

# DIAGNOSING AND CHANGING ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE IN STRATEGIC ENROLLMENT MANAGEMENT

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It is self-evident (and well supported in the literature) that the culture of an organization is an important aspect of how successful an organization is at meeting its goals. What is less evident is what the elements of the culture of an organization are; how can they be quantified; and how can we adjust them in a manner that will impact its effectiveness. This article examines an organizational culture diagnosis initiative that utilized the Competing Values Framework model in a fast-growing strategic enrollment management (SEM) division. The division was accumulating new student success-related departments at a pace that the leadership felt might affect the culture of the organization. The purpose of the initiative was to quantify the staff perception of the current state of the divisional organizational culture; quantify the staff perception of the preferred future state of the organizational culture; and recommend the creation of a metrics-driven plan to actively move the culture to the preferred state. This work seems to be unique in the SEM arena because of the quantitative approach taken to discern the state of the culture.

## Organizational Culture Defined

It is easy to think of the culture of an organization in terms of a single global qualifier (such as “stodgy” or “fleet”) that seek to simplify and summarize the inputs, interactions, and outputs of all levels of an organization. In reality, the variety of purposes and operating characteristics of organizations means that its culture is richer and more complex than a simple one-dimensional label can represent, especially for

large organizations (Jung et al., 2009). Accordingly, the research shows that there is much nuance and difference among formal definitions of organizational culture (Jung et al., 2009; Shifflet, 2015).

Edgar Schein (2010) illustrates that complexity and richness with one widely accepted definition of organizational culture:

The culture of a group can now be defined as a pattern of shared basic assumptions learned by a

group as it solved its problems of external adaptation and internal integration, which has worked well enough to be considered valid and, therefore, to be taught to new members as the correct way to perceive, think and feel in relation to those problems. (p. 18)

Paraphrasing his definition, then, organizational culture is the “the way we prefer to do things around here.”

At a broad level, theories of organizational culture can be traced back to two major disciplinary foundations. The two foundations consider organizational culture to be “defined as an attribute possessed by organizations” or “defined as a metaphor for describing organizations” (Cameron & Quinn, 2011a, p. 168). The former foundation originates from the perspective of sociological theory, while the latter originates in an anthropological view.

## Organizational Culture Research in Higher Education

A commonly used framework for diagnosing organizational culture within higher education is the Competing Values Framework (CVF). The CVF identifies four major characteristics that comprise an organizational culture and allows an organizational culture to be categorized into all four culture types in varying degrees (Cameron & Quinn, 2011a).

A variety of departments and subunits within colleges and universities have employed a CVF model in studies designed to diagnose their organizational culture. The subunits employing a CVF model in their initiatives include a university extension unit, student-facing advising organizations, a multicampus community college, and online program management (Berrio, 2003; Dale, 2012; Kwan & Walker, 2004; Selden, 2014; Shiflett, 2015).

The criteria for choosing the CVF model for this initiative was its facility in diagnosing the current culture type in a form that would lend itself to the creation of a culture-change plan, its widely accepted reliability and validity (Belasen & Frank, 2008; Cameron & Quinn, 2011a; Shiflett, 2015; Smart, 2003), and its relative economy of implementation. The breadth of higher education support activities

performed by the subunits in each of these studies indicates a high level of confidence in the capabilities and generalizability of the model for use in the higher education realm generally and the strategic enrollment management arena specifically.

## Leadership, Effectiveness, and Organizational Culture in Strategic Enrollment Management

There is little literature available that directly *quantifies* the organizational culture of enrollment management units as it relates to the effectiveness of enrollment management models. There is, however, literature that links leadership efforts and management practices, organizational structure, and organizational effectiveness, some of which is directly related to enrollment management practices.

Researchers studying organizational effectiveness have demonstrated that the behavior of organization leaders will impact the effectiveness of organizations both positively and negatively. Choosing a deliberate rather than a default leadership perspective that is aligned with the culture or structure of an organization can alter the effectiveness of an organization (Belasen & Frank, 2008; Cormier, 2008; Giberson et al., 2009; Smart, 2003; Smart & St. John, 1996).

With his definition of *distributed leadership*, Schultheis (2014) sees leadership to be a method that “... empowers the units to work collaboratively and deliberately toward achieving SEM service goals as defined in the division’s mission statement (Schultheis, 2014, Distributed Leadership section, para. 1). He further expands on the idea that leadership has impact on effectiveness, where he states, “It also requires that each unit acknowledges the inherent expertise that lies in the other SEM units” (Schultheis, 2014, Distributed Leadership section, para. 3). Schultheis views leadership behaviors as an effective method of increasing the collaboration between organizational units that share a common goal and increasing the effectiveness of organizational goal attainment.

