the connection of theory to experience, three individuals from three different institutional types participated in this study. Merriam and Tisdell (2016) described qualitative research as “interested in how meaning is constructed, how people make sense of their lives and their worlds. The *primary* goal of a basic qualitative study is to uncover and interpret these meanings” (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016, p. 25). The three individuals who participated in this study were selected through non-probability purposeful sampling. The goal

of purposeful sampling is to select individuals who are likely to be rich in information with regard to the purpose of the study (Gall et al., 2003). A form of maximum variation (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) served as the type of purposive sampling. The intent was to develop criteria for inclusion that captured three institutions that differ in terms of their purpose and scope and thus scale and degree of sophistication in quality auditing practices. Experts who have knowledge of current practices in student learning outcomes assessment and program review and teaching and learning were consulted to develop three categories from which candidate institutions were selected: 1) an arts unit within a private, independent not-for-profit university; 2) a single-purpose independent arts institution; and 3) an arts unit within a large, state-supported research-intensive university. This variation allowed for patterns to emerge that exemplified how institutional structure, quality assurance practice, and teaching and learning interact at each institution and allowed for theoretical analysis and application across experiences.

Following consultation with experts to identify candidate institutions and through the judgement of the researcher, individual artist-educators were selected on the basis of their reputation as a practicing artist and experience as an educator in their discipline. Inclusion criteria consisted of years of experience at the institution, with a preference of more than five years and less than 20 years.

Experience with quality assurance practice, including engagement in student learning outcomes and program review and work with others at the institution in these areas, were also criteria for selection. Participants who met these criteria were good candidates to provide information about the research questions of this study as they were in a position to have sufficient experience within the institution as an artist-educator, and with quality assurance to have insight into the relationship of structure, assessment, and teaching and learning.

Participants were contacted via email with an explanation of the study and a request for their involvement.

The process of identifying participants and securing their agreement began in 2019 but was interrupted by the emergence of the 2020 novel coronavirus and COVID-19 pandemic. Final arrangements had not been made with individual participants. In April of 2020 changes to recruitment and data collection strategies were requested for this study. Institutional Review Board approval was granted to allow for interviews and data collection to be conducted remotely via video calls (see Appendix A). Between May and September 2020 final participant participation agreements were obtained and interviews took place.

The agreement of two of the participants was secured quickly, but the third, representing a large public institution, was difficult to secure. Fifteen solicitations were sent to artist-educators at large, public institutions; eleven were ignored and four declined. The sixteenth solicitation garnered the third research participant.

Methods

Data collection began following final selection of participants and securing of their consent to participate in this study (see Appendix B). Participants were solicited by email (see Appendix C). Data collection for each participant consisted of an interview and review of publicly available information and documentation online.

Interviews took place via telephone for two participants and one was conducted via videoconference. The intent was to develop an overview of the organizational structure of the institution, how quality assurance is conducted, and how successful it has been. Barriers to the effective implementation and execution of quality assurance and its impact on improving teaching and learning were discussed. Interviews also provided the opportunity to identify other

sources of information to be consulted for further review, as necessary (see Appendix D).

Interviews were scheduled and conducted at the convenience of the participants.

Documentary evidence was collected online before and after interviews and included analysis of learning assessment process, procedure, and activities, as well as information about program quality assurance. Institutional narrative about mission, structure, and governance was found online and combined with interview data. Campus visits were not possible given the pandemic, and extensive documentary evidence was also unavailable due to limitations around collecting this information where it exists in physical documents in offices and otherwise unavailable throughout the period of data collection.

Data Analysis

Corwin and Clemens (2012) provided a straightforward method for data analysis that served as a model for this study. Interviews and document analysis were analyzed for the identification of initial codes according to primary content and pattern and from which a list of working codes was developed (Saldaña, 2015). Detailed codes were assigned to categories that were representative of the research questions. Gall et al. (2003) detailed the process of constant comparison that was used to compare categories for their application to research questions.

Codes were used as descriptive constructs of ideas, events, processes, and activities in which the research participants engaged. Many codes were identified in initial analysis. Continued analysis and constant comparison compiled similarities and consistency with phenomena and reduced the number of codes. Categories correlated to research questions were identified and then developed into the identification of major themes. Comparison and revision of categories continued throughout analysis (Gall et al., 2003; Saldaña, 2016).

Theoretical saturation was achieved and the relationship among categories crystalized into themes. The themes, derived from thick description provided by the participants (Geertz, 1973), accounted for the intersection of institutional organization and quality assurance with the improvement of teaching and learning. Transcript review and analysis yielded 60 codes across the responses from all three participants. Further analysis reduced the initial 60 codes to approximately 20 categories. From those 20 categories, five themes emerged that provided a landscape for the intersection of institutional organization and quality assurance with teaching and learning within the context of disciplinary culture.

A rich understanding of the culture of teaching and learning within the participants' disciplines was developed and is represented across the themes, which represents a model for understanding how the structure of the institution and quality assurance conducted by faculty interact with teaching and learning and meaning-making within disciplines. The model was shared and discussed with participants for their assessment of its accuracy.

The research participants are referred to as Participant 1, Participant 2, and Participant 3 throughout this study and gender-neutral pronouns are employed when individual reference is made. This was done to ensure the anonymity of the participants, given that the professional community of which all three are a part is relatively small and many artist-educators know each other and the institutions with which they are affiliated.

Ball's (2012b, 2016) characterization of performativity as a technology-linking effort, values, purposes, and self-understanding to measures and comparisons of output, provided a conceptual lens through which participants commented and elucidated research findings and the model representing their campus. Performativity in the context of neoliberal conceptual devices

(Giroux, 2002, 2019, 2020) served as the theoretical framework that guided reflection in data collection and analysis.

Trustworthiness

Ensuring accuracy and trustworthiness followed the procedures of triangulation and member checking. Mathison (1988) stated that “data triangulation refers simply to using several data sources, the obvious example being the inclusion of more than one individual as a source of data” (p. 14). Data from interviews were triangulated with documentary evidence and data collected online. Mathison’s approach describes how data may converge, or alternatively, exhibit inconsistency or contradiction. This process brought forth a holistic understanding of the data and ensured trustworthiness. Member checking, or respondent validation (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016), was employed for accuracy. Participants were asked to verify interpretations and major themes emerging from the data. Data from participant interviews were compared to conditions prevalent across arts disciplines in higher education and with individuals knowledgeable about these conditions.

In their work on trustworthiness and authenticity in naturalistic evaluation, Lincoln and Guba (1986) identified a set of criteria for qualitative research methodology that parallels standards of rigor of quantitative techniques. These criteria suggest trustworthiness as a standard for naturalistic inquiry, which is parallel to validity and reliability (see Table 1).

Table 1
Trustworthiness and Authenticity in Naturalistic Evaluation

Positivist Standards for Rigor	Naturalistic Standards for Trustworthiness
Internal Validity	Credibility
External Validity	Transferability
Reliability	Dependability
Objectivity	Confirmability

Note. Adapted from Lincoln and Guba (1986).

Credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability lead to authenticity as an epistemological goal in naturalistic inquiry. Lincoln and Guba's (1986) framing of authenticity in naturalistic inquiry provided the basis for trustworthiness in this study. Trustworthiness and authenticity were ensured through data collection via interviews and document analysis with results corroborated through member checking and expert observation of the professional context in which the participants operate. As data were collected, member checking confirmed and verified with participants for accuracy and clarity (Patton, 2015). These procedures ensured trustworthiness and contributed to rich understanding of the phenomena of interest and allowed for triangulation of evidence.

Limitations

This study tells the story of institutional organization, quality assurance practice, and teaching and learning from the perspective of three artist-educators. Each area pursued by the research questions is a substantial subject presenting a great number of investigative possibilities in its own right; the structure and arrangement of an institution interacts with quality assurance practices and disciplinary culture in many ways. The potential breadth of each of these areas is

thus a limitation of this study. The intent was to capture the intersections of how an organization works in terms of structure and function with the ways in which quality assurance is carried out through the experience of three individual artist-educators.

The number of participants in the study was also a limitation. The intent was to gather data indicative of the experience of each of the individual participants in rich and meaningful ways. The deeply personal nature of life as an artist and the highly individualistic pursuit of art as a life calling lends itself to an attempt to understand these phenomena according to the experience of a very few individuals as opposed to a large sample.

These experiences and their intersections provided insight into the orientation of institutional culture to learning. The observations and opinions were representative of each artist-educator and may not be the same as others. The participants had much to tell, and the intent was for rigorous methodology in data collection and analysis to give rise to the identification of themes and patterns as they emerged from their voices.

Chapter Summary

This study intended to develop a deeper understanding of the orientation of institutional culture to learning in arts disciplines from the perspective of three artist-educators at higher education institutions in the United States. A basic interpretive study explored how organizational structure and quality assurance practices intersected with teaching and learning in the arts. Barriers to effective quality auditing, how faculty conceive of pedagogical improvement, and whether learning is improved were framed by performativity and neoliberalism and investigated through the lived experiences of three artist-educators.

CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS

The purpose of this study was to explore the relationship of higher education organizational structure and institutional quality assurance practices and the culture of teaching and learning in artistic disciplines from the perspectives of three artist-educators. The conceptual framework for the study incorporated the influence of performativity and neoliberal ideology in higher education and was based on a review of literature identified in Chapter 2 that included teaching and learning in higher education arts disciplines, domain expertise and expert performance, deliberate practice, constructivist learning, and teaching creativity.

In interviews, participants responded to research questions in four areas:

1. Organizational structure and institutional quality assurance practice
2. Barriers to implementation of effective quality assurance
3. Changes and or improvements to teaching and learning
4. Orientation of disciplinary culture to learning as a result of quality assurance

This chapter consists of three sections. Participants are described and the nature of their institution and teaching appointment is discussed in the first section. The second section presents participants' responses to the research questions with the themes that emerged from the data analysis. The third section presents the conclusive research findings.

