IT'S COMPLICATED: EXPLORING THE CO-CREATION OF LAND-GRANT
BRAND IDENTITY AMONGST FACULTY MEMBERS AT OKLAHOMA STATE
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Abstract:
        Land-grant institutions (LGIs) are tasked with providing accessible education to the common man and improving their quality of life. This study examined faculty members' awareness, perceptions, and interpretations of the land-grant mission at Oklahoma State University (OSU). Branding is the theoretical framework for this study. Faculty members are the primary deliverers university missions. Universities' effectiveness are often called into question by the public and funds continue to be reduced. Past studies have indicated some personnel are unaware of pieces of the land-grant mission. A strong brand presence increases the likelihood of a positive public image. Participants were recruited using a purposive sampling method. Eleven focus groups were conducted in the summer of 2020. The audio was transcribed and imported into MAXQDA20. The data were analyzed using Glaser's constant comparative method to identify themes, which were confirmed by assistant moderators. The data were triangulated using artifacts from OSU's website, faculty orientation materials, and a post-focus group questionnaire. All participants had heard about the land-grant mission, but not all had a grasp of what it meant. Participants were unsure if the public or students understood the land-grant mission. Participants had multiple definitions of the land-grant mission. Although the land-grant mission did not specifically influence which behaviors faculty members engaged in, it did seem to affect how faculty members worked. There was a general state of concern for the future. Participants did not mention Extension when asked about OSU. As university brands should be consistent with its missions, one could argue the internal branding of OSU could be improved. Results indicate a need to improve the internal understanding of the land-grant mission at OSU. Given the less than prolific understanding of the land-grant mission amongst faculty members, internal communication of the land-grant mission should improve. I suggest hosting an annual summit where faculty members could discuss their efforts related to the land-grant mission, network with colleagues from other colleges, and learn more about the land-grant mission in action. Future research should explore the internal brand of other LGIs. University staff, administration, and student perceptions of the land-grant mission should be explored.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

History of Higher Education and the Public's Perception

Universities evolved throughout time. The organizational form of universities was established in medieval times and originally focused on the development of theologians (Peters, 2019). By the middle ages, universities also trained men of elite classes in law and medicine. Humanistic studies at universities increased in the 14th and 15th centuries (Rudy, 1984). Science was not a fixture of universities until the 19th century (Ashby, 1974). The higher education system in the United States was not established until the 17th century, only offered undergraduate education, and followed the structure of British renaissance universities (Newman, 1976). During that time academics valued knowledge purely for knowledge sake (Newman, 1976).

In the 19th century graduate education and scientific research were added to the American university creating the modern research university. This addition was modeled after German higher education reform (Brubacher & Rudy, 1968). Moreover, in the 19th century the demand for trained professionals was increasing, but the private colleges in the U.S. at the time were focused on literary education for the elite classes.

Most of the colleges during this time were religious. "These institutions were unwilling to sully their hands addressing society's common but real needs. This was not their role" (Bonnen, 1998, para. 17). However, society could no longer stand for knowledge purely for its intellectual value. The U.S. was in need of practical and applied knowledge (Bonnen, 1998).

A New Kind of Higher Education

Land-grant institutions (LGIs) were created in part to respond to these needs. Upon President Abraham Lincoln signing the Morrill Act of 1862 the most unique movement of public higher education began (Nevins, 1962). These institutions were meant to train and educate professionals to thrive in an industrialized society, provide higher education to a wide variety of students, regardless of wealth or prestige, and enhance the well-being of the common man, farmers and industrial workers. This process is known as the democratization of education (Bonnen, 1998). Although these institutions were intended to create a more educated workforce, the studies offered at these colleges were not meant to exclude the classical studies (Morrill Act of 1862, 1862).

The establishment of LGIs and research universities set in motion the standard for public higher education in the U.S. and shaped the beliefs of society regarding the role of a university. "Open access and low tuition were long a general feature of the land-grant . . . and have provided opportunity for upward mobility in society irrespective of background and wealth" (Bonnen, 1998, para. 23). An LGI is as much a place of education as it is a place of social reform. Many scholars have designated LGIs as the

University of the People (Sternberg, 2014). LGIs play an essential role in developing democratic citizens and society (Garris, 2018).

Eventually the land-grant colleges and research universities would merge to create land-grant universities, "creating constructive tension between knowledge creation and its use in society and between the intellectually elitist values of scholarly life and the egalitarian values of a democratic society" (Bonnen, 1998, para. 32). The land-grant ideal applies the highest level of scholarship to everyday societal problems. Moreover, it involves intellectual elitism and equal access to that knowledge. This dichotomy creates tension that must be acknowledged and managed (Bonnen, 1998). The history and legislative acts associated with establishment of LGIs are detailed later in this chapter.

Changing Times, Changing Education.

Universities have attempted to be responsive to changes in society. Since World War II, higher education has grown at an exponential rate. During World War II, universities and the federal government joined together in the war effort. University scholars participated in the war effort by creating the atomic bomb and deciphering codes. After the war, the National Science Foundation was founded, and other efforts were put in place to continue the funding of basic science post-war (Bonnen, 1998).

> Thus, society's covenant with the university and with science was born in the crucible of war and continued in an act of faith by society that in peace science would contribute to the greater economic strength and welfare of the nation (Bonnen, 1998, para. 57).

In the 1970s national budget deficits and increased costs of running large universities began to create strain in the higher education system. This strain resulted in more specialized research, rising student tuition costs, and thereby isolation from society (Bonnen, 1998). Research specialization has created fragmentation amongst science and researchers. This fragmentation has become so intense that rather than focusing on the original location based research mission or the teaching and outreach associated with LGIs, tenure criteria now focuses more on national and international level research (Bonnen, 1998). During this time, pursuing external funding became and has remained very important for universities of all kinds. Despite the reduction in federal and state funding, universities were still expected to lead the way in solving state-level dilemmas and creation of economic prosperity (Bonnen, 1998).

In the last century, the role of higher education has experienced a shift known as the corporatization or commercialization of universities (Jarvis, 2001). First, students started to be seen as customers, and the knowledge they gained at universities began to be measured by its monetary returns. This metamorphosis from students to customers can be traced back to the 1990s (Barham et al., 2002). Second, researchers at universities began collaborating with industry partners to create patented products and conduct research at a higher rate than ever before (Barnett, 2019). Moreover, there have been reports of connections between industry and university resulting in biased research (O'Connor, October 31, 2016).

All of these factors have caused public sentiments regarding the altruism of higher education to shift. Since at least the '80s (Bonnen, 1998), "the old consensus around higher education as public good has withered away" (Loss, 2012, para. 7). The public has

called into question the value and practicality of higher education (Campbell, 1995). Thanks to advances in technology, universities are no longer the holders and keepers of information and knowledge.

Not all hope is lost. The possibilities for growth of universities and their impacts are substantial (Barnett, 2019). Researchers postulate the "university is not in ruins but is falling short of its possibilities" (Barnett, 2019, p. 3). To remain relevant and viable, universities have shifted to a corporate mindset and use advertising, marketing, and branding to promote themselves (Osman, 2008). These efforts accentuate the unique factors and strengths of individual universities, strengths, and niches it may fill (Bonnen, 1998). Public institutions have 5 million new students enroll annually (Association of Public and Land-Grant Universities, 2019). As of 2017, the number of undergraduate students enrolled in degree-granting post-secondary institutions was 16.4 million. More than 12 million students were enrolled at public institutions (National Center for Education Statistics, 2019).

In the face of universities' corporatization and reduction of funds, institutions of higher learning still have a duty to develop responsible citizens of the democracy (Flanagan et al., 2013). The cultivation of socially responsible and serviced-oriented students is even more important at LGIs than at others (Flanagan et al., 2013). Faculty at LGIs are very important deliverers of the land-grant mission (Gavazzi & Gee, 2018).

Land Grant Institutions

The Morrill Act of 1862 was the first piece of legislation related to LGIs, but they were expanded beyond teaching. LGIs are made up of three pillars: teaching, research, and Extension. These three pillars were each created by the Morrill Act of 1862, the

Hatch Act of 1887, and the Smith-Lever Act of 1914, respectively. The establishment of these three branches of the LGI was visionary in their times but, the model of teaching, research, and outreach is one that is now widely used at all institutions of higher learning, whether private or public (Johnson, 1981). "The model of higher education proposed in these universities of and for the public was one that integrated toil and practice in everyday life with a liberal education" (Flanagan et al., 2013, p. 248).

Land-Grant Legislation

Morrill Act of 1862

In 1862, Abraham Lincoln signed the first Morrill Act into law. This act established the teaching arm of the land-grant university system (Herren & Edwards, 2002). Thirty-thousand acres for each state's Senator and Representative in U.S. Congress was granted to every state in the union (Campbell, 1995). This totaled 17.4 million acres, and more than $7.5 million (Nevins, 1962). The proceeds were then used to establish a college in each state for the purpose of teaching agriculture, military tactics, and mechanic arts, while also providing studies in the classics (National Association of State Universities and Land-Grant Colleges, 2008). In some cases, new institutions were built (e.g., Maine State College of Agriculture and the Mechanic Arts), existing institutions were modified (e.g., Bluemont College becoming Kansas State Agricultural College), or existing institutions were given the funds associated with land-grant status (e.g., Rutgers College).

The establishment of these institutions was partially in reaction to the industrial revolution and the separation of classes it created (Bonnen, 1996). These institutions were

meant to train the sons and daughters of the working class in practical and applied fields. The passing of this bill marked the beginning of accessible education for the common man. In fact, the LGI is touted as "higher education for the public good" (Gavazzi & Gee, 2018, p. 1). Creators of this legislation viewed it as an equalizer between the elite and working class, ensuring a fruitful future for all citizens (Bonnen, 1996). The Morrill Act of 1862 granted "higher education such an endowment as no other country could match" (Nevins, 1962). Moreover, this new paradigm of education set the precedent for universities with a "strong research orientation . . . with an emphasis on application and problem solving" (Johnson, 1981, p. 334).

Hatch Act of 1887

The passage of the Hatch Act created the research pillar of the LGI (Campbell, 1995). The Hatch Act established agricultural experiment stations in each U.S. state or territory, depending on the grantee's status. These experiment stations were founded to conduct agricultural research specific to each region's respective needs and interests (Kerr, 1987). The research conducted at the experiment stations was focused on agricultural practices targeted at improving farming within states and inform the teaching at the already established universities. LGIs were provided $15,000 per year to create experiment stations. The Hatch Act focused on creating and diffusing practical knowledge (Campbell, 1995).

The Hatch Act was expanded in 1906, 1925, and 1935. The 1906 Adams Act specifically endorsed basic research, rather than just applied (Marcus, 2015). In 1925 the Purnell Act expanded the scope of research to include sociological and economics research in addition to agriculture (Marcus, 2015). During the Great Depression, the

Bank-Head Jones Act of 1935 directed experiment stations to undertake research related to soil and water conservation, as well as the development of agricultural by-products, greatly broadening the scope of the original Hatch act (Marcus, 2015).

Smith-Lever Act of 1914

The third pillar, the Cooperative Extension Service (CES), was established by the Smith-Lever Act in 1914. This pillar was established to distribute the practical knowledge gained through the other pillars of LGIs to all citizens in a given state (Campbell, 1995). David F. Houston, Secretary of Agriculture in 1914, lauded the Smith-Lever act as one of the most innovative pieces of educational legislation to ever be implemented by a government (Campbell, 1995). The Smith-Lever Act was part of a "comprehensive attempt to make rural life attractive, comfortable, and profitable . . . [to] solve the chronic problems of agriculture and rural life" (Campbell, 1995, p. 23). This comprehensive effort was initiated after the Commission on Country Life was created by Theodore Roosevelt in 1908 (Campbell, 1995).

The act provided for "cooperative agricultural extension work between the agricultural colleges in the several states receiving benefits of an Act of Congress approved July 2, 1862, and of acts supplementary thereto, and the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA)" (Smith-Lever Act, 1914, para. 1). This work was not only focused on agricultural information but also on home economics. Field demonstrations and publications were often used in Extension (Campbell, 1995). The Cooperative Extension Service was created to "diffuse among the people of the United States useful and practical information on subjects relating to agriculture, uses of solar energy with respect to agriculture, home economics, and rural energy and to encourage

the application of the same" (Smith-Lever Act, 1914, para. 2). These efforts were to be done in cooperation with the USDA.

The dissemination of information by CES was intended to be practical applications of the research being conducted at agricultural experiment stations. Extension personnel were tasked with providing demonstrations for farmers and, in many instances their wives (Smith-Lever Act, 1914). Each state was initially given $600,000 to establish their CES (Campbell, 1995). The term "cooperative" referred to the cooperation local Extension was to have with the USDA, and to its funding model, which was intended to share funding provided by federal, state, and local governments (Campbell, 1995). 4-H was eventually added to the portfolio of CES, thereby including rural youth (Beale, 1973).

There are nearly 3,000 county Extension offices operating in the U.S. (Clark et al., 2016). Those employed by Extension at the county level are usually known as educators or agents. The county-level presence is advantageous because Extension educators have the potential to "have historically deep, embedded relationships that bring human, technical, information, relation, social and financial resources to local communities" (Clark et al., 2016, p. 307).

CES is managed independently by each state in conjunction with the land-grant system. Usually a faculty member at the land-grant university is the director of Extension (Peters, 2014). Traditionally, every county has educators specializing in each of the following subject areas: agricultural and natural resources, family and consumers sciences, and youth development. The distribution of county educators can vary depending on funding and population distribution. Recent budget cuts have caused some

areas to have fewer educators covering more geographic area. County educators are tasked with disseminating information from the two other branches of the LGIs to local stakeholders.

1890 Morrill Act

Another piece of LGI legislation was the 1890 Morrill Act originally created because racial segregation did not allow all students to attend 1862 LGIs in the South (Campbell, 1995). Twenty-eight years after the passage of the initial Morrill Act, Justin Smith Morrill, now a Senator, presented a new piece of legislation to provide LGIs for those not being served by 1862 LGIs. The second Morrill Act was presented 12 times before it was passed (Campbell, 1995). These institutions were in keeping with the "separate, but equal" policy that was popular at the time. Institutions funded under this legislation became known as 1890 institutions. There are 19 1890 LGIs (National Institute of Food and Agriculture, 2020). These institutions are primarily in Southern states.

1994 Equity in Educational Land-Grant Status Act

The next piece of LGI related legislation was the Equity in Educational Land-Grant Status Act of 1994. This Act granted land-grant status to 29 tribal colleges (Equity in Educational Land-Grant Status Act, 1994). There are now 37 tribal colleges with land-grant status (National Institute of Food and Agriculture, 2019). This Act also provided $5 million to the 1862 land-grants in the states with tribal colleges to create Extension programs for Native American populations (Campbell, 1995). These colleges are primarily located in the Great Plains, southwestern, and north central states. These

institutions provide educational opportunities for the Native American tribes that they are associated with.