Bolman and Deal (2008) conceptualize an effective leader to possess the facility to view leadership tasks from four different perspectives or frames in order to find a best way forward. Effective leaders are able

to view complex organizational issues from structural (rules and efficiency orientation), human resources (people and family orientation), political (coalition and competition orientation), and symbolic (rituals and stories orientation) viewpoints in order to assess the likely outcomes of resolving the issues using actions from each perspective. Skilled leaders are then able to identify and act from the frame that best satisfies the need of the organization. While not directly reported from the enrollment management (EM) field, this work likely generalizes to EM organizations given the variety of services and supporting tasks performed by EM units. It seems unlikely that a single management perspective or frame applied in every unit will yield equally effective results. For example, certain compliance tasks performed in the financial aid function would seem to be best led from a structured perspective while other, more people-facing tasks (such as college fairs) performed in the admissions and recruitment function would seem to be best led from a symbolic perspective. In addition to the leadership perspective employed in EM functions and tasks, the EM organization structural choices made by leaders also influence the EM organizational effectiveness.

Kalsbeek (2006) supports the idea of a relationship between the structure of EM functions and their effectiveness, where he discusses the mental models of organizational structures and success metrics. Success and progress measures (effectiveness) "... are also reflected in the organizational structures we design and develop to achieve our goals and purposes" (p. 5). He identifies four orientations to EM (administrative, student focused, academic, and market centered) and notes that each have strengths and shortcomings. When considered as deliberate structural alternatives, each option will enhance or detract from the effectiveness of the EM mission depending on the environment into which they are deployed (Kalsbeek, 2006). While leaders can influence the effectiveness of their organizations by how they structure them, effectiveness can also be influenced through the implementation of coherent mission-supporting principles.

The effectiveness of an SEM philosophy as implemented through the EM organization is measureable and can be evaluated for its efficacy. Bontrager (2008) defines such a philosophy to be the key paradigm that

ensures the "... alignment of institutional mission, enrollment goals, targeted investments, and budget outcomes [that] enables planning that is more strategic, in turn leading to improved outcomes for the institution as a whole, as well as individual departments" (p. iii). It seems logical to presume that this philosophy originates with, or is at least adopted by, the leadership of the EM organization and is further illustration of the impact that leaders have on the effectiveness of the EM organization. In addition, such a philosophy is closely related to another influencer of effectiveness: organizational culture. According to Hossler, Kalsbeek, and Bontrager (2015), the effectiveness of a SEM organization is highly related to the culture, or the way things get done within both the SEM organization and the university culture in which the organization exists: "... it is a function of the skills of the individual, and his or her management team, plus the culture of the organization, that determine the success of SEM efforts on any campus" (p. 44). Their SEM-specific conclusion aligns with the more general conclusions reported in the literature that the culture of an organization is a direct result of the way leaders structure and lead an organization and that organizational effectiveness is the result of the interplay among leadership, culture, and organizational structure.

Each of the authors described above ascribe the effectiveness of an organization either directly or indirectly to leadership. Schultheis (2014) sees effective leadership to be a distributed behavior that exists in an environment that allows subject-specific expertise to come forward and drive solutions as needed. In the case of Bolman and Deal's (2008) four conceptual frames, the leadership effect described is focused on the perspective a leader uses to fashion a response to organizational tasks and issues. They identify the effectiveness of the outcomes to be dependent on the ability of a leader to be facile in selecting the leadership perspective or frame that *best* satisfies situational issues rather than relying on a single frame through which all situations are addressed. Kalsbeek (2006) identifies the four commonly used EM organizational orientations implemented by leaders and the environments in which they are deployed to be a key determinant of EM organizational effectiveness. These three ideas are closely related in that all identify leadership responses

to organizational tasks and challenges as key determinants of effectiveness.

Bontrager (2008) begins to make the link between *culture* and leadership, where he identifies organizational philosophy to be a key contributor to effectiveness. Hossler et al. (2015) are more direct in their leadership–culture linkage, where they point specifically to organizational culture as another effectiveness influencer. When considering the totality of organizational effectiveness, these authors identify that there is clear interaction among the leadership, culture, and the effectiveness of SEM organizations and that leadership behavior can likely significantly influence the other two. This evidence then begs the question, how can the elements of culture be diagnosed, quantified, and modified in a way that identifies the effectiveness-increasing leadership behaviors of an SEM organization?