Description of Interview Participants

As described in Chapter 3, research participants are identified as Participant 1, Participant 2, and Participant 3 and references made by personal pronouns are gender neutral to ensure anonymity.

Participant 1 is an artist-educator in an arts unit within a private, independent, not-for-profit comprehensive university. Participant 1 earned an undergraduate degree with majors in music history and physics in a five-year program followed by immediate enrollment in a doctoral program at an elite institution. This doctoral program was intensive and involved two years of coursework followed by time focused on teaching and writing the dissertation. Participant 1 was in the doctoral program for seven years after which they were selected for the position they currently occupy. They have served at their institution for 13 years.

Participant 1's teaching responsibilities include serving as program director and teaching courses within the arts major in which they work both at the introductory and upper levels each term. Participant 1 also teaches pre-introductory courses on occasion to prepare new students and has also taught courses in the institutions' general education program. Participant 1 also serves as an advisor for students in a program designed for those who want to major in the discipline but not complete a professional degree. Participant 1's responsibilities as a program director involve oversight of assessment as well as making teaching assignments for adjunct faculty and overseeing their evaluation as instructors in the program.

Participant 2 is an artist-educator teaching in an independent, single-purpose arts institution (meaning that the institution focuses only on arts instruction). Participant 2 earned an undergraduate degree in anthropology at a selective public institution and then pursued a Master of Fine Arts degree within their discipline and at the institution where Participant 2 was subsequently hired as an instructor. Participant 2 teaches academic courses and occasionally studio classes at the undergraduate level as well as graduate students in an interdisciplinary MFA program.

Participant 2 was a program chair for several years and then a director of a division with 500 students in 12 different programs. Participant 2 was head of the curriculum committee, sat on the executive committee of the faculty senate for three years, and served as interim dean for nine months. More recently, Participant 2 has been working on assessment throughout the institution and in the division in which they are on the faculty. They have also served as special advisor to the provost on issues surrounding academic assessment. In this role, Participant 2 has rewritten learning outcomes for an entire division and worked with chairs to build assessment protocols in all programs for the division.

Participant 3 is an artist-educator who is a full-time lecturer at a large, state-supported teaching-intensive university. Participant 3 earned a degree from an arts unit within a private, independent, not-for-profit comprehensive university, also earning a teaching credential. Participant 3 went on to earn a master's degree from a large, state-supported research-intensive university. Participant 3 taught at a number of institutions including community colleges, private independent institutions, elementary schools, and several state-supported institutions of higher education within several miles of their residence. Participant 3 is an active artist in the community in which they reside and has been doing this work since 2004. Participant 3 leads master classes at various institutions across the country and has an active career as a recording artist and collaborates with a number of other recording artists on a regular basis.

Participant 3 has been in their current position for nine years and serves as a coordinator of studies. Participant 3 is not expected to do advising or committee work but advises students upon request in an informal and ad hoc way. Participant 3's main work involves teaching and managing the curriculum for which they are responsible.

Themes Present in the Data

Over the course of each interview, participants provided their answers to the research questions and generated direction and ideas on the basis of their remarks. As the interviews progressed, each participant weaved experiences and thoughts together in relation to responses that had already provided and made meaning of as they moved from answer to answer. As identified in Chapter 3, transcript review and analysis yielded 60 codes across the responses from all three participants. Further analysis reduced the initial 60 codes to approximately 20 categories. From those 20 categories, five themes emerged that provided a landscape for the intersection of institutional organization and quality assurance with teaching and learning within the context of disciplinary culture. The themes are identified and described below.

The Artist as Educator

Participants answered all questions with a pervading sense of their identity and experiences as an artist. While each also strongly identifies with their role as an educator, an overarching expression of artistic purpose was a strong commonality in the discourse surrounding their educational work and their creative lives. The inextricability of these features of identity was very similar in each of the participants. Participant 2 described their institution's "kind of academic ecosystem, so to speak; and the first thing that I think is really important to understand about the institution is that it's full of creative people." Participant 2 foregrounded the importance of what they described as:

cognitive-intuitive emotional skills that go into being a creative practitioner, whether you're a designer or an artist, whatever, it doesn't matter...a really skillful teacher is responsive, right? And that's probably true in any discipline, but in the arts it's even more true, because you're dealing with highly-charged creative and emotional issues.

It appeared that the inference was being made that the notion of skillful teaching encompassing creativity and emotion might give rise to some degree of refusal or resistance against traditional

educational and academic methodology. Participant 2 confirmed this in a subsequent response:

“Yeah. I think that’s right, and I think another way to describe the resistance is that because everybody is a creative maker of some sort, I would say almost everybody approaches their teaching as a creative practice.”

Participant 3 expressed their artistic development in more of a workmanlike fashion that privileges continual learning and a constant quest for new knowledge and new ability:

I think, for me, that’s one thing that I think of a lot. I often find the things that I learned (on stage) or things that I’ve learned working with guests, artists, or doing recording sessions with artists who are of a really high quality is really, really useful and helpful...the thing I learned the most is by being a student myself and still learning recordings and learning and studying other compositions.

This notion of the lone artist pursuing an individual path is a familiar construct. Participant 3 was careful to point out a limitation of this self-identity in an educational context:

Um, yeah like I said, one of the difficult things about a lot of my colleagues is that they’re very me-centered. And so they’re either usually thinking about their own program and their own students, or they’re only thinking of their own kind of personal needs.

Another commonality that contributed to the theme of the artist as educator is the idea that being an educator in an artistic context is essentially learned through the development of the individual artist in an almost oral transmission of culture. Talking about the intent of an artistic project or describing the contours of a performance serves as a primary method to communicate the effectiveness of artistic intent as well as its aesthetic value. It can sometimes be difficult from this point of view to conduct quality assurance practices when the data about educational effectiveness are considered anecdotal in a context that expects formal evidence be presented in formal and often quantitative presentation. Participant 2 expressed the idea this way:

I’ve come back thinking a lot about, especially in the early years when I started thinking about assessment, is the fact that we never did anything that we called assessment. We didn’t have formal learning outcomes, but we were constantly doing assessment in the

form of critiques. “Oh my God, we’ve gotta to figure out assessments.” You know, and we recognized right away we do it all the time, we do it in critique. It’s verbal, it’s not captured, it’s not measured. It’s not even written down anywhere. It’s ephemeral.

Another important feature of the artist-educator lies in the reliance on intuition as an integral part of artistic judgment. The research on deliberate practice and the development of expertise identified in Chapter 2 brings to light the importance of expert judgment in understanding and identifying the development of expert performance (Ericsson et al., 1993). The participants in this study feel as though they are expected to produce quantified results and to count things while their artistic development has relied on development of expertise and expert judgment. This dissonance sometimes results in the idea that artistic work cannot and should not be quantified. Participant 1 confronted this idea when describing how they and their colleagues approach things from an intuitive perspective:

I think we have an intuitive sense of what it means to try to do our best, but then we’re always falling back on our own ideas, you know, the intuitive sense is great in some ways, but it also is sort of...we fall back on it a lot. And, you know, since many of us were trained quite a while ago, we have these inner senses of what good education is. That is sometimes at odds with what we as an institution have decided, lately, is really best for the students.

Participant 2 characterizes the idea this way:

It’s about, kind of, mechanizing measuring, putting it into a scientific, you know, system. When, actually, so much of it, not all of it...but at least some of it is intuitive. And unmeasurable. Like telling a formula for alchemy or an alchemical reaction exactly. You can’t just...because it is magic.

Art as an Educational Endeavor

The conflict inherent for artists as educators was a common feature of the second theme identified in this study: art as an educational endeavor. Translating artistic development into an understanding of proficiencies expressed in outcome statements is a process that, in the experience of the research participants, shares some of the same difficulties that artists face as

educators. Among these difficulties are the highly individualized developmental trajectories of art students, the need for self-assessment among students, and the difficulty inherent when there are differences between expertise generated over an entire career by an artist and the educational benefit of students. Participant 1 has experience with this difficulty:

...what, is “right”...can be a source of conflict because we sometimes have different intuitive senses that can be very generational. It’s really hard to say to someone who’s been teaching [art] for 40 years that their intuitive sense of what a person should be learning is wrong in any way. So, I guess that’s, that’s part of the intuitive thing. The intuitive thing comes partly from knowing your own discipline really well, but also comes partly from knowing the students really well.

Another source of difficulty for art as an educational endeavor lies in what quality assurance terminology or research methodology would identify as the unit of analysis. Traditional quality assurance is interested in performance within a particular class, which is then rolled up into performance by students across either several sections of the same kind of class, or performance by students within a major or some other large grouping (Suskie, 2018).

Many forms of artistic learning have artistic voice as the fundamental goal. This is a highly idiosyncratic goal developed and experienced by the individual. Participant 2 expressed some of the difficulty with developing artistic voice in an educational context:

All of that has been very individualistic, very creative, very unusual. Right? And so, there from the get-go, the idea of standardizing how one either teaches or assesses one’s teaching, there’s been resistance because people pride themselves on being really creative and unusual...You’re dealing with this very nebulous thing called creativity, and you need to be really, really present in the moment to be responsive to your group—the dynamics of the group—but also the individual, and the process that the individual is going through at that given moment...you’re hoping an individual student [has the experience] where there’s like, you know, the “aha moment,” right?

There is also a process of self-discovery in artistic instruction that is often a destination approached by means of unconventional educational process. Participant 2 expressed this sentiment: “Students benefit from knowing what is expected from them. However, in classes

that have creative practice, particularly the ones like hands-on making classes, I actually think it's counterproductive, much of the time, to tell them too much." This idea was conveyed in the context of a story about a class they taught that relied on inculcating a tolerance of ambiguity.

Students were told:

"We don't know how long we're going to stay here. We don't know what we're going to do here. Feel free to do whatever you want or if you feel moved to do. When you start to feel like you're done being here, start moving towards the exit. And let's see what happens." (Participant 2)

While very useful toward suggesting an artistic process and recognizing conditions for creativity, this kind of instructional method is not particularly amenable to the expression-of-outcome and measurement-of-outcome process found in traditional quality assurance technique.