National Sea Grant College and Program Act of 1966

The Sea Grant program was established by the U.S. Congress in 1966. This program works with each coastal or Great Lake bordering LGI. Sea Grant institutions focus on research related to marine life, environmental health, and biotechnology (National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, 2019).

National Space Grant College and Program Act of 1988

Space Grant Colleges are involved in space-related research and education. There are 52 Space Grant Consortia made up of 395 institutions throughout the nation. These consortia work together to provide education and research related to aerospace science and technology (National Aeronautics and Space Administration, 2019).

Sun-Grant Research Initiative Grant of 2003

The Sun-Grant Initiative was instituted to encourage research regarding sustainable energy production. Six universities are considered regional centers for the initiative. Those universities are Oregon State University, University of Hawaii, South Dakota State University, Oklahoma State University (OSU), University of Tennessee, and Pennsylvania State University. The Sun-Grant focused on bioenergy and biofuels research, with a special emphasis on developing rural economies through the cultivation of renewable bioenergy (Oklahoma State University, 2020a).

The Essence of LGIs

LGIs are more than just places of higher education. These unique institutions are a system of organizations mandated to serve the needs of their state's population, both rural and urban (Gavazzi & Gee, 2018). The land-grant mission emphasizes community involvement and participation (Bonnen, 1998; Stephenson, 2010; Sternberg, 2014). This emphasis can be an avenue for advanced research, education, and outreach (Goldstein et al., 2019). Moreover, LGIs are mandated to provide inclusive, accessible, and affordable education at a post-secondary level. LGIs offer access to high quality education blending liberal arts and sciences with practical and applied sciences (Simon, 2009).

In the 157 years since their establishment, the institutions have undergone many changes. LGIs award degrees to nearly 1.2 million undergraduate students per year. Moreover, land-grants educate 70% of graduate students enrolled in U.S. research institutions (Sternberg, 2014). Currently, 110 institutions have land-grant status. LGIs are not only beholden to the students enrolled in the teaching branch of the institutions, but also the citizens of their respective states.

In the 21st century, LGIs have prioritized outreach to society, particularly focusing on addressing societal issues (Flanagan et al., 2013). Some speculate this shift has occurred to fill in the gaps left by federal government's withdrawal "from support of different areas on public responsibility" (Bonnen, 1996, p. 7). Some of this outreach is related to the Extension arm of the land-grant mission. Moreover, the industrialization of agriculture has also caused shifts in the purpose and applicability of some land-grant research. Agricultural producers rely upon private industry for inputs and services. This can reduce the need for public research and Extension services (Bonnen, 1996). LGIs

have adapted by expanding colleges of agriculture to consider a broader range of natural resources and environmental studies or even expanding to be colleges of life science (Bonnen, 1996; Committee on the Future of Land Grant Colleges of Agriculture, 1995).

LGIs are mandated to serve the public through research and Extension (Marcus, 2015). LGIs "have a special obligation to the publics that make and made them possible" (Jamieson, 2020, p. 2). Despite this mandate, much of the public is unaware of the land-grant mission and the institutions that carry it out (Gavazzi & Gee, 2018). Even more concerning, is the unawareness of those who work at LGIs (Zagonel et al., 2019). Faculty members and employees bear most of the responsibility to deliver the land-grant mission to students and other stakeholders, but not all faculty members are familiar with the land-grant mission or feel it is their responsibility to deliver on each branch of its mission (Gavazzi & Gee, 2018). This issue is further complicated as LGIs are not easily identifiable or distinguished from their public or private counterparts.

OSU as an LGI

According to the OSU website, the mission of OSU is "Building on its land-grant heritage, Oklahoma State University promotes learning, advances knowledge, enriches lives, and stimulates economic development through teaching, research, extension, outreach, and creative activities" (Oklahoma State University, 2020d). As an LGI, OSU strives to serve the needs of society.

> Today's land-grant universities are humble servants of the society and the
> people they serve. Oklahoma State University is typical. OSU serves its
> students by exposing them to higher education; it serves the state by
> supplying it with graduates whose salaries and taxes shore up Oklahoma's

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economy; and it serves the public welfare by discovering knowledge that

often has practical application benefitting people. OSU was, is, and will

continue to be the people's university (Chappell, 1990, p. ix).

History of University and Instruction

Born of the Land Run, Oklahoma Agricultural and Mechanical College

(Oklahoma A&M), the precursor to OSU, was established on December 24, 1890.

Oklahoma A&M was established 17 years before Oklahoma became a state. This

institution was established to serve agricultural producers (Green, 1990). Many initial

founders of Oklahoma A&M had attended other LGIs. The first classes were held in

December of 1891 in the Congregational Church in Stillwater, Oklahoma (Green, 1990;

Rulon, 1975). There were six students in the first graduating class of Oklahoma A&M in

1896 (Oklahoma State University, 2020e). Taking inspiration from Princeton University,

orange and black were selected as the official colors of Oklahoma A&M in the late

1890s, and early athletic teams were referred to as the Tigers. By the late 1920s, athletic

teams at Oklahoma A&M were known as the Aggies (Oklahoma State University,

2020e).

The early days of Oklahoma A&M were fraught with financial woes and high

leadership turnover (Rulon, 1975). In its first 17 years Oklahoma A&M had five different

presidents and focused primarily on its teaching mission. The other two land-grant

missions were more difficult to achieve due to a lack of funding, equipment, and

personnel (Rulon, 1975). The formative years of Oklahoma A&M were full of political

strife, lack of consistent funding, and issues building consensus around the way those

funds should be used (Green, 1990; Rulon, 1975; Sanderson et al., 1990).

Like many institutions across the nation, Oklahoma A&M saw a spike in enrollment post World War II. In 1957 Oklahoma A&M became Oklahoma State University for Agriculture and Applied Science, but is most commonly known as Oklahoma State University (Green, 1990; Oklahoma State University, 2020e; Rulon, 1975; Sanderson et al., 1990). At this time the Pistol Pete was established as the mascot of OSU, and the athletic teams became known as the Cowboys and Cowgirls. After its name change, the institution worked to include more diverse program offerings and saw another increase in enrollment. In 1957, the enrollment at OSU was 10,385, and by the 1980s it had more than doubled to 23,000 (Oklahoma State University, 2020e).

OSU has expanded to include other campuses across the state. In 1946, OSU Institute of Technology was established in Okmulgee (Oklahoma State University, 2020e). In 1961, a branch campus opened in Oklahoma City, and in 1999 another branch campus was established in Tulsa. Currently, there are more than 25,000 students enrolled on the Stillwater campus and 37,000 students enrolled system-wide (Oklahoma State University, 2020e).

History of Research

Early research at all LGIs focused primarily on agriculture. A desire for an agricultural experiment station was one of the major factors for establishing OSU in Stillwater (Chappell, 1990). In 1890 territorial legislation was passed to establish Oklahoma A&M and Oklahoma Agricultural Experiment Station in Stillwater. While the goal of Oklahoma A&M was to provide practical education to students, the Oklahoma Agricultural Experiment Station had two other missions: The experiment station was tasked with providing applied and useful information to Oklahoma citizens and endorsing

scientific investigation and engage in experiments (Chappell, 1990). In 1892 the

Magruder Plots were established and are the third longest-running field trial in the United

States. These plots are continuous wheat and provide research based information to

Oklahomans (Chappell, 1990).

By 1894, 60 experiments were in progress at the experiment station. Researchers

regularly engaged students in their work and reported their results to the public via

lectures (Chappell, 1990). During the first three decades of research, agriculture was the

main topic at OSU. During the 1910s engineering research also became more prominent

(Chappell, 1990).

Today, research is focused on a wide breadth of topics including science,

engineering, and humanities. Engaging students in undergraduate student in research is

also a priority. More than 1,000 faculty members mentor undergraduate and graduate

students through the research process. There are 30 research centers and institutions that

equip researchers with facilities to engage in research (Oklahoma State University,

2020f). According to the website for research at OSU, "Oklahoma State research is in

lock-step with its land-grant legacy. Whether exploring basic scientific questions or

applied concepts that directly impact lives, OSU research is relevant, accessible and

beneficial" (2020f, para. 2).

History of Extension

Extension in Oklahoma began before the official institution of Cooperative

Extension in 1914. In 1907 two individuals from the USDA were put in charge of

Extension in Oklahoma (Causley, 2020). Trains were used to travel from town to town to

spread knowledge and advice for rural homes and farmers alike. In July of 1914, the

Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Service (OCES) was established through an agreement between the USDA and Oklahoma A&M. At this time there were 44 county agents, two district agents, 17 women agents, and a state agent. These ranks grew to 60 county agents and 21 women agents by 1916 (Causley, 2020).

Currently, OCES covers topics including 4-H youth development, community and rural development, crops, family and consumer sciences, farm and ranch finances, fire training, gardening and lawn care, livestock, new product development, and water (Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Service, 2020). Extension is administered by the Division of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources. Statewide there are Extension offices in all 77 counties of Oklahoma (OSU Extension, 2019).

Governance

Three different governing bodies have guided Oklahoma A&M and OSU. From 1890 to 1908, the *Board of Regents* was the governing board at Oklahoma A&M. Following the establishment of Oklahoma as an official State, the *Oklahoma State Board of Agriculture* governed the institution until 1944 (Lawrence, 1990). Since then, the *Board of Regents for the Agricultural and Mechanical Colleges* has helped to steer the institution (Lawrence, 1990).

Along with a governing board, faculty members have had an important role in the governance of the institution. In 1892 the seven faculty members of Oklahoma A&M met with the president in the first faculty meeting of the institution. During these biweekly meetings, rules for the college's students and faculty members were established. Between 1892 and 1920, the faculty members met regularly with the president to address student concerns, curriculum, and conferral of degrees. By 1909,

there were 39 faculty members at Oklahoma A&M and the rules for how the board of

regents and the faculty governed Oklahoma A&M together were officially established.

In 1928 the Oklahoma State Board of Agriculture approved a resolution regarding

academic tenure for faculty. Tenure is a level of employment for academics that

guarantees a faculty member can only be terminated for extreme circumstances or a

justifiable cause. Tenure helps assure academic freedom for faculty members. This

resolution specifically stated that all expectations of faculty regarding tenure would be

explicitly stated in writing and provided to the college and faculty alike (Williams,

1990). The Faculty Council was officially created in 1951 (Williams, 1990).

According to the OSU website, the current Faculty Council consists of 30 elected

faculty members from across the OSU system. The council "works closely with

university administration to effectively formulate, recommend, and execute the

educational policies, procedures and long-term plans of the university" (Oklahoma State

University, 2020c, para. 2.). The governance at OSU is one of "participatory

democracy" (Olson, 1990, p. 102) in which college administration, Faculty Council,

Staff Advisory Council, and the Student Council work together to make decisions

regarding the governance of the institution (Olson, 1990).

Institutional Structure

OSU is made up of five campuses located in Stillwater, Oklahoma City, Tulsa,

and Okmulgee. There are five divisions associated with the Stillwater campus: Provost

and Academic Affairs; Administration and Finance; Enrollment and Brand Management;

Institutional Diversity; Student Affairs; and Research (Oklahoma State University,

2020b). The Stillwater campus is made up of nine colleges and schools: Ferguson

College of Agriculture; College of Arts and Sciences; College of Education and Human Sciences, College of Engineering, Architecture, and Technology; School of Global Studies and Partnerships; Honors College; Spears School of Business; University College; and College of Veterinary Health Sciences (Oklahoma State University, 2020b).

Figure 1 shows the organizational chart for OSU. This chart does not account for the name change of the Ferguson College of Agriculture or the merger of the College of Education and Human Sciences. As in many LGIs, the Dean of the College of Agriculture and the Vice President of Agricultural Programs are the same person. This role oversees the teaching, research, and Extension roles of the college. Experiment station and Extension are separate from most of the research and outreach efforts of OSU as their funding sources are specific and mandated by legislation.

Figure 1

Oklahoma State University Organizational Chart (**Office of the President Oklahoma State University, 2020**)

Oklahoma State University
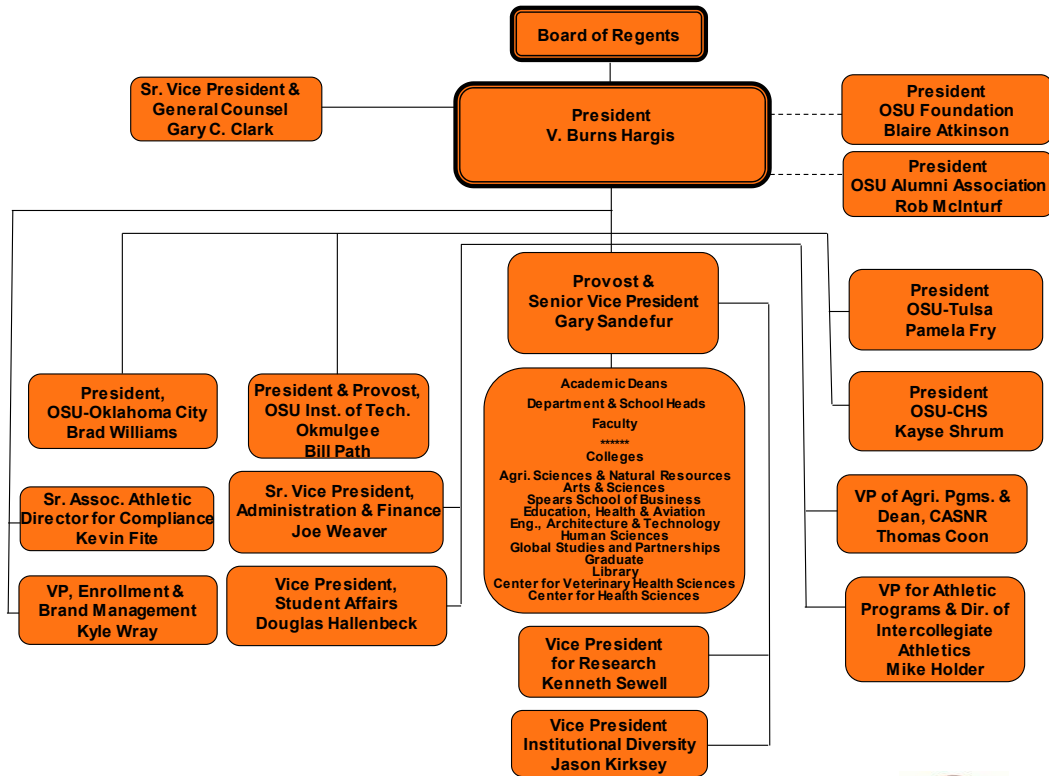
Figure 2 shows the organization of the Division of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources (DASNR). This chart is the most recent available, but does not accurately reflect the people that currently hold these roles. This organization chart accounts teaching, research, and Extension. Extension is further separated into three sections, each with their own assistant director: 4-H; agriculture, natural resources, and rural development; and family and consumer sciences. These assistant directors oversee district Extension directors and county-level Extension educators. The Associate Vice

President and Associate Director of the Oklahoma Agricultural Experiment Station

oversees the 18 research stations functions throughout the state. The Associate Dean of

the Ferguson College of Agriculture oversees the academic programs of the college.