### The Competing Values Framework Model

The CVF model of organizational culture provides a method of explicitly integrating and quantifying the linkage between the effects of leadership, culture, and effectiveness. Based on the insights presented above, the applicability of the model will generalize to SEM organizations.

The CVF is a quantitative model used extensively to diagnose organizational culture both inside and outside higher education (Belasen & Frank, 2008; Jung et al., 2009; Smart, 2003; Smart & St. John, 1996). Hartnell, Ou, and Kinicki (2011) report that the CVF has been used as an assessment model in over 10,000 organizations and the reliability and validity of instruments based on the CVF are “empirically supported” (p. 678). In a survey of instruments used to assess organizational culture, Jung et al. found at least six (nearly 10%) of the surveys had some variant of the term *competing values* in them (2009, p. 1089). This coverage demonstrates the widespread applicability of this model of assessing organizational culture. The CVF model of organizational culture as promulgated by Cameron and Quinn (2011a) can be traced back to sociological thinking, where culture is an attribute of an organization.

The CVF model of characterizing culture views the characterizations to be visible manifestations of group behavior. Behaviors are mapped across a

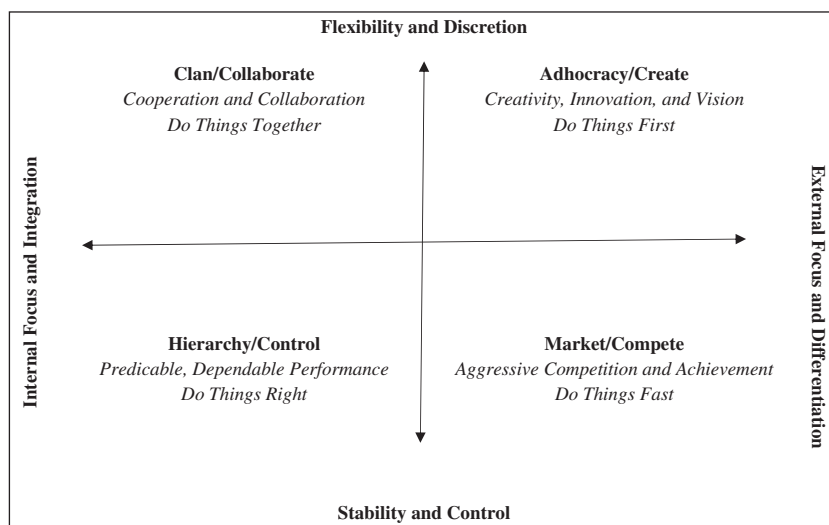
two-dimensional continuum and four culture-type quadrants. The quadrants identify the degree to which the culture falls into each of four culture types. The characteristics of the four culture types are a family-like quality (“clan/collaborate”), a creative quality (“adhocracy/create”), a competitive quality (“market/compete”), and a control quality (“hierarchy/control”) (Cameron & Quinn, 2011a, pp. 41–49, 2011b; Kwan & Walker, 2004). The vertical axis denotes a continuum of stability to flexibility of the culture types and the horizontal axis indicates degrees of internal versus external focus of the culture types. The culture of an organization exists to varying degrees in each of the four quadrants. Figure 1 shows the dimensions and quadrants as conceptualized by Cameron and Quinn (2011b).

### About This Study

This study quantified the current and desired future organizational culture of the Division of Strategic Enrollment Management (DSEM) at Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU) using the CVF model. SEM responsibilities include recruiting, enrolling, retaining, and graduating diverse, persistent, and qualified graduate and undergraduate students on behalf of VCU. DSEM has rapidly grown from 5 departments composed of approximately 80 staff to 10 departments composed of over 160 staff in just over three years. As with all organizations that have experienced rapid growth in a dynamic environment, DSEM is working to integrate its parts into an effective team with a sense of shared mission, values, and ways of accomplishing tasks and goals that will be effective at fulfilling its student success role in the university.

The DSEM organizational culture was assessed using the Organizational Culture Assessment Instrument (OCAI) developed by Cameron and Quinn (2011b). The OCAI is a survey instrument that asks respondents to allocate a set number of points to a series of statements based on their perception of the degree of similarity to the *current* organizational culture and a *preferred* future culture each statement represents. The statements reflect dimensions of organizational culture identified by the CVF (Cameron & Quinn, 2011a). The OCAI was used with the permission of the author, and the use of the survey was approved by the VCU Institutional Review Board.