Participant 3 is faced with a similar dilemma but operates within a system where there are knowable skills that must be developed by students in order for them to progress within the discipline. Participant 3 recognizes, however, that the trajectory of artistic development is not the same for all students and as a result is able to calibrate instruction accordingly. They shared:

Cause I have this large list of tunes and knowing that a lot of my students are going to be more educators or doing other things, I've had to sort of pare that down and, and have, OK, they need to you know these 20 to 30 tunes their first two years, and these 20 to 30 tunes their second two years, their junior and senior years....If they're a young group, I'm not gonna be expecting them to get to the level that a more advanced starting group would. And that's always adjusting, you know, that way. But then for certain classes, like instrumental technique or improvisation, there are definitely criteria that they have to be able to hit in order to pass the class.

Participant 2 offered an observation that characterizes much of the difficulty in art as an educational endeavor:

And so, in my mind, there's like this rational side of assessment that I would like to figure out how to capture, and then there's the irrational side, or the magical side. How is it possible to put these into these systems...

The Work of the Artist-Educator

But they've done it historically, in a very kind of, I wouldn't say haphazard, but a very kind of casual way. Like a lot of conversation and faculty meeting but none of it is used to be systematized or even recorded... (Participant 1)

This experience from Participant 1 is suggestive by the use of the word haphazard, also used in varying contexts to describe the work of the artist-educator by Participants 2 and 3.

Quality assurance, to some extent, is part of the work of each of the research participants. They experience the same kind of dilemmas present in their roles of artists as educators and with art as an educational endeavor as they navigate the work of the artist-educator. In this theme, the work of the artist-educator involves understanding student progress toward the completion of a course of study as well as the extent to which the program in which the students are enrolled meets the goals expressed by the faculty and that are understood to be of value to the institution in which the discipline resides. There was commonality around three features in the work of the artist-educator: expressing and measuring educational intent; communicating and collaborating with colleagues; and developing, maintaining, and participating in quality assurance activities and systems.

Participant 3 has had positive experiences with engagement in quality assurance activity:

I think that the most I hear, especially when we've been talking about learning outcomes is it's more of a: "Oh, we have to do this now." And it's like: "Ok, well, yeah." But I don't think there's been...I've never heard anybody say: "Oh, this assessment stuff that we're doing is not working and the learning outcomes aren't helping." Even when we had to go over our learning outcomes for GE classes, it actually made me think more about: "Ok, I need to focus more on these aspects of this class to engage in, you know, the cultural side of the music," which is what these outcomes are asking me to do rather than just thinking about the music side of it. And a lot of my other colleagues have had a lot of the same discussions [and] focusing on the learning outcomes has really made them realize: "Oh, this, this is what's important about this class,"...I think now that we're all channeling more into those outcomes that the students will hopefully be more (engaged). I've already had a few discussions in my class about the cultural emphasis.

Participant 2 has faced challenges in the journey to translate the work of art into the mechanics of education:

So, the challenge when we moved into this sort of assessment, you know, the challenge was to think about how we could not lose all the strengths but also move into ways of recording conversations through codifying, analyzing in ways that were more than simply anecdotal. So that was a big challenge and it was emotionally a big challenge for people and continues to be. But it's not just the emotional reaction, it's the reality. How do you balance this kind of freewheeling responsive kind of teaching with having to turn your syllabuses in every semester at the beginning of the semester? You know, having it all mapped out.

It is in this sense that developing language for learning outcomes that accurately capture artistic education can bring the expression of the work to a kind of low common denominator that loses the nuance of higher order learning skills. Participant 2 stated:

I think reductionism is a really good word in a more colloquial way and maybe more of an insulting way, it's kind of dumbing it down. It's taking the alchemy out of it, and, and reducing it to sort of fundamental parts. And, and I think that's a useful exercise, but it doesn't get us there completely. Like, how do you get a student to be vulnerable in the classroom? How do you build the dynamics in the classroom so that somebody can stand up in front of a critique and be really vulnerable because it's a trusted space?

And so, people are really invested in that, in the fact that teaching itself is creative. It is something that you're creating from the moment you start teaching about the class, to the moment you enter the classroom and figure out who you have in your class and the moment you leave. And after, when your students come back to you. It is a creative practice. So, the idea of being given a map or a set of criteria feels, it doesn't have to be that, I'm not saying it is that, but it feels to people like clamping down on their creative, um, the creative expanse.

Participant 3 acknowledged that understanding student learning is affected by a variety of conditions outside of the classroom that students face. It is also the case that a lack of intentional and explicit attention to student self-efficacy can sometimes make it difficult to fully understand how they learn. Participant 3 explained:

...[in the] difficulty of getting through a semester, [it is possible for students to be] working really hard on [their] first paper and then not really caring as much by the end. And so, I think you do have to use your own judgment a little bit about whether they're getting better or follow up in your classes because they certainly weren't worse writers over the course of the semester. They just were less careful....I have lots of people who

end up as good writers, but did they start as good writers? I've always said that this is hard to separate what people get out of what you're doing from what they just can do on their own.

The Doing of Assessment

Chapter 2 established that conducting quality assurance requires the use a variety of methods, the understanding of the source and intent of curricular and performance standards, and the alignment of educational purpose within an institution (Kuh & Ewell, 2010; Suskie, 2018). The participants in this study grapple with methods, standards, and purposes on a daily basis. Discussions with the participants and examination of the websites of their institutions made it clear that the primary issues they face with methods, standards, and purposes of quality assurance surround clarity, intent, and shared vision.

So one of the first changes was really to think about language. How do we describe what we're trying to do...what are the qualities we're trying to teach to our students? That's really hard to put down—certainly, in numbers, it's impossible—but it's even hard to put down in language. What are the things that, that you want to teach your students or what do you want to build into the classroom that will get your students moving in that direction? You know when you see it, right? But how do you define what gets you there? (Participant 2)

This experience, from Participant 2, underscores some of the difficulty in articulating and realizing educational goals in artistic disciplines. Starting from scratch can be extraordinarily difficult, especially if one has to gain the trust and understanding of colleagues in the process. Standards derived and developed externally, however, can sometimes provide the structure necessary to move quality assurance forward. Such was the case for Participant 3:

Yeah, I think I mentioned earlier about (external) accreditation, just having the ability helped....I could've told students: "Hey, you need to sign up for more classes for this, this, and this reason," but they didn't have to 'cause of...it wasn't in their program...they didn't have to get a degree. So, [being able to tell them]: "Hey, this is your plan. These are the classes you need to take. We're changing this one." That alone, I think, changed a lot of the success of my students. And then by the same token having those learning outcomes, which is why we as a music department, we should have more of them [laughs]. Which I think is also a little problematic because then there are not shared

views, and goals, and outcomes, and...learning outcomes in our department is pretty, you know, it's pretty non-existent, the conversations about them, um, and what we're really trying to get our students to do.

This movement forward, accompanied as it is by a step or two back, is a common experience. All three of the research participants expressed some degree of confusion or concern about alignment of quality assurance practice within their institutions and clarity of purpose.

This is especially the case for Participant 1:

...with the scaffolding I built in, I wondered: "Is this the right way to be doing it? Am I setting my deadlines too late, too early? What am I doing?" I guess all of that is part of the intuitive sense and having done it before. But in my opinion, you can assess where the students are and how they're doing, or you can assess your own tools and whether you're doing it right...I feel that the whole time our idea of assessment has kind of suffered from not really knowing whether we're trying to build strong tools for the assessment of students' skills, or whether we're trying to make sure that our practices are assessing what we think they are. And I think that we probably hope we're doing the latter, and we're probably really doing the former.

Participant 1 is a highly accomplished and internationally recognized scholar. There is no question that Participant 1 has the requisite skills to conduct successful quality assurance.

This experience is like that of the other research participants who are also highly skilled artists, scholars, and educators. The question regarding their experience is more one of purpose, alignment, and appropriate resources to carry out quality assurance functions. Participant 1 did have an experience where quality assurance at the institutional level had some benefit:

There's been some clarity about what our outcomes are. And that has seemed to make for some sort of simplicity about evaluating them, I think in the years that I've taught students across disciplines in general education, writing does seem to have improved. I think that they improved there. I think that there is a feedback loop that worked there.

The Politics of Arts Assessment

"But... I think it almost feels like the assessment protocols are the overlay...to what's really happening" (Participant 2). Questions of method, standard, and purposes for quality assurance bear an element of transaction in that they intend to answer how students are

performing in relation to instruction. They also intend to answer how departments are performing, and how institutions are performing. There is a political dimension to these questions. In the case of each of the research participants in this study, there was a great deal of question surrounding this political dimension. The period of data collection for this study encompassed the coronavirus pandemic of 2020 and calls for police reform through civil protests concerning racial equity in the summer of 2020. These contexts cast a variety of new—and in many cases—undetermined implications for the purpose of quality assurance, and they will ultimately establish a new agenda derived from the experiences of so many in such uncertain circumstances. The experiences of the research participants reflect a confluence of questions about political purposes of quality assurance, the consequences of external circumstances, and what they portend for the future of quality assurance and of higher education in the United States.

Participant 2 observed, partially tongue in cheek: “I think that assessment belongs in the value placed on rational thought. Maybe the scientific model, something you can put a number on and measure.” This observation was made in connection to new issues in the academy to be explained in greater detail later in this chapter. Participant 1 described their institutional context as follows:

So, above me there is—you know, when, again—when we first started really working hard on assessment, it seemed to me to be very difficult to get any sort of clear answer on what assessment was going to mean for us. And that I think that breeds a lot of resistance, if people feel like it’s a useless exercise and they might not be putting it the way that I am. But they might have something say, like: “I’m doing things fine.” Or they might be saying: “My intuitive sense of how do I assess students? It doesn’t need any checks on it.” But of course they do, and we do need to check. And we also need to see if practices are continuing to work as our students change. The more classes that a person teaches, more likely there is to be some resistance. And then there are people who just see it as an empty exercise and so they’re going to resist on principle. I would say that probably this term [Spring 2020], there’s so much has changed that it’s going to be very difficult to run any kind of assessment. And we can see, because so many of us are

going to have to change our teaching modalities, we're going to be very occupied with that. I mean, at this point, I've stopped carping about working over the summer because it seems very clear that the top priority is to make sure to retain students or the university is going to go under. It seems very important to do that work. If we don't assess whether we're doing good work, eventually that's going to catch up with us, but the more things seem like an emergency situation, the more that assessment seems to fall by the wayside. And so, it's possible that it is the sort of yearly repetition of assessing the same outcomes makes you think about [whether things] can things really have changed so much in a year....And at that point, you feel like you are assessing the instructor rather than the tool.