Figure 2

Division of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources Organizational Chart

(Division of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources, 2016)
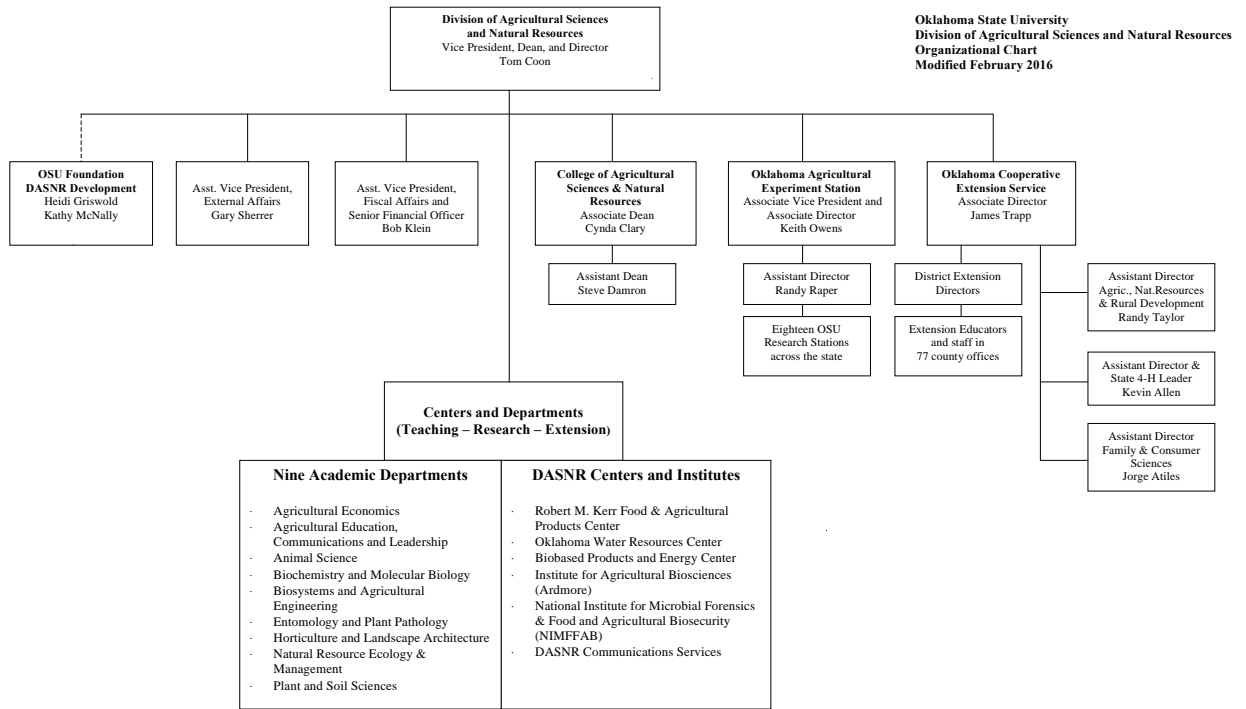
Branding

Branding is both a theory and a practice centered around distinguishing a

corporation, organization, or product from others (Franzen & Moriarty, 2009). There are

several definitions of a brand. The American Marketing Association defined a brand as

"A name, term, sign, design, symbol or any other feature that identifies one seller's good

or service as distinct from those of other sellers" (American Marketing Association, 2020). Franzen and Moriarty (2009) take a systems approach to branding: "a complex, interrelated system of management decisions and consumer reaction that identifies a product (good, services, or ideas), builds awareness of it, and creates meaning for it" (p. 6). For the purpose of this study I use Franzen and Moriarty's definition.

Fundamentally, a brand is not a single image, tagline, or logo. A brand cannot be understood when isolated from the world in which it exists. Therefore, the study of brands and branding is multifaceted (Franzen & Moriarty, 2009). A brand is intangible, yet invaluable (Aaker, 1996). A strong brand is essential for organizations to succeed in today's markets (Franzen & Moriarty, 2009; Sartain & Schumann, 2006).

Brands can be further separated into product brands and corporate or organizational brands (Hatch & Schultz, 2008). Product brands are created for one product or group of related products, and are often more temporary than organizational brands and target customers as its primary audiences. Examples of product brands would be those of Tide, Dawn, and Bounty. These products are easily distinguished, yet are subsidiaries of a larger organizational brand, Procter and Gamble (Hatch & Schultz, 2008). Whereas a product brand is only built for the duration of the product itself, an organizational brand lives with the company for its entire duration (Hatch & Schultz, 2008).

Organizational branding is more intensive than product branding. An organization's brand comes from "the company's heritage" and "the values and beliefs that members of the enterprise hold in common" (Hatch & Schultz, 2008, p. 9). An organizational brand should encompass all stakeholders associated with the organization

(e.g., employees, managers, customers, investors). A brand should "stand on values, not just current offerings" (Sartain & Schumann, 2006, p. 10). Strong organizational brands come from the essence of the organization itself. The essence of an organization begins with employees.

Internal Branding

Effective internal branding can create an environment where employees and external stakeholders take ownership of the brand and readily share the brand mission with customers or other stakeholders (Schiffenbauer, 2001). Internal branding can also be defined as "how a business builds and packages its identity, form its origins and values, what it promises to deliver to emotionally connect employees so that they in turn deliver what the business promises to customers" (Sartain & Schumann, 2006, p. vi). Internal branding also refers to the strategies used by an organization to encourage employees to emotionally and intellectually buy into the culture and the specific brand personality (Thomson et al., 1999). Some speculate a brand's source should be the organizational identity of the organization (Waeraas & Solbakk, 2009). The internal brand of an organization is not only the responsibility of those in communications and human resources. According to Ind (2008), the goal of internal branding efforts are to create "brand ambassadors" (p. 97) who "live the brand" (p.1).

A strong organizational brand should reflect the firm's vision and culture. The brand should permeate from employees to external stakeholders (Hatch & Schultz, 2008). An organization's internal practices and policies should be indicative of the organizational brand as a whole. An effectively managed brand is either adapted from the organizational culture or the organizational culture adapts to the brand (Hatch & Schultz,

2008). Sartain and Schumann (2006) argued there is no other component as important for organizations to tackle as internal branding.

Branding in Higher Education

Branding higher education is a fairly new concept (Dholakia, 2017). Universities, like corporate entities, desire to differentiate themselves in a crowded marketplace. Universities have come under scrutiny by their own researchers regarding their lack of strong branding. Each university is responsible for creating unique and appealing value to attract students and employees alike (Jevons, 2006).

"A positive school brand image can help students distinguish and define differences among schools" and help them determine the best fit for them (Chen & Chen, 2014, p. 138). The brand of a university should be "congruent with its mission, defined by its values" and "match the institution's personality" (Black, 2008, p. 2). Therefore, an LGI's brand should be congruent with its tripartite mission. Due to the complicated nature of LGIs, this is difficult to execute. As each respective LGI is intended to serve the needs of citizens in its state, the manifestation looks different across the nation (Campbell, 1995; Gavazzi & Gee, 2018; Sternberg, 2014). Some LGIs have multiple campuses scattered across the state. Moreover, Extension personnel are present in each county of the state. A multi-layered and far flung organization makes a consistent and cohesive internal brand more difficult to achieve (Sujchaphong et al., 2015).

Problem statement

Branding is important for universities to consider, but it is often ineffectively executed (Jevons, 2006). The task of branding is made more difficult in public

universities as budget cuts and frequent leadership changes are commonplace (Whisman, 2009). LGI faculty members are the vehicles by which university brand promises of education, research, and Extension are delivered (Gavazzi & Gee, 2018). To ensure the essence of the LGI brand is being communicated by faculty members, one must understand faculty members' awareness and interpretation of the land-grant mission.

Purpose and Research Questions

The purpose of this study was to conceptualize how the land-grant mission shapes the internal brand of OSU and explore the land-grant brand identity among faculty members at OSU. The following research questions guided the study:

1. What are faculty members' perception of the OSU brand?

2. How do faculty members conceptualize the land-grant mission?

3. How do faculty members translate the land-grant mission in their work?

4. What are faculty members' opinions regarding the future of the land-grant mission?

Justification

LGIs are diverse, fragmented, and complex. These institutions were created to benefit the working class and democratize education (Campbell, 1995). Every year more than 1 million students graduate from LGIs and a vast majority of graduate education is delivered at LGIs (Sternberg, 2014). LGIs are "the most important sector of higher education in the country—nay, on the globe" (Nevins, 1962, p. 29).

However, these important institutions are not well understood or recognized by the public they were designed to serve (Gavazzi & Gee, 2018). More alarming however is

administrators' perceptions that faculty members do not understand the land-grant

mission (Gavazzi & Gee, 2018). Faculty members have the most influence and control

over the execution of the land-grant mission (Flanagan et al., 2013). For it to be carried

out effectively, faculty members must understand and embrace the land-grant mission

(Gavazzi & Gee, 2018). Only then can the land-grant mission be effectively fulfilled and

communicated to the public.

Branding under a systems-level approach considers several factors that affect the

public's relationship with the brand (Franzen & Moriarty, 2009). Internal branding, or

effectively communicating the brand mission to employees, is the first step to having a

strong external brand (Punjaisri & Wilson, 2007). The branding of higher education is

complex. There are multiple layers of hierarchy and several stakeholder groups to

consider (Lockwood & Hadd, 2007). Some research indicates external stakeholder have

more influence over decisions in universities than internal audiences (Amaral &

Magalhaes, 2002). "The college or university community must define desired

expectation and behaviors associated with the [brand] promise" (Black, 2008, p. 7). For

LGIs, many of the brand promises were established for institutions through legislation to

provide accessible education to the sons and daughters of the working class, conduct

applicable and relevant research, and provide programming for the further development

of residents in their own communities (Sternberg, 2014).

While there is readily available literature on the internal branding in higher

education, the internal branding of LGIs has not been widely studied. A gap in

knowledge about faculty members' views, knowledge, and value of the land-grant

mission exists. This research seeks to address that gap by exploring faculty members' awareness, perception, and interpretation of the land-grant mission at OSU.

Summary

In 1862, LGIs were created through the signing of the Morrill Act of 1862 (Nevins, 1962). Since then the land-grant system has been expanded by several pieces of legislation, but the primary mission remains. LGIs are tasked with providing accessible education to the common man and improving their quality of life. However, there is a lack of awareness, externally and internally of the land-grant mission. The theoretical framework for this study is branding, specifically addressing internal branding. If the internal brand of the land-grant mission at LGIs could be studied and improved, the external awareness of LGIs could increase. This study seeks to examine faculty members' awareness, perceptions, and interpretations of the land-grant mission at OSU.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

The goal of this study was to explore the land-grant brand identity amongst faculty members at OSU through addressing the following research questions:

1. What are faculty members' perception of the OSU brand?

2. How do faculty members conceptualize the land-grant mission?

3. How do faculty members translate the land-grant mission in their work?

4. What are faculty members' opinions regarding the future of the land-grant mission?

The literature reviewed in this chapter includes an overview of LGIs, current challenges facing LGIs, and role of faculty members at LGIs. A theoretical framework will be introduced consisting of branding and internal branding.

LGIs in Action

Upon their founding, LGIs were at the forefront of revolution and science:

When the plan for a system of land-grant colleges took shape. . . it could

safely be said that no true university existed in the United States. It could

also be said that throughout the Western world a many-sided revolution in

. . . higher education was gathering force (Nevins, 1962, p. 7).

Some contend the most important contribution of the LGI was the

democratization of education (Collins, 2015; Nevins, 1962). Democracy in education

relates to every person's right to think and learn without restraint. "The development of

land-grant institutions eroded the elitism of the ivory tower. With this erosion,

universities were connected to food-producing communities in new and innovative ways

and were recognized as providing broad public benefits" (Collins, 2015, p. 37).

Although agriculture and applied research has been a cornerstone of LGIs, it is

not the only focus, nor the primary focus of the system. States with a minimal agricultural

presence have broadened their colleges of agriculture to encompass environmental

studies and life sciences. LGIs have also expanded to have faculty members dedicated to

teaching and researching basic science (Bonnen, 1996). The broader intention for LGIs is

to

provide an environment in which faculty and students can discover,

critically examine, organize, preserve advance, and transmit the

knowledge, wisdom, and values through teaching, research and public

service that will enhance and sustain survival of present and future

generations as well as help improve the quality of human life. (Campbell,

1995, pp. 231-232)

Since its founding, the LGI system has been evaluated and reimagined. "Whereas the fundamental land-grant mission has remained largely static since its inception, the political and economic context has changed dramatically, placing new demands on how land-grant scholars carry out their work" (Goldstein et al., 2019, p. 674). How each LGI reacts to these changes can vary. These varied reactions and the segmented nature of LGIs contribute to their complexity.

Complexity of LGIs

LGIS are "universities which combine a world outlook with adaptation to special environments" (Nevins, 1962, p. 24). Each LGI is intended to conduct region-specific research and serve the needs of its specific communities (Gavazzi & Gee, 2018). The different expression and application of land-grant legislation by each state or institution has created identity issues.

A recent SWOT analysis among senior administrators at LGIs across the U.S. found "the public at large has little understanding of how universities contribute directly to the well-being of communities, let alone understanding the more specific definition of what it means to be a land-grant institution" (Gavazzi & Gee, 2018, p. 29). The benefits of LGIs can only be fully utilized when the public have knowledge of it. In order to effectively communicate the essence of an LGI, the complex nature of the land-grant ideal nationwide and the complicated tendencies of universities themselves must be taken into consideration (Ng & Forbes, 2009). Furthermore, these types of organization are difficult to brand as the service offerings are often diverse, complex, and layered (Hoggett, 2006).

LGIs are complicated institutions that are publicly funded. These funds have been reduced overtime (The Chronicle of Higher Education, 2014, 2021). Federal and state budget cuts create pressure for faculty members to pursue extramural funding for research. The time faculty members spend generating grant dollars is time not spent on supporting undergraduate education (Collins, 2015). Furthermore, the research funded is less likely to be informed by citizens and more likely to be influenced by disciplinary silos (Flanagan et al., 2013). Moreover, the measurement and assessment of metrics are used to assess the quality of faculty members are not reflective of actual performance (Collins, 2015; Muller, 2018). For instance, student evaluations of teaching are used to gauge faculty performance, but they do not measure learning by students or competency of teachers (Collins, 2015; Muller, 2018). These issues compound to create a problem where faculty members may be focused on the wrong thing, students start to feel like customers, rather than an integral part of education, and the land-grant mission becomes an unattainable ideal, rather than the guiding principles of LGIs.