**Figure 1.** Competing Values Model of organizational culture as conceptualized by Cameron and Quinn (2011b, p. 2).



Utilizing the results of the OCAI, the study addresses three questions. First, do members of the organization perceive a difference between the current and preferred future organizational culture of the division? Second, are there differences between the assessments of the current culture by department? Finally, are there differences between the assessments of the preferred future divisional culture by department?

The answers to the questions posed in this study will be used as part of an effort to identify a preferred future organizational culture for the division. Quantifying the preferred future divisional culture, the current divisional culture, and the differences between the culture perceptions at the department level will suggest areas of decreased, increased, and steady-state managerial activities that can be targeted at specific organizational behaviors. Adjusting the emphases of these managerial activities accordingly could assist in creating the preferred organizational culture. Given the linkage identified in the literature between leadership behaviors and organizational culture, these adjustments should serve to support the desired culture shift.

## Method

### METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH

The approach selected for this study was to employ a survey instrument with a history of reliability for assessing organizational culture. Analysis of the data collected from the OCAI identified the degree of

agreement respondents had with statements about the current organizational culture of their organization and captured their desired future organizational culture based on the same statements. Respondent results were mapped to the two-dimensional CVF model of organizational culture.

Application was made to the VCU Institutional Review Board for approval of this study (HM20006042) as it involved human subjects. Approval was granted on December 29, 2015.

### PARTICIPANTS

VCU is a university enrolling nearly 32,000 students located in the mid-Atlantic region of the U.S. The participants in the study were staff members in the Division of Strategic Enrollment Management (DSEM) at the university. At the time this survey was administered, DSEM was composed of 10 departments with a full-time staff of 164. Because the incremental cost of reaching all staff members in DSEM versus a sample was minimal, the entire population ( $N = 164$ ) was given the opportunity to complete the survey. Participants were invited to complete the survey via e-mail invitation and follow up e-mail reminders.

### RESPONSE RATE

Of the 164 surveys sent to DSEM staff, 50 were returned for an overall response rate of 30.5%. The suggested response rate for a population this size is 113,

for a 95% confidence level (Krejcie & Morgan, 1970). For purposes of this study, the responses were treated as a sample of the population.

Since the response rate was less than the suggested response rate, a response wave analysis was performed to determine if a significant difference in results between early and later responders could be detected.

The responses were divided by the three dates of the reminder e-mails that were sent (October 12, 15, and 21, 2015) and a one-way ANOVA was used to compare the four current and four preferred culture types across the three response waves. No significant

difference between four current and four future culture types based on the response wave of responders was found among the groups. As a result of this analysis, it appears that the date of the response had no effect on the overall results of the study. Tables 1 and 2 display the results of the response wave ANOVA for each culture type.

## Survey Development and Administration

### SURVEY DEVELOPMENT

The OCAI was used with the permission of the original authors, Drs. Kim Cameron and Robert Quinn. There

**Table 1. Analysis of Variance Between Response Wave Participation and Current Culture Type**

| Preferred Future Culture Type |                | Sum of Squares | df | Mean Square | F     | Sig. |
|-------------------------------|----------------|----------------|----|-------------|-------|------|
| Collaborate Now               | Between Groups | 30.651         | 2  | 15.326      | .067  | .935 |
|                               | Within Groups  | 10,687.887     | 47 | 227.402     |       |      |
|                               | Total          | 10,718.538     | 49 |             |       |      |
| Create Now                    | Between Groups | 345.762        | 2  | 172.881     | 1.575 | .218 |
|                               | Within Groups  | 5,159.571      | 47 | 109.778     |       |      |
|                               | Total          | 5,505.333      | 49 |             |       |      |
| Compete Now                   | Between Groups | 199.784        | 2  | 99.892      | .441  | .646 |
|                               | Within Groups  | 10,655.882     | 47 | 226.721     |       |      |
|                               | Total          | 10,855.667     | 49 |             |       |      |
| Control Now                   | Between Groups | 100.801        | 2  | 50.401      | .331  | .720 |
|                               | Within Groups  | 7,155.248      | 47 | 152.239     |       |      |
|                               | Total          | 7,256.049      | 49 |             |       |      |