The context of the difficulties in 2020 brought a set of circumstances forward for Participant 2 that call into question the ability of quality assurance to meet the challenges of today:

One of the things I teach my students is the difference between [two forms of creative technique]. And those are gendered things. And one term for the artist is female and the other male. That's how we think of it, right? There are two different systems at issue here that have historically been gendered. But one technique came up out of systematic measuring standardizing "sizes" but it's males who are measuring, right? These are "scientific ways" of knowing, whereas the other technique works directly with women and their bodies. There would be a client and the work would be done on the body. And there's different ways of making that bear different judgments of relative value. And those value judgments have to do with the scientific method of knowing, and with gender. And male practitioners are identified with the scientific and female with intuition. So those are the kinds of things that I'm teaching my students, so they understand. It's about standardizing, measuring, putting it into a scientific system. When, actually so much of it is intuitive. And unmeasurable.

And further:

...there's been a lot of conversation [at their institution] about issues with diversity and race; I teach a lot of content that gets into that, and you really wonder about the adequacy of whether the question of quality assurance and learning assessment is going to work in that context, with respect to diversity, equity, and inclusion issues. I wonder. (Participant 2)

Research Findings

An artist is an individual pursuing unique artistic voice, and an artist-educator is one for whom existence within an educational enterprise calls for engagement with the development of students, quality assurance, and maintaining professional work in these areas. The actual work

of assessment involves methods, standards, and purposes, all of which operate on a transaction level, as well as a broader dimension in a political context.

The experiences of the research participants reveal a set of findings about the relationship of institutional structure, quality assurance, and the orientation of artistic disciplines in higher education to teaching and learning. Because arts learning often relies on a highly individualized developmental trajectory, students must employ self-assessment and develop metacognitive ability—both are essential to success.

There is also an element of learning a craft in artistic disciplines that exists independently of the aesthetic quality of artistic achievement. Many of the features of quality of assurance that exist in other disciplines in higher education are present in artistic learning. These include expressing and measuring educational intent, communicating and collaborating with colleagues, as well as developing, maintaining, and participating in assessment systems. It is clear, however, that without recognizing the role of metacognition or addressing student self-efficacy as an intentional and explicit outcome it is difficult to capture an understanding of how students learn in an artistic context. Moreover, artistic learning touches on issues of the alignment of purpose throughout an institution and the relationship of accreditation to quality assurance. And finally, the events of 2020 call into question a number of issues that are new to quality assurance, including its ability to address issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion, as well as gender differences and identity and the extent to which meaning making in quality assurance can move beyond external compliance to address critical issues within artistic disciplines.

The limitations that the coronavirus pandemic of 2020 placed on gathering data for this research was alarming at first. It appeared there may not be opportunity to gather as rich a picture of artistic learning as is necessary to answer the research questions in this study. The

reality turned out to be quite the opposite. Deep and rich conversation about what students know and how they demonstrate that knowledge and the skills they build as a result of their engagement in higher education is more on the minds of the research participants than was likely the case before the pandemic. The difficulties inherent in the social reckoning through which we are currently living provide a sharp focus for the educational work of the research participants as well as for their artistic work and sense of cultural empathy.

The next chapter includes a discussion of the findings as well as implications and recommendations for further study placed within the context of the conceptual framework and review of prior research from Chapter 2 through the suggestion and discussion of an integrative model for arts instruction and learning assessment.

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study was to explore the relationship of higher education organizational structure and institutional quality assurance practices and the culture of teaching and learning in artistic disciplines from the perspectives of three artist-educators. The conceptual framework for the study was based on a review of literature identified in Chapter 2 that included teaching and learning in higher education arts disciplines, domain expertise and expert performance, deliberate practice, constructivist learning, and teaching creativity.

This chapter consists of five sections. The first briefly reviews the purpose, theoretical framework, and methodology of the study. Section two presents a brief summary discussion of findings from the study in the context of the conceptual framework and review of prior research from Chapter 2. In the third section, an integrative model for arts instruction and learning assessment is presented. Implications of the study for theory and future research is discussed from the perspective of the instruction and assessment model. In the fourth section, implications and recommendations for arts education and quality assurance practice is then discussed. Final comments are shared in the fifth section.

Review of Study Purpose, Theoretical Framework, and Methodology

In interviews, participants responded to research questions in four areas:

1. Organizational structure and institutional quality assurance practice
2. Barriers to implementation of effective quality assurance
3. Changes and or improvements to teaching and learning
4. Orientation of disciplinary culture to learning as a result of quality assurance

In exploring the connection of theory to case, three individual artist-educators from three different institutional types participated in this study, consistent with the structure of a basic interpretive study designed for inquiry into particular sorts of experience, phenomena, or conditions (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). The three individuals participating in this study were identified by means of non-probability purposeful sampling. As identified in Chapter 3, the goal was to select participants likely to be rich in experience and information with regard to the purpose of the study (Gall et al., 2003). A form of maximum variation (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) served as the type of purposive sampling.

Criteria for inclusion captured three institutions that differ in terms of their purpose and scope and thus scale and degree of sophistication in quality assurance practices. Consultation with professionals knowledgeable about practices in student learning outcomes assessment and program review and teaching and learning, as well as the researcher's own experience, provided three categories from which candidate institutions were selected: 1) an arts unit within a large, state-supported research-intensive university; 2) an arts unit within a private, independent not-for-profit university; and 3) a single-purpose independent arts institution. This variation provided for patterns to emerge that illustrated how institutional structure, quality assurance practice, and teaching and learning interact at each institution and for theoretical analysis and application across experiences.

Individual artist-educators were selected on the basis of their reputation as a practicing artist and experience as an educator in their discipline. Inclusion criteria consisted of a preference for having five to 20 years of professional experience and experience with quality assurance practice, including engagement in student learning outcomes and program review, and work with others at the institution in these areas. The three participants were selected and

interviewed who met these criteria and provided rich and detailed information about the research questions given their work at their institutions as artist-educators having experience with quality assurance.

Data analysis included preliminary exploratory analysis and open and thematic coding, with each interview transcript coded and reviewed several times to build descriptions of the participants and their activities, processes, and thoughts about their work. These codes then identified the themes present in the research (Saldaña, 2016). Trustworthiness was enhanced by means of member checking regarding quality assurance in the areas of learning assessment and program review, and peer debriefing with several researchers and practitioners of assessment in arts disciplines available to the researcher. Institutional and departmental websites, document analysis, and review of specialized accreditation standards also contributed to trustworthiness.

Discussion of the Findings

Chapter 4 identified the themes present in the data collected for this study as suggestive of a scenario in which an artist is a lone individual pursuing a unique artistic voice, and an artist-educator is a person for whom existence within an educational enterprise calls for engagement with the development of students, conducting quality assurance, and maintaining professional work in all of these areas. The actual work of assessment is derived from methods, standards, and purposes, all of which operate on a transaction level, as well as a broader dimension in a political context.

These themes, as representations of the findings of this research, suggest an integrative model that progresses from the research questions. This section discusses the findings in light of how the participants experience quality assurance practices within the context and structure of their institution and their artistic discipline; barriers they have observed to carrying out quality

assurance and why they have occurred; changes and improvements have been made as a result of quality assurance practice; and the effect of organizational structure and quality assurance on the culture of learning in the participants' disciplines.

The Artist as Educator

The participants in this study spend a great deal of time delineating their effort and skill between the preparation and performance of their art. They have honed their skill through years of working and practicing, refining their craft. All of this learning, work, and preparation results in an artistic entity; a performance, a piece of art, or the presentation of ideas in a form recognized as aesthetic expression. This kind of creative work, which is the life pursuit of the research participants, is inherently an individual effort. The cycle of doing art—conceptualizing, creating, and performing it—defines the contours of the life of an artist and has been familiarized to such an extent that it serves as their existential clock.

The inherently individual effort of art is best expressed by the idea of artistic voice. It is this quality and this uniqueness that is the ultimate goal of artists. It is intended to be different from what was before and what comes after—should one be lucky enough to serve as an influence upon what comes after. This individualism was a source of conflict in the work of each of the three research participants. The demand for quantified and aggregated information about student achievement that are features of quality assurance do not always allow for an understanding of the individual work at the core of artistic education. To be effective in the institutional environment in which the research participants are situated, each has to reach some degree of compromise between their instincts and the native evaluative techniques of their discipline and what the department, school, college, or institution needs. The assessment of

learning needs to be carried out in a way that preserves their judgement as artists and as experts within a set of standards that are situated in the climate of artistic work itself.

The artist as educator employs the methods already in use in their discipline and, in essence, translates an understanding of student performance on an individual basis to information about student performance in the aggregate. The participants in this study share a common feature in this translation: they use language recognizable to other academic disciplines and to quality assurance professionals. It is this process of rectifying a level of analysis accounting for the individual and groups of students, as well as the translation of artistic work into more common educational language and understanding, that is at the core of the work of artists as educators.