The teaching arm of the LGI is not the only one under criticism. In 1999, the Kellogg Commission on the Future of State and Land-Grant Universities stated, "we have lost sight of our institutional mission to address the contemporary multidisciplinary problems of the real world" (Kellogg Comission on the Future of State and Land-Grant Universities, 1999, p. 20). The commission also contended that engagement or outreach was not a central or integral part of all the universities it studied. However, many contend sectors of universities engage in public outreach and service, but may not label it as Extension efforts (Bonnen, 1998).

Scholars have identified issues with LGIs. However, a general sense of optimism remains:

> The Morrill Act symbolizes the public trust that has given life to our
> nation's entire educational system for the past 150 years. . . . It reminds us
> all of the public commitment that will be necessary for the system to
> thrive for 150 more. (Loss, 2012, para. 13)

LGIs Moving Forward. Several scholars have postulated approaches for LGIs to take to adjust to changing contexts. Some researchers recommend orienting the land-grant toward an attitude of servant leadership. "Servant universities are those institutions of higher learning that . . . give primary emphasis to the stewardship responsibilities they have been given by society to provide for the development and well-being of its communities" (Gavazzi & Gee, 2018, p. 34). This reorientation is said to be in keeping with the original intention of land-grant legislation (Gavazzi & Gee, 2018). This service-oriented approach is similar to another suggestion by scholars known as community-engaged scholarship (Mehta et al., 2015).

Others are calling for a refocusing of land-grant institutions in undergraduate education:

> Undergraduate education . . . should not just focus on résumé building and
> work force preparation. It should also build student capacity to interrogate
> inequities and take personal and collective action to drive citizen centered
> governance . . . developing the character and public spirit of students and
> equipping them to take up the complex problems of our tie not only as
> experts or professionals but as critically conscious citizens constitute

higher education's most important omission. (Flanagan et al., 2013, pp. 256-257)

Some propose the World Grant Ideal where universities and leaders work together to conquer society's problems and grant the public access to university knowledge (Simon, 2009). Still others believe in the land-grant mission and its relevance to modern day problems so intensely they are calling for another Morrill Act to increase funding for LGIs by selling off current federal government holdings (Goolsbee & Minow, 2016). Some believe the LGIs role should be fostering rural innovation and entrepreneurship (Lyons et al., 2017). There are many opinions about what the future of the land-grant mission should be, but as a public institution it's difficult to move forward if stakeholders do not agree.

Role of Faculty Members in LGIs

Administrators, regents, and legislators may have some influence in how LGIs are ran. However, the key deliverers of the land-grant mission are faculty members. Faculty members are the primary vehicles for teaching, research, and Extension (Gavazzi & Gee, 2018). One of the reasons faculty members are paramount in the delivery and communication of the land-grant mission is their role in the tenure and promotion of other faculty members. "Other than curriculum development and implementation, there is no greater role in governance played by faculty members than the evaluation of each other's performance regarding the tripartite mission of the land-grant university" (Gavazzi & Gee, 2018, p. 112).

It is important to consider both tenure and non-tenure track faculty members. Tenure-track faculty make up less than one-third of the academic labor force (American Associatin of University Professors, 2020). Faculty members are the vehicles by which the land-grant mission is communicated and delivered to students and other external stakeholders (Gavazzi & Gee, 2018). Some faculty members have specifically sought out employment at LGIs because of their own interest in the tripartite mission. Meanwhile, others just happen to be employed at an LGI with no interest in the mission (Gavazzi & Gee, 2018). Faculty members must be invested in a university's mission for it to move forward. Furthermore, the faculty level is the most important to institute change within a university (Bonnen, 1996). "When faculty feel connected to the land-grant mission, they are going to think about how their scholarship engages with the communities they are serving" (Gavazzi & Gee, 2018, p. 123).

Theoretical Framework

Branding

Brands are valuable for organizations to attempt to manage because they can be viewed as a monetary asset (Olins, 2005). Branding is multifunctional and can be used to guide decision-making, promote public visibility, and provide a framework for strategic communication support of organization initiatives or products (Arozian, 2003; Black, 2008; Franzen & Moriarty, 2009). Non-profit organizations often operationalize branding as "a purposeful strategy for identifying what an organization does, communicating who it does that for, and establishing understanding of why those two things are important" (Arozian, 2003, para. 4).

A brand exists for every company and organization, even if the powers that be are unaware of it (Arozian, 2003). Branding was once thought of as a one-way communication. Brand managers and organizations pushed out brands, and consumers accepted or rejected them. This was also known as a closed-source approach to brands (Pitt et al., 2006). However, newer ideas suggest branding is both a science and an art, a complex and interrelated system of interaction and communication, and a two-way approach (Franzen & Moriarty, 2009), also known as an open-source brand (Pitt et al., 2006).

Brands are not controlled by the organizations they belong to. "[B]rand[s] live in the hearts and minds of those we serve" (Black, 2008, p. 3). The public's perception of a brand is known as brand image (Franzen & Moriarty, 2009). A brand's image is influenced by the heritage or history of the brand, its employees, and its values (Fritz et al., 2017). Consumers require authenticity from their brands. When consumers perceive brands as authentic, their brand loyalty increases (Fritz et al., 2017).

Brand loyalty is the level of attachment a consumer feels to a brand, also known as brand strength (Wood, 2000). The degree of brand loyalty determines the value of the brand, because loyalty or strength relates to the likelihood of future cash flow (Wood, 2000). By assigning an economic value to a brand, the importance of brand management can be monetized and prioritized (Wood, 2000). As the concept of a brand is abstract, it is important to communicate its value to decision makers. This encourages management to consider the long-term health of the brand when making decisions. When brand managers seek to maximize brand strength and brand value, the natural consequence is increased profitability of the organization as a whole (Wood, 2000).

Branding as a Practice. The practice of branding has long been used by companies and organizations to distinguish themselves in the marketplace. The first company to participate in branding was Procter and Gamble in 1837 when they created the brand for Ivory soap (Franzen & Moriarty, 2009; Whisman, 2009). However, the study of branding did not begin until 1990 (Franzen & Moriarty, 2009).

Corporate brand orientation is an approach some organizations use when it comes to branding. In this orientation, the brand is treated as the cornerstone of the organization (Balmer, 2013). The brand informs all strategic decisions. The brand is a manifestation of the organization's values and promises to consumers and acts as a central force (Balmer, 2013). Therefore, the brand is evident in all communication, external and internal. Essentially, when using the corporate brand orientation, all roads lead to the brand. All actions should be indicative of the values of the brand and therefore build the brand (Balmer, 2013; Foster et al., 2010; Harris & Chernatony, 2001).

"The doing of branding is key to understanding how people who engage in these processes are participating in constituting both what and who is being branded" (Vasquez et al., 2013, p. 144). Branding requires an active, persistent, and consistent effort (Arozian, 2003; Hanover Research, 2014). A brand will be successful if it delivers its promised values. Branding does not have to be a large investment of funds. "Branding isn't about spending huge amounts of money on advertising, blimps, and stadium naming rights. . . . it's a powerful technique for purposefully creating a strategic identity in a marketplace or community" (Arozian, 2003, para. 17). When branding is understood from a systems approach, every act and actor of an organization is part of the brand of an

organization (Franzen & Moriarty, 2009). Therefore, employees' perceptions of a brand are important to understand (Bolman & Deal, 2008).

Branding in Non-Corporate Settings. Branding is not exclusively the burden and opportunity of for-profit organizations. Non-profit, public organizations, and governmental organizations should also take an interest in intentional branding (Kim, 2002). Competition for the public's time, attention, and funding is fiercer than ever. To compete with other non-profits, for-profits, and governmental organizations for funding and personnel, non-profit organizations implement corporate-type branding strategies (Franzen & Moriarty, 2009; Keller & Lehmann, 2006; Kim, 2002). These strategies strengthen relationships between the brand and the public, thereby improving the public's approval of the organization as a whole (Whelan et al., 2010).

Trust is an important component in public's approval and support of an organization (Kang & Hustvedt, 2013). Trust is even more important when competing brands have similar offerings or rely upon emotional connections to ensure brand loyalty (de Chernatony, 2001b). Unfortunately, the public has become distrustful of organizations associated with the government and are intended to provide unbiased, scientific based knowledge (Birkland, 2011). However, non-profit organizations tend to have higher level of public trust than corporate organizations (Martin et al., 2016; Mase et al., 2015; Settle et al., 2017).

Although the practice of applying corporate type branding strategies to public organizations is commonplace, the phenomena was rarely studied until recently (Sataøen & Wæraas, 2013; Settle et al., 2018; Tschirhart et al., 2005; Wæraas, 2008; Walsh, 1994; Whelan et al., 2010). Branding in public organizations such as institutions of higher

education (Judson et al., 2006), government organizations (Settle et al., 2014), and non-profits (Wright et al., 2012) have been studied. These types of organizations struggle to differentiate themselves from other organizations that offer similar services. For instance, hospitals struggle to differentiate themselves from one another (Sataøen & Wæraas, 2013). Moreover, these types of organizations struggle to create a sense of importance around communication and branding efforts amongst internal audiences (Sataøen & Wæraas, 2013).

Internal Branding

Internal brands, like external brands, exist regardless of intervention or creation by management (Sartain & Schumann, 2006). Internal branding is the process of building a brand from within. An organization's brand identity is affected by human resources, internal communication, organizational culture, social interactions, and management (Sartain & Schumann, 2006), which makes the study and execution of internal branding multidisciplinary (Theurer et al., 2018). The term internal branding was first used in 1999 (Keller, 1999). Internal branding is the alignment of employee behaviors with the brand promise. When employees fulfill their roles, there is lower probability of negative brand experiences and ensures brand communication remains consistent across channels (Piehler et al., 2015).

For external stakeholders to view a corporate brand as cohesive, internal branding must be emphasized (Harris & Chernatony, 2001). A strong internal brand is especially important for service-based organizations and depend upon customer and employee interaction (Schmidt & Baumgarth, 2018). Studies have shown a solid internal brand is positively related to external brand performance (Baumgarth & Schmidt, 2010; Burmann

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et al., 2009). Successful internal branding strategies result in employees who are committed to and identify with the organizational brand at large (Meyer et al., 2002). The end goal of internal branding is employee behavior consistent with the organizational brand, also known as brand-supporting behavior (Punjaisri et al., 2008). Other researchers refer to this type of behavior as brand citizenship behavior (Burmann & Zeplin, 2005). Brand compliance, brand endorsement, brand development, brand commitment, and brand understanding are important components of internal branding. Brand compliance is conforming to brand-related rules and regulations. Brand endorsement is the purposeful promotion of the brand. Finally, brand development is the active pursuit of overall brand improvement (Piehler et al., 2015). Brand commitment is also an important aspect of brand citizenship behavior. Brand commitment is an employee's emotional attachment to a brand (Burmann & Zeplin, 2005; King & Grace, 2012), which influences an employee's "willingness to exert extra effort towards reaching brand goals— in other words to exert brand citizenship behavior" (Burmann & Zeplin, 2005, p. 284). Finally, brand understanding is an employee's comprehension of a brand and knowledge of what the brand stands for (Piehler et al., 2015). Empirical studies have shown a brand understanding and brand commitment directly affect brand citizenship behavior (Piehler et al., 2015).

Researchers suggest management actively translate the brand's values into everyday activities to promote a strong internal brand. It is important employees can associate their daily tasks with the brand's vision (Punjaisri & Wilson, 2007). Training during the onboarding process is essential to establish a sense of belonging and investment into the brand. "When employees receive coherent and well-orchestrated

brand messages, their understanding is constantly reinforced and in harmony with their colleagues" (Punjaisri & Wilson, 2007, p. 11). It is also advantageous if employees' personal values align with that of the organization's (de Chernatony, 2001a). The communication of a brand internally should not be limited to orientation, but should also be done through recruitment of new employees to ensure the best fit (Erkmen, 2018).

Eliminating silos and division in an organization can help strengthen the internal brand (Sartain & Schumann, 2006). Moreover, there is a positive relationship between organizational morale and internal communication (Settle et al., 2013). Internal communication provides information to employees, promotes brand understanding, and enhances employees' commitment (Gilly & Wolfinbarger, 1998). Some organizations implement brand ambassador programs to enhance employees' knowledge of the brand's values and increase their involvement in brand creation (Schmidt & Baumgarth, 2018; Xiong et al., 2013).

Internal branding facilitates the delivery of brand promises by employees (Punjaisri et al., 2011). However, internal branding does not "identify how employees interpret brand messages and develop brand meaning" (Dean et al., 2016, p. 3047). A strong internal brand is prerequisite of a strong overall brand (Punjaisri et al., 2009).

Co-Creation of Brands. Although a brand is not created solely by brand managers, the source of a brand is the organization itself (Sartain & Schumann, 2006). Organizations rely on employees or internal audiences to deliver its brand. Brands are constructed and reconstructed by internal and external stakeholders (Rindell & Strandvik, 2010), which is one type of brand co-creation (Yang & Mutum, 2015). "Organizations

need to consider the brand-building process as a loop where there is no starting point or ending point" (Erkmen, 2018, p. 52).

Another type of brand co-creation takes place internally. An internal brand can be strengthened by engaging employees in significant conversations about brand values and brand identity. This activity helps employees feel connected and invested in their organization's brand (Chapleo, 2011). This type of co-creation is essential to ensure each internal stakeholder has a similar understanding of the brand identity before communicating it to external stakeholders (Punjaisri et al., 2011). This type of co-creation can also increase the strength of an organization's internal brand. Through this process internal stakeholders develop feelings of moral responsibility for the brand (Black & Veloutsou, 2017).

Co-creation of a brand meaning is a perpetual process occurring at every stakeholder level. Understanding the internal stakeholders' role in this process is essential (Ind et al., 2013). Moreover, brand co-creation is not a linear process. It is affected by context and social interactions (Edvardsson et al., 2010). Employees construct their brand meaning through interactions with others and communication materials. "Perception about a brand is built during each and every interaction," and after each interaction "there is a review and re-interpretation of the brand meaning" (Iglesias et al., 2012, p. 260). This is known as a re-interpretation loop (Iglesias et al., 2012). "Employees' co-creation of the brand identity is a result of their personal brand interpretation and social interaction with the internal and external markets" (Dean et al., 2016, p. 3045). Co-creation is a social process that refreshes itself with every interaction.

Branding in Higher Education

Branding in higher education is more complex than corporate branding. The service offered, education, is intangible and the choice to attend a university is a high-involvement decision most people only make once in their lives (Mazzarol & Soutar, 2002; Mourad et al., 2020). In higher education settings as compared to corporate settings, customers (i.e., students) have a greater number of interactions with a wide variety of different brand representatives over a longer period of time (Dean et al., 2016). Moreover, customers of universities "do most of the work, and end up as different people from the ones who first came through the door" (Temple, 2006, p. 18).