**Table 2. Analysis of Variance Between Response Wave Participation and Preferred Future Culture Type**

| Preferred Future Culture Type |                | Sum of Squares | df | Mean Square | F     | Sig. |
|-------------------------------|----------------|----------------|----|-------------|-------|------|
| Collaborate Future            | Between Groups | 86.185         | 2  | 43.093      | .352  | .705 |
|                               | Within Groups  | 5,752.871      | 47 | 122.402     |       |      |
|                               | Total          | 5,839.056      | 49 |             |       |      |
| Create Future                 | Between Groups | 131.081        | 2  | 65.540      | 1.572 | .218 |
|                               | Within Groups  | 1,959.666      | 47 | 41.695      |       |      |
|                               | Total          | 2,090.747      | 49 |             |       |      |
| Compete Future                | Between Groups | 2.596          | 2  | 1.298       | .026  | .975 |
|                               | Within Groups  | 2,361.349      | 47 | 50.241      |       |      |
|                               | Total          | 2,363.944      | 49 |             |       |      |
| Control Future                | Between Groups | 55.966         | 2  | 27.983      | .581  | .564 |
|                               | Within Groups  | 2,265.539      | 47 | 48.203      |       |      |
|                               | Total          | 2,321.505      | 49 |             |       |      |

were no changes made to the original instrument for this study other than localizing the instructions to the population of interest.

A pretest of the questionnaire was conducted on a group of 11 individuals that provided feedback on instructions and visual elements of the survey. Adjustments were made to the instructions and formatting. Following that pretest, a follow-up distribution was conducted with an additional five individuals. Based on the results of the second follow up, the instrument was deemed ready for official distribution.

### FINAL QUESTIONNAIRE

The OCAI asks respondents to rate the current and preferred organizational culture by allocating 100 points per culture to four statements in six groups. Respondents indicate the similarity of each statement to the current culture and the degree of desirability of the future culture with their allocation of the 100 points.

### SURVEY ADMINISTRATION

The OCAI used for this study was administered online. The survey was available from October 13, 2015, until October 23, 2015. The survey population was contacted three times via e-mail, and each e-mail included a link to the online OCAI. The initial e-mail was sent on October 13. Follow-up e-mails were sent to individuals that had not completed the survey on October 15 and 21.

### Analysis of Data

The research questions, variables relevant to the question, and the statistic employed in the analysis of the variables for this study are summarized in Table 3. Each of the

statements in the OCAI were grouped into one of the four culture types for the current and future desired cultures based on the scoring key from the OCAI. The points that respondents assigned to each statement were accumulated into the same culture types.

For purposes of this analysis, the 10 departments in DSEM were aggregated into six departments: Advising, Financial Aid, Office of Strategic Enrollment Management, Office of Admissions, Records and Registration, and Student Accounting. Four departments are housed within two of these areas and are organizationally separate only administratively for human resources tracking purposes.

### Findings

The analysis of the OCAI administration results for each of the three research questions follows.

*Question 1:* Is there a difference between how respondents rate the current culture and how respondents rate the desired future culture?

The mean of each culture type group score at the division level was calculated. A paired samples *t*-test was performed that compared the mean scores of the current culture types (CollaborateCurrent, CreateCurrent, CompeteCurrent, ControlCurrent) and the preferred future culture types (CollaborateFuture, CreateFuture, CompeteFuture, ControlFuture).

The means for the culture comparisons and their standard deviations can be found in Table 4A, and the paired samples test results can be found in Table 4B. Each current and future pairing showed significant difference at the .05 level.

**Table 3. Research Questions, Variables, and Associated Analysis Statistics**

| Research Question                                                                                                              | Variables                                                                                                                          | Statistic                     |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1. Is there a difference between how respondents rate the current culture and how respondents rate the desired future culture? | <b>Dependent variable:</b> The four culture scores.<br><b>Independent variable:</b> The two cultures (current and desired future). | Paired sample <i>t</i> -tests |
| 2. Is there a difference between the assessments of the current division-level culture by department?                          | <b>Dependent variable:</b> The four current culture scores (at a department level).<br><b>Independent variable:</b> Department.    | ANOVA                         |
| 3. Is there a difference between the assessments of the future Division level culture by department?                           | <b>Dependent variables:</b> The four future culture scores (at a department level).<br><b>Independent variable:</b> Department     | ANOVA                         |

**Table 4A. Paired Samples Statistics for Current and Future Culture Types**

| Culture Pairings |                    | Mean    | N  | Std. Deviation | Std. Error Mean |
|------------------|--------------------|---------|----|----------------|-----------------|
| Pair 1           | Collaborate Now    | 22.9700 | 50 | 14.79005       | 2.09163         |
|                  | Collaborate Future | 31.3567 | 50 | 10.91625       | 1.54379         |
| Pair 2           | Create Now         | 20.3000 | 50 | 10.59970       | 1.49902         |
|                  | Create Future      | 23.7800 | 50 | 6.53210        | .92378          |
| Pair 3           | Compete Now        | 28.3333 | 50 | 14.88436       | 2.10497         |
|                  | Compete Future     | 20.6000 | 50 | 6.94577        | .98228          |
| Pair 4           | Control Now        | 28.3967 | 50 | 12.16892       | 1.72095         |
|                  | Control Future     | 24.2633 | 50 | 6.88314        | .97342          |