Art as an Educational Endeavor

A central idea pervading this study concerns the highly individualized developmental trajectory of an artist. This trajectory marks art as an educational endeavor in a way that recursively joins the educational intent of artistic instruction to the idea of the individual work of art. The ability of students to assess their own work and their own progress is central to this theme. According to the method and philosophy of their discipline, the research participants expressed both the importance of the notion of student self-assessment and the difficulty of capturing that self-assessment in quality assurance activity. Faculty in the arts are themselves products of a model of teaching and learning based on a “master-apprentice” relationship where evaluation and assessment are inherent and embedded in student-teacher interaction (Parkes, 2010, p. 98). The challenge for arts disciplines is to preserve the autonomy of faculty as experts and maintain artistic voice as the principle in teaching and learning while providing useful,

transparent, and understandable results that have the capacity to demonstrate curricular effectiveness over time.

The participants discussed the utility and transparency of different kinds of learning outcomes that they have encountered in their work. Each suggested that there are elements of what they do that are knowable in ways that are recognized by educators in other disciplines. For example, the number of tunes a jazz musician learns and can perform can be counted. Writing can be evaluated according to a rubric upon which faculty have agreed in terms of criteria and standards.

The difficulty comes with aesthetic learning. This is an area where the experience of the research participants with their colleagues suggests that arts faculty know it when they see it, but “it” is something that is difficult, if not impossible, to explain to someone without initiation, refined sensibilities, and significant artistic training. This is a persistent dilemma and real concern in arts education.

There are, however, substantial areas of agreement described by the research participants that circumnavigate barriers to quality assurance practice. The arts disciplines in which they work are deeply rooted in demonstrating knowledge and skills gained in the teaching and learning process. For example, musicians and filmmakers regularly perform and display their work and are subject to juried examinations, recitals, screenings, critiques, and concerts. Visual artists and designers collect, reflect, select, and display their works in portfolios.

Despite the abundance of this kind of direct evidence of learning, the research participants described a reluctance within the culture of their discipline to translate their native evaluative techniques into systematic analysis of student learning. They and their colleagues have resisted the process of expressing what students should know and be able to do into tools

and terminology for the purposes of assessing learning. Participant 2, in particular, described how colleagues of theirs balked at this process as reductive in terms of identifying artistic process and product, and dangerous to understanding creativity and the individualized nature of artistic voice.

Fine and performing arts rely on transparency and direct demonstration in performance for their pedagogical techniques. The term for capturing this direct demonstration—authentic assessment—is meant to describe the real work of what professionals in a discipline do. It is a highly effective way to understand learning and is inherent in arts teaching and learning.

The Work of the Artist/Educator

The third theme derived from this study is manifest in a series of issues faced by the research participants in the course of their regular work and identified in conversation with them. These issues include expressing and measuring educational intent; communicating and collaborating with colleagues; developing, maintaining, and participating in assessment systems; and negotiating the limits standard quality assurance practice places on expressing the results of artistic learning.

The areas of expressing and measuring educational intent and communicating and collaborating with colleagues identified the interaction of organizational structure and quality assurance practice within the discipline of each of the participants and within the culture of learning in a broader context beyond their own institutions. Educational objectives rely on pedagogic intent to inculcate learning strategies, and in turn, different learning strategies call for different pedagogical approaches. While a level of agreement about this relationship was common among the research participants, agreement on more sophisticated expression of learning outcomes and educational intent was significantly more difficult.

The research participants are familiar with and discussed language from the work of Benjamin Bloom to establish and apply taxonomies of learning and descriptions to educational domains (Anderson & Bloom, 2001). In fact, the terminology of Bloom's cognitive domain is the *lingua franca* of learning outcome statements (Bloom et al., 1956). The extensive (and sometimes exclusive) use of this domain for quality assurance purposes, however, is problematic for arts learning. There are other highly applicable domains. The affective Domain describes how individuals deal with things emotionally, such as feelings, values, appreciation, enthusiasms, motivations, and attitudes. The psychomotor domain includes physical movement, coordination, and use of motor-skills that require practice and are measured in terms of speed, precision, distance, procedures, or techniques in execution (Krathwohl et al., 1973). These domains are essential to understanding learning in the arts but are significantly less prominent in mainstream assessment practice and thus unfamiliar to many arts practitioners, including the participants in this research study. Couching learning in the arts solely in the language of Bloom's cognitive domain can express learning in inappropriately formulaic and cognitively-centric developmental terms at the expense of recognizing the emotional and physical components of artistic learning.

Another significant and sometimes taxing component of the work of the artist-educator as experienced by the research participants is communicating and collaborating with colleagues. Each participant has had leadership responsibility where they have had to work closely with colleagues in the development of quality assurance systems. This has proved difficult in each case and has been identified as a barrier to carrying out quality assurance as well as being a significant feature in experiencing the work of quality assurance within their institution and their discipline. Among concerns of their colleagues is the perceived reductionism of assessment

previously identified in this study, and the idea that quantification and assessment practice are antithetical to creativity.

Understanding and addressing these challenges requires a disproportionate amount of time and effort. Trying to achieve some degree of agreement among colleagues for assessment work can be emotionally taxing. The difficulty of developing outcome language and assessment plans that can be carried out and documented—and will derive some understanding of student learning—is an order of magnitude more difficult.

Each participant described their work in assessment as somewhat haphazard and lacking an element of sustainability. This suggests that the development, maintenance, and ongoing participation in assessment was secondary to the goal of creating the capacity to do the work and that assessment is conducted under external pressure as performativity couched in the language of market efficiency (Ball, 2003, 2015, 2016; Giroux, 2002, 2019, 2020).

Finally, each of the research participants suggested in their own way that without metacognition and self-efficacy as central components of artistic learning, it is difficult to grapple with how students are learning as artists. This sentiment speaks to limitations inherent in the sole use of the cognitive domain of Bloom et al.'s (1956) taxonomy for arts learning. Monitoring intent and execution, regulating behavior, and analyzing performance are central behaviors in the arts and necessary for high order learning and synthesis and integration of knowledge and skill into an artistic product. Understanding the artistic development of the individual, building self-regulative skills, and reinforcing the iterative process of practice and performance over time, are all core values expressed by the study participants.

The Doing of Assessment

The fourth theme is closely related to the work of the artist-educator. The difference is in the extent to which the doing of assessment, in terms of the experience of the study participants, related to alignment of educational goals throughout their institution and the demands of specialized accreditation. Each of the research participants works within an institution or a department in which one or more of the disciplines has earned specialized accreditation. The tension between accountability and improving teaching and learning, a regular feature in all forms of accreditation (Ewell, 2009), is especially prominent in arts disciplines. As introduced in Chapter 2, creative and performing arts draw upon applied study and the demonstration of skill in performance for pedagogy and foreground the development of artistic voice. The CAAA (2007) positioned achievement and quality in the arts in this individual framing and suggested that: “Because so much of the source of quality is individual, it is extremely problematic to assume that what works in one case will work automatically in another: ‘in pedagogical approaches, there are no universal certainties’” (p. 10).. The National Association of Schools of Music suggested that quality assurance should preserve disciplinary methodology in “...formulating ideas and conditions central to assessment on our own terms...and advocating and defending the validity of our assessment approaches” (Wait & Hope, 2007, p. 17).

The tradition of teaching and learning that models a master-apprentice relationship identified earlier in this study suggests the success and longevity of this fundamental educational relationship across arts disciplines. Specialized accreditation for arts disciplines signals the importance of preserving this relationship, the autonomy of faculty work, and the expertise of faculty in establishing curricular standards and measuring outcomes. The involvement of

specialized accreditation in the experience of the research participants was positive, especially in terms of the influence it can have on colleagues toward collaboration in the work of assessment.

The accountability versus improvement question will likely remain in discussions about assessment. An authentic and intentional culture of assessment must demonstrate concern for the effectiveness of the teaching and learning enterprise, as well as investigate how students learn and the quality of that learning. The experiences of the research participants suggest that arts disciplines have always been engaged in an exemplary teaching and learning model from which much is to be learned, and the doing of assessment benefits from incorporating disciplinary practice.

The Politics of Assessment

The final theme derived from this study concerns the politics of assessment. Each of the study participants is quite familiar with the basic approach for conducting learning outcomes assessment. Each described the elements that include faculty who define student learning outcomes, define and conduct the measurement selection process and the procurement or the development of instrumentation and approaches to measurement, and complete the cycle by implementing the assessment process. Larger issues emerged from further discussion and deeper inquiry into the true ability and genuine likelihood of assessment to address both high level learning characterized by synthesis and integration of knowledge and skill and important issues of creativity and artistic identity.

The questions of who should do the work of assessment over time, what sorts of resources should be allocated to assessment, and the kind of management model that might be effective in providing leadership for effective assessment, were prevalent and concerning to each of the participants. There was also concern over the fundamental question of what assessment

was going to mean for the participants and their colleagues. This question—what assessment was going to mean to the participants—confronts a deeper concern about the extent to which assessment cloaks a hidden agenda. Is it some form of resource allocation? What about the connection of assessment to evaluating faculty work? It is here where performativity through the lens of neoliberal values is provides a model to deconstruct definitions of educational effectiveness in American higher education.

Discussions with the research participants, member checking with colleagues and experts in the field, and evaluation of their assessment documentation and information publicly available on the websites of the research participants' institutions, made it clear that there is a deep desire to express alignment of purpose and quality across these complex educational organizations. The work involved in collecting the data for this study made it clear that there are significant elements of this alignment already realized in the institutions of each of the study participants. There are, however, two core contradictions to note that were expressed by the participants in the context of each of their institutions.

The first contradiction surrounds the traditions of the institution and the true depth of knowing about educational quality and outcomes over time. Each institution foregrounds the history and story of their connection to their students, their region, and their community, and clearly demonstrates a desire to continue those connections. It is difficult to find, on the other hand, much more than required and often cursory information about educational quality, assessment results, and actual student outcomes of which graduation rates, attainment of learning outcomes, and performance of programs are indicative.

There certainly is no intent on the part of the study participants to conceal any of this information, but they are not positioned to influence the narrative surrounding institutional

performance. It appears from this study that it is much more likely to be the case that a long-term intentional process of assessment, one that is sustainable and demonstrative of gains over time, is difficult to generate within the administrative structures that exist at the institutions of the participants.