The rising competition and cost associated with higher education cause higher scrutiny among university customers. The top 25 universities rarely change and may not require a concerted branding effort, as their brands are already established (Bunzel, 2007). The skillful branding of institutions is particularly important for those "on the cusp of 'elite state'" (Bunzel, 2007, p. 153). The top 25 institutions do not require intensive branding efforts because their brands are long established and are very recognizable. The lesser-known or younger universities require strategic and intentional branding efforts (Bunzel, 2007). This type of branding effort "is generally seen as more complicated than product branding, as the corporate brand is intangible and organizations consist of people whose attitudes, beliefs, and values may vary considerably" (Waeraas & Solbakk, 2009, p. 451)

Although effective brand strategies could be immensely helpful for universities, the interest in studying branding in the context of higher education is fairly recent (Chapleo, 2007). Branding studies in the context of higher education have mainly focused

on applying corporate brands to universities (Osman, 2008), brand equity (Tran et al., 2020), and using service branding (Ng & Forbes, 2009).

Ng and Forbes (2009) and Pinar et al. (2014) agree the educational experience of students is paramount when branding a university. Of that education experience, faculty knowledge and faculty-student interaction, were found to be the biggest determinant of perceived brand quality (Pinar et al., 2014). Teachers, social activities, sporting events, or other tertiary activities can influence students' views of a university brand (Jevons, 2006). According to past research, reputation, perceived quality of faculty, emotional environment, and brand loyalty are the most important factors for increasing the strength of a university brand (Pinar et al., 2014; Wood, 2000)

The multiple audiences universities address create an additional facet of complexity. Students are not the only audience that universities should consider. Maintaining a positive reputation among general community members and media is important for university success to encourage donors, legislators, and others to continue to provide funding (Mourad et al., 2020). Studies also show alumni prefer personalized communication efforts from universities (Northfell et al., 2016).

Universities are navigating these muddy waters while relying on corporate branding strategies, but universities are not corporations. Therefore, traditional brand management strategies do not suffice when marketing universities (Argenti, 2000); a holistic brand approach is recommended (Khoshtaria et al., 2020). As Jevons (2006) states,

> We owe it to the universities that employ us, or provide us with the
>
> essential resources for our businesses, to help, and insist, that they clarify

just what the brand of their particular university means, and how it is

meaningfully different from alternative providers. It is a disgrace to those

who fund these expensive institutions if this is not done, and an

embarrassment to the marketing and branding experts who work within

them. (p. 467)

The marketing and communication efforts made by universities are essential in

creating a strong and positive brand (Black, 2008; Tran et al., 2020). However, studies

have shown universities use general, vague, and non-targeted communication in their

respective mission statements, although communication is more diversified and targeted

in other communication pieces (Broucker et al., 2020). Brand image, which is "the

essence of how you would like alumni, prospective students, legislators, and the public to

perceive your institution" (Lawlor, 1998, p. 19), was initially the main concern of

universities. Intentional and effective branding strategies can create positive image shifts

in the eyes of stakeholders in a relatively short time (Dholakia & Acciardo, 2014).

"Higher education and branding go back a long way – though until very recently,

branding for most universities simply meant the crest on its headed notepaper" (Temple,

2006, p. 15). Universities have a unique opportunity to brand through the architecture of

buildings, design of campus, landscape, university history, and general ambience

(Bulotaite, 2003; Drori et al., 2013). The towns universities are in can also contribute to

brand identity (Almond, 2020; Becker, 1993). These elements, in addition to webpages,

advertisements, mascots, apparel, and other merchandise, help create a brand for

universities. Sometimes referred to as brand images, logos can even differ between

college and departments within universities. Logos, colors, and mascots are often referred to as a visual identity (Dowling, 1986; Melewar & Akel, 2005; Olins, 1995).

Trends in University Branding. Drori (2013) cited three major trends in university branding. The first is the simplification or restyling of symbols, particularly university seals. The seal of a university is often the original brand image for most universities. Seals were used for official documents and other formal capacities. Seals are often wrought with symbolic images, but universities have been restyling or replacing seals and other logos to appear more approachable and relevant (Drori, 2013). OSU has recently adopted a new universal logo, an example of this restyling.

The second trend is for universities to add to or repurpose their traditional logos or visual representations. For instance, seals are still used on diplomas, letters of acceptance, transcripts, and so on. While this is the most formal image related to the university, it is not often the most common associated with university brands (Drori et al., 2013). Wordmarks or other images are often used for identifying universities in less formal documents (Drori et al., 2013). Revamped logos and images are used to attract new students or advertise the university (Drori, 2013). Furthermore, some universities even shorten their names when branding their institutions. For example, Oklahoma State University is sometimes shorted to Ok State, OSU, or O State. These numerous logos or brand images can be similar or vary. The more logos associated with a brand, the more watered down a brand can become (Franzen & Moriarty, 2009).

The lack of consistency within brands and brand images has led many universities to undertake rebranding efforts (Drori et al., 2013). These efforts are intended to "clarify identity and direction through visual symbols (Drori et al., 2013, p. 5). The vast number

of logos, brands, colors, and fonts that can be associated with an institution has led many

to create branding guidelines or "brand books" that lay out the rules and specifications of

use (Drori, 2013). Recently, branding efforts in higher education have focused on

"peripheral areas, such as assessing Pantone colors in logos, creating and disseminating

marketing materials, or selling licensed merchandise" (Lockwood & Hadd, 2007, para.

18).

The third trend associated with images related to brands at universities is the

tendency to trademark or otherwise protect the images from being used by others (Drori,

2013). These legal terms include the proprietary use of images. Therefore, other

intuitions, like high schools, cannot use brand images without explicit permission (Drori,

2013).

The Value of University Branding Beyond Marketing. A brand is not only

useful in market differentiation but also in prioritization and decision making. A well-

established brand serves as a guiding force for institutions. For example, if a university

brands itself as research-driven, the decisions made by administration and faculty

members should always be guided by research (Black, 2008). Thus, intentional branding

of universities is of utmost importance.

A brand does not begin or end in the marketing unit of the university. Branding

should be a "catalyst for defining who the institution is and what it aspires to become,"

while simultaneously creating a uniting intention and goal (Black, 2008, p. 9). Few best

practices exist for implementing and promoting a strong internal brand strategy

(Dholakia, 2017). However, it is clear that outside-in approaches that do not consider

internal buy-in are not often successful and occasionally cause problems (Whisman,

2009). Efforts have been made to share lessons learned from institutional name changes or other rebrands (Celly & Knepper, 2010; Dholakia, 2017; Haytko et al., 2008). These studies suggest being transparent and communicative to internal audiences about the brand effort by stressing research-based evidence regarding the updated brand and avoiding top-down brand impositions (Dholakia, 2017).

Without transparent communication, branding efforts often generate feelings of conflict concerning identity and image for faculty members (Vasquez et al., 2013). The conflict between individualized careers of faculty members, the overall university mission, department politics, and limited resources can make branding a difficult topic for faculty members (Vasquez et al., 2013). Some suggest reframing the idea of branding as institutional promise or reputation management to be more palatable to faculty members (Gray et al., 2003). A university is "an environment where branding and customers are not acceptable terms to creating meaningful relationships" (Dholakia, 2017, p. 236). Although complicated to navigate, a successful brand is possible for institutions of higher education can be achieved if faculty, staff, and administrators are on the same page (Temple, 2006).

Internal Branding in Higher Education: Faculty's Role

Despite these challenges, many researchers have recognized the internal audience as an integral part of brand management at universities (Chapleo, 2010; Whisman, 2009). Branding researchers in higher education have focused mainly on student brand co-creation rather than the faculty component (Yang & Mutum, 2015). However, internal branding literature supports looking at the brand from an employee's perspective. Internal branding should focus on the way the brand promise is communicated by employees to

external audiences and how that final communication then sets expectations for future interactions (Punjaisri et al., 2011). "The role of branding is to set expectations amongst all co-creators" (Dholakia, 2017, p. 236).

"[C]olleges and universities must recognize their most valuable tangible asset is their passionate employees" (Whisman, 2009, p. 368). Faculty and staff "must passionately believe in and care about the [brand] promise for it be authentically delivered through the educational experience and student services" (Black, 2008, p. 7). A recent study suggests all employees are responsible for the brand of a university (Endo et al., 2019). This study called for employees of universities to "work in an integrated way to serve as 'part-time marketers' and to deliver the best the brand can offer" (Endo et al., 2019, p. 410). This study also suggested all employees were responsible for the brand and communicating it effectively (Endo et al., 2019).

Researchers call for employees of universities to be brand champions. By "living the brand promise" university employees share the brand of the university in their everyday interactions with students and other stakeholders (Black, 2008). An institution's branding success is reliant on the level of buy-in from faculty and staff (Chapleo, 2009). Therefore, it is important to consider faculty's perceptions of the brand and even consider their voices when developing a brand and its associated efforts (Leijerholt et al., 2019).

The brand of an institution should be evident through its culture and delivered on a daily basis. One LGI, the University of Rhode Island, has found success in a rebrand by implementing internal brand management strategies before the new brand was developed (Dholakia, 2017). Faculty involvement in an institution's brand creates an atmosphere in which the brand is more likely to be successful (Moorer, 2007). Moreover, universities

that engage in internal branding are more likely to have higher levels of institutional commitment (Anwer et al., 2020).

University branding does not come without challenges. Some universities are so complex with different schools and colleges that several brands exist for a single entity (Stripling, 2010). "Universities may be too complex and fragmented to both understand and express as single identity organizations" (Wæraas & Solbakk, 2008, p. 459). Faculty and staff may identify more closely with their department or college, rather than the university itself (Jevons, 2006). Institutions of higher learning are composed of colleges, departments, and majors. LGIs have another layer of complexity including Extension and Experiment Stations. Branding efforts can occur at each of these levels (Vasquez et al., 2013). When a collaborative employee culture exists, employees are able to deliver the best the brand can offer (Endo et al., 2019).

Branding of the LGI

The first found mention of branding associated with Extension was in 1998 (Maddy & Kealy, 1998). This commentary piece, featured in the Journal of Extension, called for Extension to start using the now common corporate practice of branding to stay competitive in the 21st century. The authors envisioned Extension as "a household brand name associated with quality and accessible education programming that helps people put knowledge to work" (Maddy & Kealy, 1998, para. 21).

While the term "branding" may not have been explicitly used regarding LGIs until the '90s, perceptions have been researched since the '70s (Adkins, 1980). Legislators were the target population for the 1980 study. It was determined Extension was not keeping up with the urbanization of the population. The image it was perceived

as projecting was one of education exclusively for rural audiences. Adkins (1980) called for Extension to more intentionally label and market its programs as being associated with Extension to elevate its public image.

It has been found public awareness of Extension is low (DeBord, 2007), but more concerning is university personnel are also not familiar with it (Zagonel et al., 2019). Extension is rapidly losing funding, personnel and programs while facing "increased pressure to evaluate and assess impacts with tools that ultimately do not capture the greatest public good" (Collins, 2015, p. 58).

Although not explicitly stated as such, different LGIs have been working to improve their brands for a long time. In 1991, researchers and Extension professionals from the University of Maryland, urged every state Extension system to revise and overtly state its core values and identity (Smith & Oliver, 1991). This is essentially a call for improved and intentional branding. Moreover, Smith and Oliver comment on improving the internal brand of the organization:

> What we stand for as an organization-what our people believe in-is crucial
> to our success. Any control we have is philosophical and conceptual. It's
> our ideas about ourselves and others and the environment we exist in that
> make us believe and behave as we do (1991, para. 3).

The University of Maryland worked to improve their brand by distributing a document stating the guiding philosophy, values, and goals of the organization to all faculty members, using these guiding points to develop indicators for performance, setting priorities as an organization, and displaying the philosophy statement in every county office. Moreover, faculty members were urged to use the statement where they

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saw fit (Smith & Oliver, 1991). Although these efforts were not framed as branding, they encompass many of the steps needed to build a strong brand.

In 2010, Abrams et al. examined the public perception of a brand associated with all three parts of the land-grant mission at the University of Florida. While residents of the targeted state were mostly aware of the three primary efforts of the institution, they were not able to directly tie it to the existing brand (Abrams et al., 2010). Stakeholders were more likely to connect the land-grant mission to just the university, not the entire land-grant brand and system (i.e., teaching, research stations, and Cooperative Extension). It is recommended all land-grant systems associate closely with an existing university brand (Abrams et al., 2010).

In 2013 researchers collected data from Extension personnel in Florida. Respondents framed the brand of Extension in Florida as an organization that provided research-based material and expert knowledge, and solved problems (Settle et al., 2016). When media professionals were asked about their awareness of land-grant efforts in Florida, those familiar with the brand associated it with a positive reputation (Baker et al., 2011). However, the overall awareness of the brand among media professionals was low. The information provided by the brand was perceived as credible and usable. Baker et al. encouraged practitioners to communicate to stakeholders about the value of LGIs service and information, rather than just the information itself. Past research suggests Extension branches of LGIs should be clearly identified as part of its LGI. Moreover, Extension personnel are often relied upon to represent the LGI brand to the public (Settle et al., 2016). When assessing the perceptions among Extension agents, faculty, staff, and students at North Dakota State University, "state and local outreach" and "applied

research" were most frequently associated with the land-grant mission. Respondents did not view the land-grant as exclusively serving the agricultural sciences or as having disciplinary restrictions (Kirkwood, 2018).

Internal Branding of LGIs. When assessing the internal brand of K-State Research and Extension, it was found the brand was internally strong. Internal audiences saw Extension as providing research-based information, educational experiences, and providing valuable resources for low or no cost (Ray et al., 2015). Moreover, employees of Extension viewed their work as improving the lives of people and providing people with skills and information to make decisions (Ray et al., 2015). When Florida Extension employees were surveyed, similar sentiments were found (Settle et al., 2016). However, employees were concerned the brand was not widely known externally. Extension being the *best kept secret* was seen as very negative (Ray et al., 2015). Researchers have also suggested the term *Extension* may confuse external audiences (Settle et al., 2016).

Past research found people from different employment categories (i.e., faculty, non-faculty, state, and county) held different beliefs about Extension, denoting a lack of communal identity (Settle et al., 2016). When faculty members at 46 LGIs were surveyed, only 26% of the science faculty and 25% of the humanities faculty indicated outreach and public engagement as a priority for faculty members (Holesovsky et al., 2020). However, faculty members recognized the importance of public engagement and 98% of those surveyed had participated in outreach activities (Holesovsky et al., 2020).