**Table 4B. Paired Samples t-Test Showing Significant Difference between Current and Future Culture Types**

|        |                                    | Paired Differences |          |              | 95 % Confidence Interval of the Difference |          | T      | Df | Sig. (two-tailed) |
|--------|------------------------------------|--------------------|----------|--------------|--------------------------------------------|----------|--------|----|-------------------|
|        |                                    | Mean               | Std. Dev | Std.Err Mean | Lower                                      | Upper    |        |    |                   |
| Pair 1 | Collaborate Now–Collaborate Future | –8.38667           | 10.32985 | 1.46086      | –11.32238                                  | –5.45096 | –5.741 | 49 | .000              |
| Pair 2 | Create Now–Create Future           | –3.48000           | 10.30986 | 1.45803      | –6.41003                                   | –.54997  | –2.387 | 49 | .021              |
| Pair 3 | Compete Now–Compete Future         | 7.73333            | 14.17249 | 2.00429      | 3.70556                                    | 11.76111 | 3.858  | 49 | .000              |
| Pair 4 | Control Now–Control Future         | 4.13333            | 12.12473 | 1.71470      | .68752                                     | 7.57914  | 2.411  | 49 | .020              |

*Question 2:* Is there a difference between the assessments of the current division-level culture by department?

The current culture as identified by respondents was compared across the six different departments in the study: Advising, Financial Aid, Office of Strategic Enrollment Management, Office of Admissions, Records and Registration, and Student Accounting. There was no significant difference found among the groups in their assessment of the current Division culture. The results of the one-way ANOVA can be found in Table 5.

*Question 3:* Is there a difference between the assessments of the future preferred division-level culture by department?

The future preferred culture as identified by respondents was compared across the six different departments in the study: Advising; Financial Aid; Office

of Strategic Enrollment Management; Office of Admissions, Records and Registration; and Student Accounting. There was no significant difference was found among the groups in their assessment of the preferred future division culture. The results of the one-way ANOVA can be found in Table 6.

#### VISUALLY REPRESENTING CULTURE

Use of the OCAI facilitates the development of a graphical representation of the four culture types and the strength of the culture type relative to the other culture types. In addition, the graphical representation locates the organizational culture along the two continuum (horizontal and vertical) described above. Table 7 shows the means of all respondent's current and preferred culture type responses; differences in the preferred and current culture scores; percentage change; and direction of the change (reporting the division-level culture types). Those means and the con-

**Table 5. One-Way ANOVA Showing No Significant Difference Among Any Department Perceptions of the Current Division Culture**

| Source of Variation |                | Sum of Squares | df | Mean Square | F     | Sig. |
|---------------------|----------------|----------------|----|-------------|-------|------|
| Collaborate Now     | Between Groups | 1,712.704      | 5  | 342.541     | 1.674 | .161 |
|                     | Within Groups  | 9005.834       | 44 | 204.678     |       |      |
|                     | Total          | 10,718.538     | 49 |             |       |      |
| Create Now          | Between Groups | 594.006        | 5  | 118.801     | 1.064 | .393 |
|                     | Within Groups  | 4,911.327      | 44 | 111.621     |       |      |
|                     | Total          | 5,505.333      | 49 |             |       |      |
| Compete Now         | Between Groups | 1,133.206      | 5  | 226.641     | 1.026 | .414 |
|                     | Within Groups  | 9,722.460      | 44 | 220.965     |       |      |
|                     | Total          | 10,855.667     | 49 |             |       |      |
| Control Now         | Between Groups | 322.004        | 5  | 64.401      | .409  | .840 |
|                     | Within Groups  | 6,934.046      | 44 | 157.592     |       |      |
|                     | Total          | 7,256.049      | 49 |             |       |      |