The second core contradiction concerns the primacy of quantitative data and assessment framed primarily or solely in cognitive dimensions. As discussed throughout this study, there is a presence of counts in the quality assurance process as proxies for development. Numbers of student exams proctored, papers written, counts of pages written within those papers, and scores on standardized testing instruments also frequently serve as proxies for learning, often because they are readily available. Perhaps partially because of expedience in communicating the practice of learning outcomes assessment, Bloom et al.'s (1956) cognitive domain is foregrounded at the expense of other ways of knowing about arts learning. The same is the case for emphasizing objective ways of knowing over subjective judgment.

These core contradictions exist in conditions that make it very difficult to explicate causality and to determine intent. To paraphrase the sentiment of the study participants, everyone and no one is guilty. It is clear from their experience that there is a strong desire for students to learn as well as possible and for faculty to be in a position to teach as effectively as possible. The process of quality assurance, however, has developed a degree of sophistication—and of performativity—that makes it largely inaccessible to rank and file faculty. Some degree of specialization is required to carry it out. And this specialization is often thought to be represented by personnel lines, excessive resource allocation, time lost from creative activity, and ultimately the dilution of the educational enterprise.

Study participants expressed concern for the future and worry about the encroachment of a market-based understanding of institutional performance. The expression of educational effectiveness in curricular outcomes oriented to consumer confidence and inquiry into educational process that emphasizes expediency at the expense of deeper ways of understanding the health, quality, and sustainability of an educational enterprise, are alarming trends to each of the research participants.

Perspectives on the Institution

The first research question posed in this study concerned how participants view the relationship of the organizational structure of their institution to the provision of quality assurance practices in their disciplines. In the experience of the research participants, quality assurance is provided by and understood within the context of a department or a smaller school within the host institution. Much of their experience externalized quality assurance to the institution, where it was a condition to be met for purposes of compliance with accreditation or some other form of bureaucracy in higher education.

The participants also noted a lack of clarity about exactly what outcomes or expected by the institution and the extent to which the nature of their discipline and the conditions of their work were understood outside of their neighborhood, or in this case their department, school, or college. Participant 1 suggested that there was a misunderstanding about whether the faculty were expected to build strong tools for the assessment of student skills or if they were intended to make sure that their practices for assessing what they think those skills are was the fundamental purpose. Participant 1 suggested that the hope was they were doing the latter when, in reality, they were probably doing the former.

Initially it seemed as though there would be a much stronger connection between research participants and their understanding and interaction with the institutional level of their work. It is now clear that this relationship would benefit from further study, as the convergence of educational practice from the department upward, and institutional understanding of learning from the top down, is mismatched in the results of this study.

Implications and Recommendations

This study made an assumption so fundamental to the arts that it might be overlooked—that is art is about acts of creation. Creativity is the underpinning of artistic expression, and as such, a great deal of the work of arts educators surrounds this phenomenon.

It is important to acknowledge that the abstract and ineffable qualities encountered in the creative process are sometimes demonstrated (or indeed are absent) in a manner so completely evident to a trained observer that the need to describe and document seems absurd. However, for the purposes of assessing learning, the identification of skill, originality, and invention must be accompanied by an intentional, well-scaffolded program of intensive study, deep reflection, persistence, and deliberate practice. Assessment must attend to that which is developed and then demonstrated in expression and performance.

The basic questions of learning assessment consider what students should know and be able to do as a result of their engagement in an educational enterprise. Curriculum must be purposeful and intentional in defining the contours of creative intent and its realization, including context, interpretation, and technique. It must recognize and analyze the social environment in which it operates with respect to intrinsic motivation and artistic growth.

The experience of the participants in this study and its implications are threefold; 1) the opportunity for creation and risk as curricular and pedagogical imperatives, 2) the acceptance of

a subjective ontology and epistemologies of diagnosis to connect the arts to teaching and learning in other disciplines, 3) and a convergence of top-down and bottom-up leadership models to identify and document educational effectiveness. A brief return to the research questions for this study indicate investigation into quality assurance practices in the lives of the research participants, barriers to carrying out quality assurance, changes and improvements to curricula and teaching brought about by quality assurance, and the effect of organizational structure and quality assurance on the culture of learning and inquiry in the artistic discipline of each of the participants.

The first implication of this study is about creation and risk. The participants all expressed concern in varying degrees about the extent to which students are able to truly take risks toward developing a unique artistic voice in an environment of narrowly defined statements of learning outcomes and of educational efficacy as identified in program review reports. Creativity embodies risk. Making something new might work and it might not. Interpreting a work of art in performance—an act undertaken by many, many artists—may work and it may not. This idea of risk for the purpose of allowing space for students to fail in such a way that it is of benefit developmentally, creatively, and artistically, is critical to arts education. And it is critical that assessment of arts education make space for this risk.

The next implication concerns the acceptance of a subjective ontology and an epistemology of diagnosis in arts education and in assessing artistic learning. The idea of a subjective ontology and an epistemology of diagnosis emerged from this research. A subjective ontology is a way of interpreting reality and the meaning of phenomena through the experience, judgment, and expertise of someone qualified to make a complex and comprehensive judgment about that phenomena. An epistemology of diagnosis is a process where understanding and a

knowing about a phenomena is developed through an analysis of conditions and indicators present in an example of that phenomenon situated in the context of characteristics unique to an individual. A metaphor is drawn here from the idea of medical diagnosis where the health of an individual is understood both from the presence of indicators (blood pressure and blood oxygen levels, for example) that suggest healthy or unhealthy conditions and the context and circumstances unique to that individual. It is this combination of objective external circumstances (i.e. the craft necessary to demonstrate artistic skill) and the interpretation of an expert that identifies the aesthetic qualities present in a particular artist.

It is important that space be made for expert opinion and the judgment of artist-educators to predominate in setting standards and criteria for quality in arts disciplines. As the participants in this study identified, there are ways in which student learning in the arts can be quantified and understood rather easily, and ways in which the ineffable aesthetic qualities of artistic voice are much more mysterious, especially to the uninitiated. If this subjective ontology is accompanied by an epistemology of diagnosis, the conditions for deep understanding of artistic learning will be present. An epistemology of diagnosis means that artist-educators consider the conditions of individual students according to their own educational development. Progress toward learning outcomes and the establishment of a course of study that is consistent with the development of artistic voice can then be established in collaboration with student artists. While this may be a labor-intensive process, it is clearly in the interest of artistic education and has significant implications for deriving useful and valuable assessment data from the process.

The third implication concerns institutional leadership that supports and enables sound educational practice that leads to sustainable outcomes over time. The experience of the study participants is such that the proximity of their work to the culture of the discipline is directly

related to compliance with quality assurance activity. This result came as a complete surprise. But it is clear—artists discussing art with other artists is the best way for learning and teaching to take place in artistic disciplines. The experience of the participants was such that discourse around specialized accreditation in arts disciplines was more meaningful and more real to them and to their colleagues. The kinds of things expected by accreditors perceived to be more distant to the work of faculty, that which is more involved with the institution's external compliance, is of significantly less interest to them and their colleagues. This situation reveals a fundamental flaw in the practice of institutional accreditation in America: the connection of institutional accreditation to the institutional level of administration removes it from the regular life and educational practice of faculty. As such, institutional accreditation appears to faculty as an exercise in external compliance and accountability as opposed to a meaningful opportunity for internal meaning-making, which is in fact how it is constructed and suggested to function by institutional accreditors. Moreover, each participant described their work in assessment as haphazard and lacking an element of sustainability, suggesting that the development, maintenance, and ongoing participation in assessment is secondary to meaningful inquiry into educational effectiveness and purpose.

Areas for Further Study

More could be learned about incorporation of artistic craft with a tolerance for ambiguity, convergence in management and leadership, connecting learning gains from educational intent, involving students and their own self-assessment in the assessment process, and developing an ecosystem approach to artistic educational development. The implications and recommendations resulting from this study are suggestive of two main areas for further analysis.. The first involves artistic craft and ambiguity. As has been identified in this study, there are areas surrounding

artistic craft that lend themselves to traditional assessment technique. These so-called craft outcomes are critical to the acquisition of the basic skills in an artistic discipline and are a fundamental part of artistic education. The ineffable part, on the other hand, involves the “it” factor which, when surfaced, is unsatisfying in terms of its description of educational process. However, tolerating ambiguity is an important affective skill for both students and faculty. If designed carefully and assessed properly, this ambiguity could serve as a factor in identifying artistic voice an aesthetic development, as well as the more ineffable characteristics of artistic expression. Students must tolerate the ambiguity of not knowing all the answers and the fact that they must develop many answers very much on their own, and faculty must tolerate the ambiguity of working with students outside of their own area of aesthetic preference, which draws upon educational practice more than artistic sensibility and is essential to sound communication between journey person and apprentice. Such a formulation for arts teaching and learning and assessment can draw a more natural line of inquiry from teaching to learning to knowing, and accounts for the frequently messy and always variable process of developing and expressing creativity.

The second area for further research concerns leadership and management. For teaching, learning, and assessment in the arts, as well as for practices in all disciplines, it is essential for institutional leadership to recognize and actively support and develop a convergence model where the educational work of faculty and their definition of the curriculum—including learning outcomes—meets the concerns of the institution in terms of resources, enrollment, budget, planning, and institutional stability and sustainability.

Conversations with the study participants about their students and about their own artistic activity made it clear that there was an element of performativity in the quality assurance they

were conducting or that in which they were directed to participate. This performativity was manifest in the illusion that they were conducting educational research and calling it assessment as opposed to declaring educational intent and investigating curricular alignment. This is a significant distinction and the third area recommended for further research. It would be of great value to understand more about how learning gains can be determined and understood and tracked over time in a research context, reserving the development and expression of educational intent and the alignment of curricula with educational intent for faculty engagement. The research participants were not in a position, in terms of their training or experience or desire, to conduct valid and reliable educational research into learning gains. However, they were very interested in thinking about expressing educational intent and the ways in which the curriculum realizes that intent.