Summary

The goal of this study was to explore the land-grant brand identity among faculty members at OSU. Previous research indicated faculty members as the primary vehicle in

which university missions are delivered. Moreover, faculty members are often hesitant to take part in branding efforts. The land-grant model and mission's effectiveness are often called into question by the public and funds from legislative bodies continue to be reduced. Past studies have indicated some university personnel are unaware of pieces of the land-grant mission and their respective importance. Branding and internal branding provide the framework for this study. Branding is a systems approach theory that conceptualizes the variety of factors affecting the overall impression or view of an organization. A strong brand presence increases the likelihood of a positive public image. Moreover, an effective internal brand strategy is a prerequisite to an effective external brand.

CHAPTER III

METHODS

Researchers have recognized internal audiences as an integral part of brand management at universities (Chapleo, 2010; Whisman, 2009). At universities, faculty members are the primary and most valuable deliverers of brand promises. (Pinar et al., 2014; Whisman, 2009). Therefore, they are an important audience to consider when assessing the brand of an institution. At LGIs specifically, the institutional goal is to provide students with a practical education, conduct applied research, and disseminate its information and education to the public of its respective state (Gavazzi & Gee, 2018). This study sought to determine if the land-grant mission was being intentionally carried out by faculty members at OSU. A strong internal brand of the land-grant mission at OSU could result in higher student satisfaction and overall brand success (Moorer, 2007). The purpose of this study was to explore the land-grant brand identity amongst faculty members at OSU. The following research questions guided the study:

    1. What are faculty members' perceptions of the OSU brand?

    2. How do faculty members conceptualize the land-grant mission?

    3. How do faculty members translate the land-grant mission in their work?

    4. What are faculty members' opinions regarding the future of the land-grant mission?

Qualitative research

Multiple perspectives and interactions can be studied in qualitative research (Flick, 2009). To fully understand the multiple perspectives of faculty members and the context in which the internal brand of the land-grant mission was manifested at OSU, a qualitative approach was used. Qualitative research offers a rich understanding of the research subjects' experiences and views (Flick, 2009). This type of inquiry allows researchers to ask follow-up questions to clarify points and reach the depth of answers desired by researchers (Flick, 2009; Rubin, 2005). Qualitative methods are especially useful when researchers seek to explore or discover multifaceted, poorly understood, or contextual phenomenon (Flick, 2009).

Phenomenon can rarely be explained apart from their environment (Flick, 2009). With qualitative research, researchers open themselves to the complexities of reality and have the opportunity to understand their subject in its everyday context (Flick, 2009). Qualitative research is suited to give "an understanding of why things are the way they are and how they got to be that way" (Morgan, 1998, p. 12). Research questions guide the study, rather than the practice of tailoring the research questions and study to fit a methodology common in quantitative inquiry (Flick, 2009).

Focus Groups

Focus groups were the specific qualitative technique used to collect data in this study. Meaning is derived from individual thought but is often manifested in the behavior of groups (Pollock, 1955). When conducting individual interviews, researchers have a greater chance of collecting data not indicative of the norm (Flick, 2009). Focus groups

are research-oriented group discussions focused on a specific researcher-identified topic (Morgan, 1998). These groups discussions help to mitigate chances of collecting data not indicative of the norm (Flick, 2009). Focus groups as a data collection method provide the opportunity for participants to validate or refute other's points in real-time (Flick, 2009).

Group discussions such as focus groups have been used in research since the 1920s (Morgan, 1998). Focus groups are especially prevalent in marketing and communications research (Morgan, 1998). Focus groups are useful to assess different populations within a larger study (Morgan, 1998). This method is useful to understand people's motivations and behaviors, but focus groups should not be conducted with participants who are not comfortable with one another (Morgan, 1998). Focus groups are ideal when studying the social construction of meaning (Caillaud & Flick, 2017). The discussions within the selected group are the data used by researchers (Morgan & Scannell, 1998). When conducting focus groups, researchers determine what topics will be studied and thereby discussed by participants (Morgan & Scannell, 1998). To hear what participants have to say, it is essential researchers are not too controlling of the group. "It is [the researcher's] focus, but it is [the participant's] group (Morgan, 1998, p. 10).

Focus groups can be designed to have homogeneous or heterogeneous groups (Morgan & Scannell, 1998). Homogeneous groups are made up of individuals who are similar in aspects related to the research questions; heterogenous are different in the characteristics related to the research questions (Flick, 2009). In the context of this study these related characteristics were things like academic college, educational pedigree (i.e.,

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where participants were educated and trained, who mentored them), appointment splits, and tenure level. To capture sentiments from each college in a manner where participants had the greatest chance of being comfortable, homogeneous groups within five of the colleges on OSU's Stillwater campus were studied. To increase participants' comfort level in the sessions, tenure track and non-tenure track faculty were studied separately. The colleges studied were Spears School of Business (SB), College of Education and Human Sciences (CEHS), College of Engineering, Architecture, and Technology (CEAT), Ferguson College of Agriculture (COA), and the College of Arts and Sciences (CAS). Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, focus groups were conducted via Zoom. A total of 11 focus groups were conducted in the summer of 2020 via Zoom.

Online Focus Groups

Online focus groups are different than the traditional face-to-face focus groups "in that they take place in a networked computer environment" (Abrams & Gaiser, 2017, para. 3). I conducted synchronous online focus groups via Zoom. When the richness of data generated in online synchronous focus groups was compared to face-to-face focus groups, it was found to be similar (Abrams & Gaiser, 2017). Synchronous focus groups consist of participants sharing opinions and answering questions in real-time (Abrams & Gaiser, 2017). Online focus groups are most beneficial when groups are accustomed to communicating over the internet (Poynter, 2010b). Faculty members had been using Zoom for teaching and meeting purposes for four months and therefore were likely familiar with the platform.

Participants and Sampling

  A purposive sampling method was used to assess research questions and gain an understanding of the internal audience's perceptions of LGIs. Participants were recruited by contacting each department head in each of the five colleges in the study. I asked each department head to suggest two to three faculty members to participate in focus groups. Participants came from various ranks and backgrounds. If department heads were non-responsive or their suggested participants were non-responsive, I acquired email addresses from departmental websites. Participants were selected to be as representative of faculty rank, race, and gender as possible. All potential participants were invited to participate in a focus group via email. This email was sent three weeks prior to each respective focus group session. Calendar invites were also sent. Reminder emails were sent two days prior to focus groups to those who had agreed to participate.

  It is suggested online focus groups use fewer participants than traditional focus group (Abrams & Gaiser, 2017). To give participants adequate time to share their thoughts, three to eight participants is the recommended size for online focus groups (Poynter, 2010a). Available internet connection speeds must be considered when recruiting participants (Abrams & Gaiser, 2017). Up to 10 participants were recruited for each focus group in hopes at least six participants were present to ensure the ideal range of participants was reached (Poynter, 2010a). This was ideal for capturing a range of opinions, while also allowing adequate time for each person to express their opinions (Abrams & Gaiser, 2017). A total of 11 focus groups were conducted. No incentives were offered to participants. Two focus groups – one for non-tenure track faculty and one for tenure track faculty – were conducted for each college. An additional focus group was

done for tenure track faculty in COA because more individuals were interested in participating than anticipated. There were a total 51 participants. Table 1 shows the breakdown of participants in each focus group.

Table 1

Focus Group Participation by College and Tenure Status

Focus Group	Number of Participants
College of Education and Human Sciences Non-Tenure Track Faculty	5
College of Education and Human Science Tenure Track Faculty	6
Spears School of Business Non-Tenure Track Faculty	3
Spears School of Business Tenure Track Faculty	4
College of Arts and Sciences Non-Tenure Track	2
College of Arts and Sciences Tenure Track Faculty	7
Ferguson College of Agriculture Non-Tenure Track Faculty	4
Ferguson College of Agriculture Tenure Track Faculty 1	5
Ferguson College of Agriculture Tenure Track Faculty 2	9
College of Engineering, Architecture, and Technology Non-Tenure Track Faculty	1
College of Engineering, Architecture, and Technology Tenure Track Faculty	5

Data Collection and Procedures

Focus groups were conducted via Zoom in the summer of 2020. Focus groups lasted between an hour and two hours. This length of time was ideal as it allowed for persistent observation of the phenomenon being studied but was not overly intrusive for participants (Krueger, 1998b; Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Litoselliti, 2003). Persistent observation is important because it allows the researcher to recognize the most relevant elements of the topic being addressed and then focus on them. This can be done through probing and clarifying questions. Persistent observation is a technique used to establish the credibility of a study (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). A moderator's guide was used at each focus group to guide the discussion between participants. It was developed utilizing recommendations by Bloor et al. (2001), Krueger (1998b), and Litoselliti (2003). The

protocol was audited by an external panel made up of agricultural communications and education faculty members who were familiar with focus groups and LGI experts from across the U.S. familiar with focus groups to increase the credibility of the study (Guba & Lincoln, 1982; Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Informed consent was provided to participants in their reminder email and through the chat function of Zoom.

Internal consistency was assured through comparing moderator's notes, assistant moderators' notes, and the audio recording and transcripts of participants' responses (Flick, 2009). To protect participant confidentiality, all identifying information was removed and a code was assigned to each participant. After coding was finished and themes were established, the assistant moderators confirmed the results. The full protocol was approved by the OSU Institutional Review Board (Appendix 1).

The advanced technology of Zoom offered unique challenges during data collection. In some focus group sessions participants messaged the moderator privately to express dissenting opinions or cite concerns that all participants were not being forthright. To mitigate these issues, I sent a follow-up questionnaire to offer participants another opportunity to share opinions. The questionnaire can be found in Appendix II.

Thick Description

A thick description is a detailed account of the field in which the research was completed (Holloway, 1997). A thick description helps the reader gauge the degree to which the results of the study can be transferred to other situations and therefore enhances the transferability of a study (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The thick description of this study is detailed throughout this methods chapter and context is also available in the

results chapter. I will also offer further description of the time and setting of the research here.

This study was completed during the COVID-19 pandemic in the summer of 2020. This study was focused on OSU, which is a NCAA Division I university for athletics. OSU is located in Stillwater, Oklahoma. Stillwater has a population of nearly 50,000. OSU offers more than 300 undergraduate majors and minors, and more than 200 master's and Ph.D. options. OSU is a nationally ranked research university. There are nearly 25,000 students enrolled at OSU. There are more than 500 student organizations available at OSU. OSU is known for their homecoming celebration and *America's Brightest Orange* (Oklahoma State University, 2021a). OSU had recently completed a rebranding effort streamlining logo usage across the university. The College of Education and Human Sciences had recently been formed from two separate colleges: The College of Education and the College of Human Sciences. Furthermore, the college of agriculture was renamed from the College of Agricultural Science and Natural Resources to the Ferguson College of Agriculture. A detailed history of OSU can be found in the introduction of this study.

Questioning Route

Questions asked in the focus groups were based off of the research questions. The ideal number of questions for each focus group is around 10, but this number can be increased slightly if the group is homogenous (Krueger, 1998b). It is suggested focus groups begin with describing ground rules for participants, such as do not talk over others, and there is not an order in which participants are intended to respond, and the moderator may ask to hear your opinions (Litoselliti, 2003).

When creating the questioning route, the participant comprehension of the questions was considered. The sequence of questions was also considered to ensure the questions flowed logically (Litoselliti, 2003). Furthermore, questions were mostly open-ended to allow participants to express their views (Krueger, 1998b). The first questions were used to make participants comfortable and engaged. The best questions to begin with are factual type questions, which are called opening questions (Krueger, 1998b; Litoselliti, 2003). In the present study, I began questions by asking participants to describe their role at OSU, home department, and appointment. Next, I asked introductory questions meant to introduce the topic of conversation for the focus group session (Krueger, 1998b). I asked questions such as "What comes to mind when you think of Oklahoma State University?" and "What do you think Oklahoma State is known for?"

Next, transition questions were used to advance the discussion toward the topics that directly addressed the research questions (Krueger, 1998b). Transition questions such as "What do you think Oklahoma State values as an institution?" were used. These questions "make the connection between the participant and the topic of investigation" (Krueger, 1998b, p. 25).

Subsequent questions were categorized into four sections: teaching, research, Extension, and the overall land-grant mission. These were considered to be key questions. Key questions often require more time for participants to properly articulate answers to and fully discuss, which means they also require more time and attentiveness in analysis (Krueger, 1998b). In each section the questions began as being more general and unstructured. As questions progressed in each section, they got more specific. This is

called the funnel approach (Litoselliti, 2003). These questions required some probing questions for participants to elaborate on their opinions.

To end the formal questioning portion of each focus group session, I asked an all-things-considered question: "Suppose you had 30 seconds to describe the land-grant mission to someone who is unfamiliar, what would you say?" This type of question encourages participants to reflect on everything they have heard during the session (Krueger, 1998b). Moreover, if participants have presented contradictory opinions, an all-things-considered questions offers an opportunity to provide a final, clear, and succinct opinion. This question was usually answered by every participant in the group (Krueger, 1998b). The last question I asked is known as an insurance question: "Is there anything that we haven't talked about that you would like to share before we finish up?" This ensures important points have not been neglected by the moderator's guide (Krueger, 1998b).

Finally, I summarized the major points discussed during the session and asked participants if they viewed it to be an adequate summary. This served as a member check. Member checking is an important process because it provides participants the opportunity to clarify points or provide other feedback (Krueger, 1998b), provides an opportunity to summarize preliminary findings, give participants space to correct researcher errors, and challenge interpretations (Creswell & Poth, 2017). A member check is also used to ensure the credibility of a study (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The full questioning route can be found in Appendix III.

Moderator and Assistant Moderator

A skilled, experienced, and flexible moderator is essential in focus group research (Bloor et al., 2001; Krueger, 1998b; Litoselliti, 2003). Moderators must strive to regard participants with respect at all times (Krueger, 1998c). Moderators should not inject their opinions into sessions, favor certain participants and their opinions, or show strong reactions; moderators are involved in focus groups to ask questions and listen to participants (Krueger, 1998c). Moderators use probing questions when participants are not eager to elaborate on their opinions. For example, a moderator may ask a participant to explain further or provide an example. Moderators are also there to regulate discussions by asking opinions from people who are hesitant to share and even ask some over-eager participants to share less (Krueger, 1998c). As I moderated the focus groups, analysis began at the time of data collection by considering the main points and major themes that emerge during discussions (Litoselliti, 2003). Moreover, when the moderator's guide did not properly address the research questions of the study, I made adjustments after initial sessions (Litoselliti, 2003). For instance, I reordered the introductory questions and removed the question, "What is it like to work at Oklahoma State University?" I have been trained in moderating focus groups by an associate professor in agricultural communications. I have moderated more than 10 focus group sessions and assisted with seven.