**Table 6. One-Way ANOVA Showing no Significant Difference Among Any Department Perceptions of the Preferred Future Division Culture**

| Source of Variation |                | Sum of Squares | df | Mean Square | F     | Sig. |
|---------------------|----------------|----------------|----|-------------|-------|------|
| Collaborate Future  | Between Groups | 796.007        | 5  | 159.201     | 1.389 | .247 |
|                     | Within Groups  | 5,043.049      | 44 | 114.615     |       |      |
|                     | Total          | 5,839.056      | 49 |             |       |      |
| Create Future       | Between Groups | 257.985        | 5  | 51.597      | 1.239 | .307 |
|                     | Within Groups  | 1,832.762      | 44 | 41.654      |       |      |
|                     | Total          | 2,090.747      | 49 |             |       |      |
| Compete Future      | Between Groups | 157.434        | 5  | 31.487      | .628  | .679 |
|                     | Within Groups  | 2,206.510      | 44 | 50.148      |       |      |
|                     | Total          | 2,363.944      | 49 |             |       |      |
| Control Future      | Between Groups | 256.191        | 5  | 51.238      | 1.092 | .378 |
|                     | Within Groups  | 2,065.314      | 44 | 46.939      |       |      |
|                     | Total          | 2,321.505      | 49 |             |       |      |

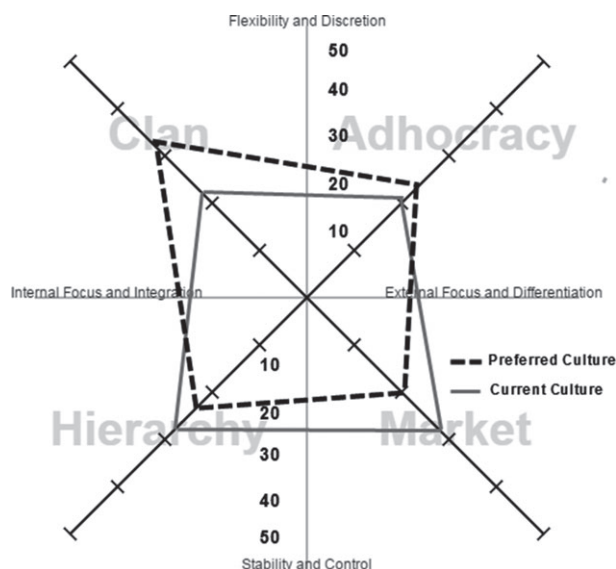
**Table 7. Culture Mean Scores and Percentage and Direction of Change Between Current and Preferred Culture Types**

| Culture Type        | Current Score | Preferred Score | Score Change | Change Direction | % Change |
|---------------------|---------------|-----------------|--------------|------------------|----------|
| Collaborate (Clan)  | 22.97         | 31.36           | 8.39         | Increase         | 26.8%    |
| Create (Adhocracy)  | 20.30         | 23.78           | 3.48         | Increase         | 14.6%    |
| Compete (Market)    | 28.33         | 20.60           | -7.73        | Decrease         | 27.2%    |
| Control (Hierarchy) | 28.30         | 24.26           | -4.04        | Decrease         | 14.3%    |

tinuum locations represent the data that supports the first research question in Table 3 and are mapped and presented as a graphical representation of the culture states (current culture is a solid line; preferred future

culture is a dashed line) in Figure 2. As there was no significant statistical difference at the department level between the perception of current and preferred future cultures, a diagram depicting the differences

**Figure 2.** Current and preferred future culture types for DSEM. Internal/integration and external/differentiation continuum are shown on horizontal axis while stability/control and flexibility/discretion continuum are shown on vertical axis. Organizational continuum locations are identified where the lines intersect the axis.



*Adapted from Cameron and Quinn (2011a).*

(research questions 2 and 3) was not constructed. This method of graphically displaying the differences at a department level could be utilized if desired.

## Discussion

This study investigated three questions related to how individuals view the current and preferred future culture of a large university unit, DSEM. The study tested three specific ideas that revolved around organizational culture. The study did not find any support for the second two propositions that the department in which an employee worked influenced the employee's perspective on the current or preferred future culture of DSEM. The results do show support for the first proposition that there was a preferred future culture that is different from the current culture as perceived by the staff in DSEM.

### DIFFERENCES BY DEPARTMENT NOT SUPPORTED

The CVF model maps organizational culture across a two-dimensional continuum with stability and

control contrasted with flexibility and discretion on one dimension and internal and integration focus contrasted with external and differentiation focus on the second. Further, each of the quadrants in the two-dimensional model identify the degree to which the culture falls into each of four culture types. Those four cultural types are group-centric collaborative culture ("clan"), a development or creative centric culture ("adhocracy"), control-centric culture ("hierarchy"), and rational market culture ("compete") (Cameron & Quinn, 2011a, p. 98).

The second two research questions originated in the idea that subunits *within* DSEM operate under organizational rules and cultures so much stronger and so different from the DSEM-level culture that they would influence the responses in ways that varied by department. That was not the case in this study. It is possible that a larger response rate could change this outcome to reflect that there are in fact significant differences. That idea should be considered in future research of this nature.