Given the collaborative nature of the relationship between student and teacher in artistic learning, the findings of this study brought forward another area for further research involving students in the assessment process. The constructivist nature of arts education and the implications of deliberate practice and the development of expertise are such that the establishment of outcomes by students themselves is most indicative of the development upon which they should embark. Self-regulation and metacognitive skill are important features of artistic activity and of successful artists. Involving students in a process through which their own identification of educational goals is central would reinforce notions of self-regulation and metacognition. Such a process would also benefit the diagnostic epistemology identified in this study as benefitting artistic teaching, learning, and assessment.

All of these areas for further research could be thought of as an ecology of artistic learning. The experience of the research participants and their engagement with students is

indicative of an ecological model in that there are many factors to which successful student engagement can be connected, such a holistic model, one that considers student success in artistic learning by means of a systems approach that would be of great value to art students. Aligning the environment of the discipline in which the student is situated to the relationship of that discipline to a department, school, or college, is the sort of process for which a holistic understanding of educational influence would be very useful.

Implications for Practitioners

There are a number of implications resulting from this research that affect practitioners of a variety of types. Among those types are artist educators, academic administrators, and quality assurance professionals.

The implications for artist-educators represent a great deal of the findings of this research. Artist educators would stand to benefit from identifying and employing a process of assessing student learning that proceeds from assumptions about an objective ontology and an epistemology of diagnosis. These assumptions provide an opportunity for the elements of artistic practice that are more readily observable and quantifiable (e.g., craft outcomes) to be situated within artistic skill demonstrated by an individual. It is then the judgment of the artist-educator that provides and understanding of artistic quality and educational development.

Academic administrators should focus on a convergence model of leadership that brings forward the work of faculty and the achievement of students in a way that aligns with the goals of the institution. This kind of leadership can allow for the nature of artistic work to be articulated, understood, and supported in an educational context that accounts for multiple levels of understanding and skill acquisition along a developmental trajectory that also aligns with the goals of the institution. Quality assurance professionals need to take the time to fully understand

the ontology and epistemology of arts learning. Becoming familiar with trustworthiness as a standard for program evaluation and the interpretive skills of a qualitative researcher are essential to success for quality assurance in arts disciplines. The idea that the same methodology used in any of a number of other disciplines (mathematics, economics, or physical sciences) is sufficient for understanding arts learning may have some application and utility, but it may also misrepresent the educational intent of artistic disciplines, skew results, and alienate the faculty and students engaged in that work.

Conclusion

The process of articulating a purpose, identifying research questions, considering methodology, and conducting research has been a phenomenal journey. At this point I assume the privilege of shifting from the neutral voice of the researcher to the researcher-educator-learner and express myself in the first person. While I have spent most of my professional career in creative arts disciplines, it has been in the context of administration and leadership. Conducting this study reconnected me to the centrality of students in the entire enterprise of American higher education and reminded me that they are the fundamental purpose.

Conducting interviews and completing this study during a global pandemic following the emergence of the novel coronavirus and COVID-19 cast an interesting light on this work. I share a sense of urgency and deep abiding sensitivity to the importance of educational work with my study participants. I entered this process with what I thought was a great deal of knowledge about teaching, learning, and assessing educational outcomes in artistic disciplines. Some of what I learned in this process of research confirmed elements of that knowledge, but other things I learned demonstrate how much more there is to know, and the existential angst of never being able to know all of it. I am, however, more convinced than ever of the value of the ways in

which we educate artists and the importance of transferring that process to a variety of other disciplines. The deep appreciation for aesthetic knowledge is a critically important component of the education that institutions of higher learning should deliver.

The events of 2020 so far have, in one sense, demonstrated the corrosive power of fear and demagoguery and instilled deep doubt in ways of knowing that had been heretofore unassailable merely a year ago. In another sense, some of 2020 has embodied the power of ideas whose time has come and asked that we recognize these ideas as promises of improvement, of being better. Promises to which artistic practice can provide tremendous insight. It is my intent and hope to continue inquiry into teaching and learning in higher education, and it is my humble desire that this work contributes in some way to shedding the light of understanding.

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APPENDIX A: INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD APPROVALS

IRB Approval Protocol Chase, #20 53

IRB <irb@PACIFIC.EDU>

Wed 11/27/2019 8:37 AM

To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED] IRB <irb@PACIFIC.EDU>

1 attachment (267 KB)

ds Chase, David IRB Long Consent Form 191126.pdf;



OFFICE OF RESEARCH AND SPONSORED PROGRAMS | INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD

TO: David Chase
Educational Administration and Leadership
Benerd College

CC: Dr. Delores McNair, Faculty Advisor

FROM: Sandy Ellenbolt

DATE: November 27, 2019

RE: IRB Approval Protocol Chase, #20-53

Your proposal entitled "*Higher Education Organizational Structure, Quality Assurance Practice, and Teaching and Learning in Arts Disciplines*," submitted to the University of the Pacific IRB has been approved. Your project received an Exempt review.

You are authorized to work with 3 as human subjects, based on your approved protocol. This approval is effective through November 26, 2020.

NOTE: Enclosed is your IRB approved consent document with the official stamp of IRB approval. You are required to only use the stamped version of this consent form by duplicating and distributing to subjects. (Online consent should replicate approved consent document). Consent forms that differ from approved consent are not permitted and use of any other consent document may result in noncompliance of research.

It is your responsibility according to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services regulations to submit an annual [Active Protocol Status/Continuation Form](#). This form is required to request a continuation or when submitting your required closure report. Please be aware that procedural changes or amendments must be submitted to the IRB for review and approval prior to implementing changes. Changes may NOT be made without Pacific IRB approval except to eliminate apparent immediate hazards. Revisions made without prior IRB approval may result in noncompliance of research. To initiate the review process for procedural changes, complete [Protocol Revision Form](#) and submit to IRB@pacific.edu.



UNIVERSITY OF THE
PACIFIC

Protocol Revision Form

			#20-53
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		

Sandy Ellenbolt

[Signature]

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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Sandy
Ellenbolt

Digitally signed by Sandy
Ellenbolt
DN: cn=Sandy Ellenbolt,
o=Institutional Review Board,
ou=email=IRB@upacific, c=US
Date: 2020.04.15 08:14:32 -07'00'

APPENDIX B: RESEARCH SUBJECT'S CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH



UNIVERSITY OF THE
PACIFIC

IRB Approved 4/15/2020
Valid through 11/26/2020

Benerd College
RESEARCH SUBJECT'S CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH
Higher Education Organizational Structure, Quality Assurance Practice, and Teaching
and Learning in Arts Disciplines

Name of Lead Researcher: David Chase
Name of Faculty Advisor Dr. Delores McNair

Your consent is being sought to participate in a research study, and your participation is entirely voluntary.

A. Purpose of Research. The purpose of this research is to explore the relationship of higher education organizational structure and institutional quality assurance practices of learning outcomes assessment and program review to the culture of teaching and learning in artistic disciplines from the perspectives of three artist/educators.

B. Duration of Participation. The expected duration of participation in this study will be two- to two-and-a-half hours.

C. Research Procedures. If you decide to participate, you will engage in a ninety (90) minute interview to be scheduled at a mutually agreeable time. A second, shorter interview may be requested. Interviews will take place either by telephone or video call, depending on interviewee preference. Participants will also be asked to review their individual interview transcript for accuracy and the interpretations drawn from it. In total, I do not expect the time commitment involved to be no greater than two and a half hours. I may also request documentation of learning outcomes and program review materials that do not identify students or faculty. The purpose of my review of this documentation is to develop a comprehensive understanding of learning outcomes assessment activity in your program and at your institution and your engagement in that activity.

D. D. Foreseeable Risks. While care and attention will be given to recording and storing audio on the iPhone I will use for recording, there is a remote possibility that my laptop or iPhone could be hacked or compromised. To mitigate the risk of this occurrence, files in my iPhone will be password and biometrically protected and all digital data will also be password and biometrically protected on my laptop. All consent forms will be kept in a locked file cabinet at my home.

E. Benefits. There are no direct benefits to you for participating in this study. There may be a benefit to others as the insights gained from the research may provide better understanding of the faculty perspective regarding learning outcomes assessment and program review in arts disciplines in higher education.

F. Alternative Procedures. There are no alternative research procedures for this study.



I. CONFIDENTIALITY

We will take reasonable steps to keep confidential any information that is obtained in connection with this research study and that can be identified with you. Each participant will be assigned a pseudonym during the interview that will be used throughout analysis and reporting. Basic demographic information collected in the course of study, including academic rank, terminal degree status, institutional longevity, gender, and age, will be anonymized in reporting. Findings from this study will be reported as part of researcher's doctoral dissertation.

Measures to protect your confidentiality include the assignment of a pseudonym during the interview to be used throughout analysis and reporting. Also interview recordings will be transcribed by a professional transcription service. Once transcribed, the interview recordings will be destroyed. This is anticipated to occur within one year of the taping.

All records related to this study will be kept at the home of the researcher in a locked file and all individually identifiable data will be destroyed once the study is complete. Participants in the study may request a copy of the findings; please note that regulatory agencies and the Institutional Review Board may review the research records. A copy of your signed consent form will be maintained by the principal investigator for at least 3 years after the project is complete before it is destroyed. The consent forms will be stored in a secure location that only the researcher will have access to and will not be affiliated with any data obtained during the project.

II. PARTICIPATION

You were selected as a possible participant in this study on the basis of your reputation as a practicing artist and experience as an educator in your discipline, including the characteristics, techniques, skills, and knowledge you have developed through extensive experience, practice, and education. You are known to your community and the researcher as someone whose abilities and judgement are accorded authority, accuracy, and status by the public and your peers.

We expect to have three participants take part in this study. Please feel free to ask any questions you may have.

Your decision whether or not to participate will involve no penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. If you decide to participate, you are free to discontinue participation at any time without penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled.