Assistant moderators were in charge of taking notes of participants' responses and body language. Following each session, I reflected and debriefed with the assistant moderator. During debriefing, we considered what were the most important things discussed during the session, how they differed or agreed with earlier focus groups, and

any unanticipated findings or conclusions (Krueger, 1998c). Given the large number of focus groups and the time commitment required, I had four assistant moderators during data collection but, only one assistant moderator per session. Assistant moderators also played an important role of auditing the results of the study. Once I had finished analyzing data and establishing themes, I met with all the assistant moderators to review and confirm the themes. This was an opportunity to articulate the results to a more external audience and enhance the credibility of the study (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

Subjectivity is a component of a researcher that may affect the way a researcher looks at a subject or impact the researcher's attitude toward the study's topic (Preissle, 2008). Qualitative experts suggest researcher be transparent and frank about their subjectivity so to better understand how his or her views may influence the research (Peshking, 1988). If the subjectivity of the researcher is available to the reader, the reader can more accurately consider the credibility and quality of a study (Peshking, 1988; Preissle, 2008). Therefore, in the name of academic honesty and integrity and to enhance the confirmability of the study, I have detailed my subjectivities below.

Subjectivity Statement

At the time of research, I was an agricultural education graduate student specializing in agricultural communications at OSU. This research was completed for my dissertation research. I have been involved with components of the land-grant mission since the age of eight as a member of 4-H. I grew up on a small farming operation in southwest Kanas. I am a white, middle-class woman. All of my post-secondary education has been completed at LGIs. Moreover, most of my professional employment has been at LGIs. All of my degrees and work experiences at LGIs have been directly connected to

colleges of agriculture. I have experience researching the internal brand of Extension organizations.

Data Analysis

As I was present at each focus group, I began analyzing once data collection began. First, I listened to participants' responses to confirm their intent was completely understood. Next, I summarized the focus group session as fully as possible for participants to confirm and clarify the points they made. I debriefed with the assistant moderator after each session and shared interpretations and conclusions from each session (Krueger, 1998a).

To ensure accurate and reliable data collection, each focus group session was audio recorded (Flick, 2009; Krueger, 1998c). The audio files from focus group sessions were transcribed using Temi, a web-based transcription app. Once the transcripts were completed by Temi, I reviewed them to ensure accuracy of transcription. Transcripts, moderator's notes, and assistant moderators' notes were used to confirm data collection and triangulate data (Flick, 2009).

Data were further triangulated by collecting artifacts from the OSU website and new faculty orientation sessions provided by OSU. Triangulation is the combination of different methods, theories, or data sources to examine a phenomenon (Flick, 2009). Triangulation is used to mitigate the deficiency of a single strategy (Thurmond, 2001). Furthermore, triangulation is used in qualitative inquiry to ensure that data is rich and comprehensive. Triangulation is also a tool to help researchers establish credibility (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Past research has assessed brands through triangulation (de Chernatony et al., 2007; Freling & Forbes, 2005). Triangulation was achieved by

comparing how the university presented itself compared to the viewpoints shared in the focus group sessions. This is considered a triangulation of data sources (Carter et al., 2014; Jonsen & Jehn, 2009). The 61 artifacts were inputted into MAXQDA20 and analyzed for mentions for the following terms: land, grant, mission, purpose, and role. Data were further triangulated by administering a questionnaire via Qualtrics to participants after focus groups were completed. This questionnaire was used to capture ideas that participants may have been reluctant to share with the wider group. The questionnaire was answered by 23 of the 51 participants (45.1%). Most of the participants who responded reported they were comfortable with responding in the focus groups. No confounding data was presented in the results of the questionnaire. This is considered methodological triangulation (Thurmond, 2001).

Transcripts, artifacts, and questionnaire responses were formally analyzed with MAXQDA20 using Glaser's constant comparative method (Glaser, 1965). Analysis was guided by the research questions (Litoselliti, 2003). I indexed the transcripts by assigning codes to data. Index codes were broad and become narrower as analysis progressed (Frankland & Bloor, 1999). Codes are labels that assign meaning to a piece of the transcript (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Codes were used to break the data into manageable pieces. Those pieces were then put together with other data to create meaning (Flick, 2009). Next, codes were organized into categories around different phenomena related to the research questions. These categories were used to create themes (Flick, 2009). Themes usually occur several times in the data set. A theme is "an abstract entity that brings meaning and identity to a recurrent experience and its variant manifestations. As such, a theme captures and unifies the [data] into a meaningful whole" (DeSantis &

Ugarriza, 2000, p. 362). In order to increase credibility, the assistant moderators reviewed and confirmed the themes I established.

As part of the coding and theme finding process, I took extensive notes and created summaries for each theme. The construction of the categories and themes were noted and described in MAXQDA20. These notes were helpful when describing the themes to external auditors and writing results (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). I also used these process notes to add to the formal audit trail of the study. The full audit trail of this study includes audio files, transcripts, written field notes, assistant moderator notes, artifacts, coding matrix, structure of categories, theme descriptions, and instrument development information. This information provides rationale for research decisions and improves the confirmability of the study. A dependability audit of my study was performed by the faculty on my graduate committee (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

Limitations

This study has potential limitations, which include those associated with all qualitative studies. The results of my study are not be generalizable (Creswell & Poth, 2017). The results can only directly be applied to OSU. However, the study will likely yield relevant implications for other LGIs and institutions of higher education. Purposive sampling also has limitations (Flick, 2009). Although every effort was made to select a diverse population from the faculty at OSU, it is possible the opinions offered were not representative of all faculty members at OSU since random sampling was not used.

Focus groups also offer their own unique set of limitations (Krueger, 1998a). There is a certain amount of social pressure within focus groups that can sometimes cause participants to voice socially desirable opinions rather than their actual opinions. This

may have been exacerbated in my study as some people within my groups knew one another personally or professionally. Due to scheduling conflicts, non-responses to emails, and other extenuating circumstances, there is an over representation of COA faculty and underrepresentation of non-tenure track faculty. COA faculty likely have a more familiarity or dependency upon the LGI funding. The data may be skewed to be more representative of opinions of COA faculty. Data was triangulated with artifacts and questionnaire data. This should mitigate some of the limitations addressed above (Creswell & Poth, 2017; Flick, 2009).

Priming may also be an issue in my study. Due to IRB regulations, participants were aware I was studying the land-grant mission and branding. Therefore, participants may have mentioned the land-grant mission and concepts related to branding more readily. My study may also be affected by COVID-19 and its many impacts. The data were collected in a time of general uncertainty, budget cuts, social distancing, and chaos. Moreover, in the fall of 2019 a new cohesive logo and brand image was instituted by OSU, which could affect my study. Finally, there were many changes in colleges at OSU immediately prior to data collection. Two colleges merged and another was renamed. Both of these instances resulted in some of the previous brand identifiers to be stripped away in a way that marginalized some faculty in each college. For instance, "natural resources" is no longer associated in name with the Ferguson College of Agriculture, and health and aviation are no longer accounted for the name of the College of Education and Human Sciences.

Summary

Participants for this study were recruited using a purposive sampling method through university department heads and departmental websites. A moderator and assistant moderators conducted 11 focus groups in the Summer of 2020. A standardized moderator's guide was used for each session. The audio from each session was transcribed and imported into MAXQDA20. Next, the data was analyzed using Glaser's constant comparative method to identify themes. Themes were confirmed by assistant moderators. The data was further triangulated by comparing the themes found in the focus groups to artifacts found on OSU's website, new faculty orientation materials, and responses from a post-focus group questionnaire.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to explore the land-grant brand identity amongst faculty members at OSU. The following research questions guided the study:

1. What are faculty members' perception of the OSU brand?

2. How do faculty members conceptualize the land-grant mission?

3. How do faculty members translate the land-grant mission in their work?

4. What are faculty members' opinions regarding the future of the land-grant mission?

The results presented in this chapter are from focus groups with tenure-track and non-tenure-track faculty members at OSU. These focus groups were conducted via Zoom in the summer of 2020 and lasted about two hours each. Results were triangulated using archival data from faculty trainings, university websites, the faculty handbook, other official university materials, and post focus group questionnaire. The results are presented as themes in order of the three research questions. The focus groups were analyzed with Glaser's constant comparative method (1965).

The focus groups were coded in MAXQDA2020; the codes were then organized into themes. Names and other identifying information were removed from transcripts. Participants were assigned codes. In these results, the college and tenure status for each comment will be provided in order to provide context.

RQ1. What Are Faculty Members' Perceptions of the Oklahoma State University Brand?

To conceptualize the internal brand of OSU, faculty members were asked to describe what came to mind of when they thought of OSU, what they thought OSU was known for, and what OSU values as an institution. The primary themes associated with this research question were OSU's internal brand identity, university values, an increased emphasis on research, and Stillwater connections.

OSU's Brand Identity

Faculty members in each of the 11 focus groups mentioned the color orange, Pistol Pete, and "Cowboy Culture" as major identifiers of OSU. Most focus groups also mentioned agriculture, T. Boone Pickens, athletic endeavors, diversity, community, and a friendly campus atmosphere as other major calling cards of OSU. Faculty members also mentioned aeronautical engineering, oil and gas, and fire programming as prominent and well-known programs or areas of study at OSU. OSU's homecoming celebration was also mentioned as an important component of the OSU brand.

Many faculty members described OSU as a home or family. "I think a lot of people think of it as like a sort of a home away from home," said a non-tenure-track faculty member in COA. A non-tenure-track faculty member in CEAT agreed, "It's kind

of like more like a family than just a place. I think it's just more homey. I would say Oklahoma State is a homey place to be."

A COA tenure-track faculty member felt the homey and welcoming atmosphere did not apply to all. In a response to the follow-up questionnaire they said,

> I think all of the people that are home bred so to speak, can't imagine there are other universities that function as well or better. Everyone speaks to how welcoming the campus is, but that is only if you adhere to their belief systems and ideals. If not, good luck.

Faculty members also mentioned teaching, research, and the land-grant mission as cornerstones of the OSU brand. According to the university website, OSU describes its efforts as "Building on its land-grant heritage, Oklahoma State University promotes learning, advances knowledge, enriches lives, and stimulates economic development through teaching, research, Extension, outreach, and creative activities." A tenure-track faculty member in CAS said, "Land-grant mission is like basic key word that OSU is affiliated with."

Although most faculty members saw OSU as a distinctive institution, some faculty members saw OSU as an average university. "OSU just looks like any other big state school in a lot of ways, and it covers all the areas and topics," said a tenure-track SB faculty member. The preceding information is the big picture of OSU's brand identity. As a brand is all-encompassing, all other data presented here also affects the overall brand identity of OSU.

Stillwater Connections

When participants were asked about the first things that came to mind when thinking of OSU, many mentioned Stillwater, Oklahoma. A non-tenure-track faculty member in CEAT stated, "I really think the biggest thing that comes to mind is Stillwater." A tenure-track faculty member in the SB was also of this opinion saying, "One thing I've heard here for many, many years is that OSU and Stillwater is like K-State and Manhattan. It's linked and related to the town." Another tenure-track faculty member in the SB the sentiments of their colleague, stating "I agree, it's hard to separate Stillwater from OSU."

While some faculty members saw this connection to Stillwater as a positive thing, even saying they heard from many alumni choosing to move back to Stillwater to retire, some faculty members dissented and expressed a more negative sentiment about the effect OSU has on Stillwater. A non-tenure-track faculty member in the CAS said

> I don't know if people have any association with the university, other than football. I think that's really sad. Because I think there's a lot that the university does give back to the community, and there's a lot more that we could give back, but I do notice there's a disconnect.

A non-tenure-track faculty member in CEAT mentioned another negative effect OSU has on Stillwater,

> In some ways our community suffers because OSU doesn't pay taxes. Taxes is how we pay for schools. The largest employer and landholder in Stillwater is OSU. And I think that's a huge drawback that has nothing to do with the land grant status, but when the largest employer doesn't have

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to pay taxes. It really affects the community in so many different ways . . .

So as a community member, that's a huge negative.

University Values

Faculty members were asked to describe the university's principles and what the university valued. Faculty members shared the university valued tradition, integrity, honesty, and inclusion, people, both students and faculty members, and teaching.

Tradition. "I see a respect for the notion of tradition. The fact that, you know, my dad and my granddad went here certainly there's a lot of respect for that," said a non-tenure-track CAS faculty member. Another non-tenure-track CAS faculty member agreed saying

I think tradition is really important at Oklahoma State. I think that sort of

bends both ways. Like sometimes that's great and sometimes that makes

us maybe less flexible or adaptable than we need to be. Or less willing to

approach, cultural elements at Oklahoma State that we know are

problematic and yet for some reason, and we tolerate rather than eradicate.

A non-tenure-track faculty member in the COA mentioned "I hope we value that the tradition of what OSU was built upon. I mean, it was, what did they say, *Princeton of the Prairie* back in the day."

Integrity, Honesty, and Inclusion. A tenure-track CEAT faculty member said, "I think the university values integrity and honesty from both the students' perspective and the faculty's perspective." One of the mission statements listed on OSU's website states "Integrity: Commitment to the principles of truth and honesty."

A tenure-track faculty member in the COA saw inclusion as a high priority for the university, "I've been happy with the amount of inclusion that's been here. I mean, there are always problems, but I think the ideas of diversity and inclusion are strong here." The university website also cites diversity and inclusion as a priority: "respect and value the diversity of individuals, beliefs and opinions." According to a follow-up questionnaire, response tenure-track faculty member in CAS did not view OSU as an inclusive institution: "By not putting out a statement of anti-racism this summer, OSU shows it does not value the voices or actions of people of color or allies."

People. According to a tenure-track COA faculty member OSU "values the people that make up the institution whether that's faculty, staff, or students . . . . I see that as the common thread, amongst decisions that are made and in a lot of the efforts." A CEHS tenure-track faculty member said, "I think we feel like that is our first obligation to our students. . . our first obligation and responsibility to take care of is teaching." Faculty members also mentioned that OSU valued alumni.

A non-tenure-track faculty member in CAS found themselves questioning whether or not OSU truly valued students or was more concerned about the financial aspect of the university, "In terms of the actual students especially right now is we're being ordered back to class despite coronavirus. My cynical side thinks, is it really just about the numbers? It's about the money?" Moreover, a CAS tenure-track-faculty in the follow-up said "By going back to school in person in the fall, OSU shows it values tuition more than the health of its students, staff, faculty, and their family members."

Teaching. Along with valuing the people which make up the institution, most faculty members agreed teaching and instruction were high priorities of the university. One tenure-track faculty member in CEHS said

> I think OSU has had a really long-standing commitment to its students and providing really high-quality instruction. I think even as they've increased the focus on research, I think that teaching is still much part of the mission and they want to enhance the community through the high-quality instruction students are leaving with.

A tenure-track faculty member in COA said "it seems like the undergraduate education kind of takes priority. I don't know if that's because we're drowning in undergrad students compared to our faculty numbers." A tenure-track faculty member in SB believes the university values teaching above the other branches of the land-grant mission "At OSU as a whole, I think my sense is that instruction is probably the main driver. I think probably research and then Extension in, in that order."