### CURRENT AND PREFERRED FUTURE CULTURE DIFFERENCES

The first research question asked if there was a difference between the current DSEM culture and the preferred future DSEM culture as perceived by the staff. Difference was noted. The result of this line of inquiry is strengthened by notion that there were no significant differences by department in the perceptions of both the current and the preferred future cultures. The department perceptions were statistically consistent with each other. This implies evidence of strong agreement between and among department-level staff and their perceptions about the culture states in the study and should lend weight to the desire for division-level culture change efforts.

Figure 2 graphically identifies the culture areas to be considered for change efforts based on the CVF model. From that we can interpret that the DSEM staff collectively expressed a preferred future culture that increased the elements of the clan and adhocracy culture while diminishing the hierarchy and market cultures. The most significant increase was in the clan culture and the most significant decrease was in the market culture.

There was a slight increase toward the internal focus and integration end of the horizontal continuum while there was a decrease in the stability and control end of the vertical continuum. In addition, the results showed a desired increase in the flexibility and discretion dimension of that continuum.

Staff appear to be suggesting that the new DSEM culture make time for integration and an increased emphasis on the more group centric “clan” organizational culture. This interpretation would seem to be congruent with the relative youth and high velocity growth of DSEM over the past three years. If efforts were undertaken based on this interpretation, it would be valuable to repeat this exercise again at some point in the future to see if progress had been made or if circumstances, when viewed through an organizational culture lens, suggest a different set of changes.

#### ONE WAY FORWARD

In this section, one possible approach to shifting from the current to the preferred organizational culture is described.

Following the culture change plan generally outlined by Cameron and Quinn (2011a), the intent of the next steps of a culture change initiative should be to deliberately calibrate initiatives with the promotion of a specific culture configuration with the goal of increasing DSEM’s effectiveness. Included in these next steps should be an effort by the DSEM Leadership Team to finalize the preferred organizational culture using the CVF model. The leadership team should also identify management and leadership behaviors to maintain, increase, and decrease that support the preferred organizational culture. It is likely that the DSEM leadership possess managerial and leadership capabilities in degrees that are different than those that would be called for in order to support the preferred culture. The leadership staff should be provided opportunities to assess their managerial skills in relation to the CVF and identify areas of strength and areas that can be improved. They should be provided with appropriate leadership and managerial development resources that address the results in their assessments and their search for new management behaviors and initiatives that extend the preferred culture.

Identification, planning, and implementation of DSEM initiatives should be influenced and informed by the newly identified preferred culture and the associated managerial tactics and competencies that align with the preferred culture. Deliberate review of initiatives, plans, and decisions on managerial approaches in support of the preferred culture should be documented along with the successes. At an appropriate time in the future, DSEM staff should be resurveyed using the OCAI to determine if a cultural shift to a preferred culture has actually occurred as well as to determine if there is a new desired cultural configuration that should be considered since the last assessment.

#### AREAS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

An alternative explanation for the nonsupport of these department-level differences investigated by the second and third research questions might be that the DSEM organization has done a superior job of inculcating a higher order culture that transcends any “interference” from culture at a subunit level. If so, the practices resulting in such transcendence would be of interest to many large organizations that struggle with the alignment of culture to support corporate-level ideals. If true, it would be worthwhile to understand if this effect could be reproduced in other organizations through deliberate efforts as well as understanding which deliberate efforts (managerial practices, education, training, etc.) are most effective. This should be an area of interest for future research.

In addition, an area within the context of subunit culture comparisons that was not explored was the identification of relationships between the individual departmental culture and the division level culture. The degree of alignment between the department current and preferred cultures with the current and preferred division-level cultures would be of interest when attempting to identify activities that might support common higher order culture building. It might also help identify departments or subunits that would require differential effort to align to the SEM global culture.

Another unexplored dimension of the current study is the relationship between the position and experiences of the staff member and the organizational culture’s perception. It would be useful to know for example if

there are significant differences between the way managers and supervisors view the current and preferred future culture states compared to the line staffs view the culture. Further, it might be instructive to determine if position complexity is related to organizational culture perceptions. Finally, the tenure and types of SEM experiences possessed by the staff member as it relates to culture perceptions could yield additional valuable insights.

## Conclusion

As organizational culture evolves, so too should the methods used to assess, enhance, and align it with organizational goals. This task can be made more manageable and the results made more accurate and useful using tools and techniques such as those used in this current study. These results in particular have shown value by providing alternatives for future research as well as recommendations for a specific leadership-driven culture change initiative that could serve the SEM field and the DSEM at VCU well.

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