III. EXPERIMENTAL PROCEDURES



No experimental procedures are involved.

IV. COLLECTION OF INFORMATION OR BIOSPECIMENS

Information about you collected as part of the research, even with identifiers are removed, will not be used or distributed for future research studies.

V. UNIVERSITY CONTACT INFORMATION

I am the lead researcher in this study and I am a doctoral candidate at the University of the Pacific, Benerd College.

If you have any questions about the research at any time, please contact me at [REDACTED] or [REDACTED].

My advisor is Dr. Delores McNair; she can be reached by email at [REDACTED] or [REDACTED].

If you have any questions about your rights as a participant in a research project or wish to speak with an independent contact, please contact the Office of Research & Sponsored Programs, University of the Pacific at (209) 946-3903 or by email at IRB@pacific.edu.

VI. NO COMPENSATION & NO COMMERCIAL PROFIT

No compensation is being offered for participation in this study.

VII. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT AND SIGNATURE

I hereby consent: (Indicate **Yes** or **No**)

- To be audio recorded during this study.

___Yes___No

- For such audio records resulting from this study to be used for transcription and analysis.

___Yes___No



UNIVERSITY OF THE
PACIFIC

IRB Approved 4/15/2020
Valid through 11/26/2020

You will be given a copy of this form to keep.

Your signature below indicates that you have read and understand the information provided above, that you have been afforded the opportunity to ask, and have answered, any questions that you may have, that your participation is completely voluntary, that you understand that you may withdraw your consent and discontinue participation at any time without penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled, that you will receive a copy of this form, and that you are not waiving any legal claims, rights or remedies.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Research Study Participant (Print Name): _____

Researcher Who Obtained Consent (Print Name): _____

APPENDIX C: PARTICIPANT EMAILS

First Recruitment E-Mail Message

Email Subject Line:	Arts Faculty, learning assessment, and program review – research participation
<p>Dear Colleague,</p> <p>I am contacting you to invite you to participate in a study I am conducting as part of my doctoral work at the University of the Pacific. You have been identified as someone with the experience, background, and expertise to make you particularly well suited for the questions I am asking in my research.</p> <p>The purpose of my research is to explore the relationship of higher education organizational structure and institutional practices of learning outcomes assessment and program review with the culture of teaching and learning in artistic disciplines from the perspectives of three artist/educators.</p> <p>The study will involve a ninety (90) minute interview to be conducted via telephone or video call scheduled at a mutually agreeable time. A second, shorter follow-up interview may be requested. You will also be asked to review your individual interview transcript for accuracy as well as the interpretations drawn from it. In total, I do not expect the time commitment involved to be greater than two and a half hours. I may also request documentation of learning outcomes and program review materials that do not identify students or faculty.</p> <p>Participation in the study is voluntary and the decision to participate will have no impact on current or future relations with you, your institution or University of the Pacific. If you are willing to participate in this study, please respond to this email by April 20, 2020, and include your current teaching assignments and learning assessment/program review responsibilities.</p> <p>Thank you for your considering this opportunity, David Chase</p>	

Second Recruitment E-Mail Message

Email Subject Line:	Reminder Arts Faculty, learning assessment, and program review – research participation
<p>Hello Colleague,</p> <p>This is a follow-up email to my invitation for you to participate in a study I am conducting as part of my doctoral work at University of the Pacific.</p> <p>As a reminder - participation in the study is completely voluntary and consists of a ninety (90) minute interview to be conducted via telephone or video call with the possibility of a second, shorter follow-up interview. You will be asked to review the interview transcript for accuracy as well as the interpretations drawn from it. In total, I do not expect the time commitment involved to be greater than two and a half hours. I may also request documentation of learning outcomes and program review materials that do not identify students or faculty.</p> <p>The purpose of my research is to explore the relationship of higher education organizational structure and institutional practices of learning outcomes assessment and program review with the culture of teaching and learning in artistic disciplines from the perspectives of three artist/educators.</p> <p>Your decision of whether to participate or not will have no impact on current or future relations with you, your institution or University of the Pacific. If you can participate in this study, please respond to this email by April 23, 2020 and include your current teaching assignments and learning assessment/program review responsibilities.</p> <p>Thank you for your considering this opportunity, David Chase</p>	

Selection as a Participant Email

Email Subject Line:	Selection for Dissertation Study on Arts Faculty, Learning Assessment, and Program Review
<p>Hello <i>[insert name]</i>,</p> <p>Thank you for responding to the invitation to participate in the study of arts faculty, learning assessment, and Program Review and I am very appreciative you will be involved; I look forward to including include your thoughts and experience as part of the research. The remainder of this email outlines what will happen next. Should you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact me directly.</p> <p>Consent Form:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The consent form for this study is attached to this email. It should be reviewed carefully. • As is stated in the consent form, participation in this study is voluntary and the decision to participate will have no impact on current or future relations with the me, your institution, or the University of the Pacific. • If you have any questions regarding the consent form, please contact me. • After you have reviewed the consent form, please respond to this email to indicate you agree with the terms outlined. <i>Note: completion of a consent form is a requirement of participating in this study.</i> • On the day of your interview, you will be asked to sign two copies of the consent form. You will keep one copy and I will retain the other as part of the records for the study. <p>The Interview:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Once I have received an email from you indicating your agreement with the consent form, I will contact you to schedule an interview in April or May 2020. • Interviews will last ninety (90) minutes and will take place by phone or video call. • You will receive a confirmation email and a calendar meeting request including your preferred method for the interview (telephone or video call) for the date and time of the interview. A reminder email will be sent 2 days prior. <p>Once again, thank you for your willingness to participate in this study, David</p>	

Consent Confirmation Email

Email Subject Line:	Selection for Dissertation Study on Arts Faculty, Learning Assessment, and Program Review Confirmation
<p>Hello <i>[insert name]</i>,</p> <p>Thank you for your return email indicating that you consent to the terms of the study. I will be in touch within the next couple of days to schedule your interview.</p> <p>I appreciate your willingness to participate in this study, David</p>	

Post-Interview Email

Email Subject Line:	Thank you!
<p>Hello <i>[insert name]</i>,</p> <p>Thank you so much for your participation in yesterday's interview. A transcript of your interview is being completed and should be available within 7 days. Once I have received it, I will make arrangements to deliver a hard copy for your review. You will have 1 week to review the transcript for accuracy and notify me that it is ready.</p> <p>Take Care, David</p>	

APPENDIX D: ARTIST-EDUCATOR INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

Institution:

Interviewee:

Interview Section Used:

1. Organizational structure and institutional quality assurance practice (QA)
2. Barriers to implementation of effective QA
3. Changes and/or improvements to teaching and learning
4. Orientation of disciplinary culture to learning as a result of QA

Other Topics Discussed:

Document Analysis:

Post Interview Comments or Recommendations for More Information:

Teaching, Learning, and Assessment Interviews

Introduction

I have asked to speak with you today because you have been identified as an artist-educator with significant experience in teaching, learning, and assessment in your discipline at your institution. This research project focuses on the relationship of the organizational structure of your institution and its quality assurance practices* to the culture of teaching and learning in your discipline. This study does not involve any sort of evaluation of your teaching practices or assessment activities; rather the intent is to learn more about teaching, learning, and assessment in the context of your discipline and your institution.

With your permission, I would like to record our conversations to facilitate an accurate record. I will be the only person with access to the recording and it will be deleted after it is transcribed. In addition, you must sign a form devised to meet University of the Pacific's human subject requirements. All information will be held confidential, your participation is voluntary, and you may stop at any time if you feel uncomfortable, and I do not intend to inflict any harm of any kind whatsoever. Thank you for your agreeing to participate.

I have a series of questions that I would like to ask you, and I have planned for this interview to last approximately ninety (90) minutes, and the questions are organized in four areas:

1. Organizational structure and institutional quality assurance practice (quality assurance practice will subsequently be referred to as QA)
2. Barriers to implementation of effective QA
3. Changes and/or improvements to teaching and learning
4. Orientation of disciplinary culture to learning as a result of QA

Participant Background

What is your artistic training and your teaching discipline?

How long have you been at this institution?

How long have you been in your present position?

What degree(s) have you earned?

Briefly describe your role at this institution and your responsibilities.

How are you involved in teaching, learning, and quality assurance?

**Quality assurance, in the context of this research project, refers to learning outcomes assessment and reviews of program effectiveness and quality*

1. Organizational structure and institutional quality assurance practice (QA)

How does quality assurance work? How would you describe what it is - it's aims and goals - in your discipline and at your institution?

How is teaching and learning understood and improved in your discipline - how do the faculty talk about teaching and learning?

In what ways do you focus on improving teaching and learning?

What is the relationship of your discipline and the institution in terms of quality assurance practice?

How is teaching and learning understood and improved across your institution?

2. Barriers to implementation of effective QA

Have you experienced, and if so, can you describe a time when you or your colleagues have encountered resistance to quality assurance practice in your **discipline**?

Have you or your colleagues encountered resistance to quality assurance practice in your **institution**?

What has been done, or what might you do to overcoming those barriers – how might they be mitigated? Do you have examples or experiences?

Can you tell me about a time when working on quality assurance worked – when there wasn't resistance, there weren't barriers?

3. Changes and/or improvements to teaching and learning

In what ways, if any, have quality assurance practices led to improved student performance, or learning, or accomplishment, in your **department**?

In what ways, if any, have the quality assurance practices at this institution led to improved student performance, or learning, or accomplishment, in your **institution**?

How about the same - improved performance, or learning, or accomplishment, for **teaching**?

What is your perspective – what would you say is being accomplished through QA practice in your department and at your institution?

4. Orientation of disciplinary culture to learning as a result of QA

In what ways, if any, have quality assurance practices improved the teaching and learning **culture** in your discipline?

In thinking about the relationships we've been discussing, which quality assurance practices seem to accurately reflect and explain the most about student learning?

Follow up: How do you know – what criteria or evidence indicates improvement?

Is there anything about QA that I haven't asked or anything more you want to share?