Although many faculty members cited teaching and instruction as the main priority and high value for the university, some faculty members said research seemed like the highest priority for the university. This shift is detailed in another theme related to this research question.

Teaching is Why I am Here. Participants were very passionate about teaching. Faculty members valued relationships with students and were enthusiastic about education. Faculty members were insistent on being accessible to students and wanted to continue that role.

A CEAT tenure-track faculty member spoke of the value faculty in their college placed on teaching, "Faculty here value teaching quite a bit. I would say my colleagues in the department and the college and the whole university talk and care a lot more about teaching than I hear from other people at other universities." Another CEAT tenure-track faculty member was disappointed in the level of recognition available for excellent teaching, yet they also noted faculty members were still motivated to teach well: "We don't have a good way of recognizing and awarding the teaching. But the faculty members here certainly care. That's part of just kind of the culture that we have." A COA tenure-track faculty member thought faculty members at OSU were more focused on teaching than peers at other institutions, "Compared to other places I've been, I think the focus on students is greater here. . . . In a good way."

A COA tenure-track faculty member valued the relationships they fostered with students: "The relationships I build with students and being a teacher make me feel like I have a positive contribution to the life of students, so that means a lot to me." An SB tenure-track faculty member thought teaching was the main function of faculty members:

> From my perspective, that's why we're here. Everybody has said we got to
>
> do research, that's what the university is saying that's what you gotta do.
>
> But, without students, we would have no reason to exist as a university.
>
> And to me that's a critical thing.

A CEHS tenure-track faculty member had similar thoughts saying, "I think we feel like our first obligation is to our students. We value research. We value service to the community. But our first obligation and responsibility to take care of is teaching." Another CEHS tenure-track faculty member also agreed, "The first thing I thought was

we really cherish students and instruction and focus on them, but also research has an emphasis, not too much that it takes away from kind of outreach or instruction aspects."

A CEHS non-tenure-track faculty member spoke about the benefit of watching students grow and evolve:

One of the benefits we have too is we get to see them grow. It's not like we're one and done. Many times we may see them as freshmen, sophomores, sometimes as juniors, and then in capstone, we get to see what they've learned and watch them grow.

An SB tenure-track faculty member talked about the multiple generations of students that they had mentored:

I love instruction. Research is just meh. I really want to interact with the students and get involved in their learning and get them outta here. I had a guy that graduated from our program, who's enrolling their child at OSU. He stopped by my office just to say hello. And to me, that's what this is about. Those folks who left can be very successful taking whatever experiences you could share with them, discovery or life, and going out and do good things and come back and share it with others. You know, that's what gets me up every morning is that part of the job.

A CEAT tenure-track faculty member talked about teaching as the most rewarding part of their job:

I do both teaching and research, but I feel like teaching is a really rewarding portion of our job, because that's where we get to interact with the students. You know, sometimes we hear feedback, and you feel, you

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know you're doing something good for the students and internally you

know, you get rewarded for that even though probably you may not really

get a recognition, but at least I think that's the part of the job I like a lot . .

. . good comments from students can be even better than the feeling of

getting one paper published, at least to me. . . . Papers, aren't going to

come back in 10 years and give you a hug.

An SB tenure-track faculty member enjoyed teaching, but did not feel that it was

incentivized:

I find it very rewarding to work with the students, which I don't want to

create the impression that I don't, it's just that usually the incentives aren't

there to focus on teaching as much as research, but it is very intrinsically

rewarding anyway, working with students and just getting to know them

and helping them succeed and navigate problems.

Faculty members were insistent about being accessible to student. A CEAT non-tenure-

track faculty member talked about the open-door policy of most faculty members in their

department:

I have an open-door policy, and most of the faculty that are on my same

hall, we all have open door policies where yes, we have office hours, but

our true intent is we want students to feel comfortable coming in. Like,

we're people too, and we value their specific individual lives.

A CEHS tenure-track faculty member was concerned about the transition to online classes, even prior to pandemic forced courses online. They were concerned relationships with students would suffer as a result:

> I think this is probably happening everywhere, but we're all making the
> shift to more online courses, and I do worry that there is a loss there. Not
> only on the faculty perspective, but also on the student side and the
> relationships that they can build with their faculty members.

Although most faculty members were more passionate about teaching than research, a few faculty members dissented and cared more for research. An SB tenure-track faculty member said, "I got into this to do research." Another SB tenure-track faculty member agreed:

> My personal passion is research, so that's why I'm in this field. I just
> really enjoy it. I think it's really rewarding. I like thinking about problems
> and trying to figure out how people work. And as I said, I was in industry
> before, and that's a big reason I left is because I just wanted to do just
> basic academic research.

Varying Levels of Students. When asked about the students at OSU, faculty members often cited the variety of students. Faculty members spoke about the varying levels of interest in research, motivation, and academic achievement among students. Many credited this wide variety of students to fulfilling the land-grant mission.

A CEAT tenure-track faculty member spoke about the ways they attempt to give lower achieving students a leg up:

I am here to serve my students, all of them. We're a land grant institution.

I want to make sure students that are behind can catch up. Students that

don't know research are the students I approach to try it out in the lab first

. . . . It's all about equalizing the opportunities for students. Making sure

every student has the same opportunity to succeed because they come in

here very different ways.

A CEAT non-tenure-track faculty member saw it as their role to teach in a way every level of student can find accessible: "I think that my job is to kind of accept everybody where they are without making an assumption about where they came from and trying to provide opportunities for them to be successful." However, a COA tenure-track faculty member found this range to be quite challenging: "I find students have a very broad range of backgrounds and abilities, which is a challenge to teach to all different levels for sure." A CAS tenure-track faculty member talked about accepting students with lower test scores as part of the mission of OSU: "Part of our land grant mission is to let in a more diverse group. In other words, the lower the SAT and ACT scores, that kind of stuff." A CAS non-tenure-track faculty member echoed these thoughts saying:

Here we have a mission and history of being a university for everybody.

Like we have very low, if any admission standards, which is a blessing

and a curse. I like that I get a diversity of students, and I can see students

that otherwise wouldn't have had the opportunity sometimes just flourish

and thrive once they get here.

A CEAT tenure-track faculty member made it their personal mission to embrace a diversity of students: "I think part of my mission is to make sure the field that I'm in values all different backgrounds . . . . it's worth working towards making these institutions really great."

A COA tenure-track faculty member talked about the wide variety of students served by the university:

> When we have really good students, we do put in other resources to really help them shine, but we have a really sincere drive to take students with low ACT scores coming in. We want them to do well. So, we really do have that educate the public, serve the public attitude. We'll get you a degree.

A CAS tenure-track faculty member spoke specifically about serving students from a rural background and varying socioeconomic status, "We were an A&M school. We have a more agricultural and natural resources focus still. And so, especially when that's the case, the students that we're supposed to be serving are by definition, more rural and less economically well off." A CEAT tenure-track faculty member had similar ideas, saying, "A lot of our freshmen being a state land grant institution, they're not coming from privileged backgrounds and academic families."

A CEAT non-tenure-track faculty member spoke of the negative side of accepting lower achieving students:

> I know because of our mission we are supposed to be taking in students that maybe can't go to OU or some other schools. But I also think in some ways it's disastrous. I've just seen it firsthand student after student after

student who probably should be at a junior college getting some basic

skills before they come here . . . . but at the same time, there's students

that are going to be able to come here that couldn't go anywhere else, that

can be successful.

An SB non-tenure-track faculty member put it this way: "We have really good talent. It's just about coaching up that talent and getting them to perform well." A COA tenure-track faculty members talked about the challenge of teaching the applied science of agriculture to students who may or may not have a background in it:

We have a large number of students with no agricultural background. And

it is a challenge from the teaching side to know what level you are going

to teach and still have everybody engaged from the novice of not even

being around an animal at all to those that have been around them all their

lives.

Increased Emphasis on Research. Faculty members described an increased emphasis on research. Some faculty members attributed this to the shift to an R1 university, while others thought the switch was primarily due to an increased need for grant funding. Faculty members provided evidence of university behaviors that were intended to encourage research.

A tenure-track faculty member from CEHS shared their view of the recent shift:

When I was hired, OSU [was not a top tier research institution] . . . . as a

tenure-track research-based faculty, I'm seeing a lot of emphasis on

getting those publications out there, securing grants and external funding,

which of course goes back to the land-grant mission as well because they

want the research to be connected to the local community and the state

community and forming those relationships.

Another tenure-track faculty member in CEHS echoed the sentiment and added thoughts regarding the increased need for grant funding:

I think there's been a shift even within research. It's shifted from

publications to grants. Now grants are the bigger emphasis. I think we

know it's a land-grant university, but when it comes down to when you're

being evaluated, they're looking at those grants and publications.

Faculty member in other colleges also saw an increased importance for grant funding, but not necessarily in productivity. One tenure-track faculty member in CEAT put it this way:

I feel like the emphasis is on the money and not the research though. You

get a million dollars and do nothing with it, they're going to see a million

dollars. They're not going to see that you've done nothing with that. So

there's too much emphasis on the money, not enough emphasis on

outcomes. Because you can do a lot of outcomes with very little money,

but it's going to go pretty much unseen in most cases.

Non-tenure-track faculty members also recognized a shift in university priorities. A non-tenure-track faculty member in the COA, mentioned the university's priorities being expressed through hiring decisions:

In our department, we're really struggling on a teaching side, but the last

four or five people that we have hired have a 70% research appointment

and the 30% teaching appointment, which means they teach one class a

year. So, the majority of those people are kind of geared towards heavy

research.

Faculty members also mentioned research as having longer-lasting effects and

impacts than other parts of their work. "Teaching is great, but at the end of the day,

students are gone. And Extension is within County, within the State. That is why faculty

members place high priority on research and give their heart and soul doing high-quality

research," said a tenure-track faculty member in COA. Moreover, faculty members also

mentioned research as the way that the university gains international recognition.

Chasing Funding and Grants. Pursuing grants and thoughts on funding was a

common thread throughout each focus group. Faculty members were concerned about

research, funding models, getting grants, and tuition dollars.

A COA tenure-track faculty member talked about the challenges of acquiring

research funding, "It's hard to get research funding. Commodity groups are hit or miss,

and they want very specific things. I think each mission has challenges, but in my view,

Extension probably has it the and the biggest challenges going forward." Another COA

tenure-track faculty member spoke of the lack of consistent funding:

> We struggle a lot with the lack of consistent funding. Federal funds have
>
> gone down. The success rates on USDA grants are less than 10%. Hatch
>
> funds, which used to fund some of the long-term research, has shifted to
>
> more overhead administrative stuff because the states have stopped
>
> supporting the university systems

A CEAT tenure-track faculty member talked about the pressure of pursuing grant funding but not necessarily in the line of inquiry they were interested in:

> We always feel the pressure of research money. But often times I have some interest in certain topic, but because that topic isn't in line with available funding, I have to just abandon that idea in order to go to topics that potentially could bring some money.

According to faculty members, not all disciplines have the same opportunities to acquire external funding. A CAS tenure-track faculty member put it this way: "I think in my field, we have very limited opportunities to get big research grants. It just doesn't happen, and it's usually the bigger schools who gets them." A SB tenure-track faculty member spoke of the challenges in their line of research:

> There are certain fields that lend themselves to more external funding opportunities. If you can get them, and it's hard to get NSF [National Science Foundation] and NIH [National Institutes of Health] grants, but if you can get them, those could be grants that are hundreds of thousands of dollars, or over a million-dollar grants to do, you know, the kinds of work that is expensive. Whereas the kind of research that I do and a lot of us do in social sciences, is not that expensive to do. I mean, if I was applying for a grant, and it asked me to justify needing a hundred thousand dollars, I wouldn't even want to suggest what that money is for.

Another CAS tenure-track faculty member spoke of the size of grants available to them: "Although we get national grants, it's only few thousand dollars, and that's it. And that's

not enough to even fund a graduate student an entire semester." A CEAT tenure-track faculty member spoke of the college's priorities:

> From my observations in the last few years within our college is that the color of the money matters. And what I mean by that is federal government funding, NSF, NIH, DOD [Department of Defense], that money is valued more from an A&D [appraisal and development] perspective and from a tenure perspective than money that maybe is obtained within the state. And as a land grant university, I mean, I understand the need to have some federal funds for a national reputation and whatnot, but there's lots of ways we could be serving the state and used to serve the state that we are not pursuing or aren't valued as much in my humble opinion.

A CAS tenure-track faculty member noticed that the university treated some programs differently than others, "I also think that OSU sometimes has preferential treatment towards programs which can bring those big bucks just because their field has many opportunities and many ways to apply for funding."

When speaking about the priority of research, a CAS tenure-track faculty member spoke about the emphasis on external funding, "And within research, external funding is what really counts. You bring in the money. They'll reduce your teaching load. You can publish as much as you want, but your teaching load will not get reduced." A tenure-track faculty member in CEAT spoke about the way tuition dollars are distributed and used within the college:

I think you have to follow the money. What I mean by that is the

university has this system set up by which they allocate money, and it's by

student credit hour. That means even within engineering, we're competing

against each other for students in classes. And we're certainly competing

against other colleges. I don't think that's the best thing for the university

or the students.

A COA tenure-track faculty member was quite frank about the university's dependency

on student tuition dollars: "The primary driver for having face-to-face instruction is false.

It's not because we're a family, and we miss you. It's because our checkbook's kind of

weak, and we need you." A CAS tenure-track faculty member spoke about the internal

contradiction at the university: "The internal emphasis is on research, but it's the teaching

that's keeping our budgets, particularly now."

A COA tenure-track faculty member thought research grant dollars and student

tuition dollars were the primary sources of funding for the university, leaving Extension

out in the cold:

Research is what, in a lot of ways, pays to keep the lights on in most

situations. So that's what most universities end up leaning toward is the

research side, just because F&A [facilities and administration costs] is a

big factor for a university to function. And the same thing could be said

for students and their tuition that they pay. And so that's why Extension

kind of falls to the wayside because it's not getting any sizable amount of

money that's going into that effort.

A CEHS tenure-track spoke about acquiring external funding to support Extension and outreach efforts:

> When we look at the future of outreach, Extension, land-grant type work, I think this goes back to our shift to being an R1 institution. There's a lot more expectation to be securing those grants and the external funds to support that kind of outreach and Extension work. Maybe we're not receiving as much from tax dollars or other sources of revenue as we have been. But, to bring in those external funds takes its own set of time and expertise to put that together.

RQ2. How do Faculty Members Conceptualize the Land-Grant Mission?

To understand how faculty members conceptualized the land-grant mission, participants were asked what the land-grant mission meant to them, their own definition of the land-grant mission, and describe how the land-grant mission is manifested at OSU. The primary themes associated with this research question were aware of but uninformed about the land-grant mission, and varying definitions of the land-grant mission.

Aware of But Uninformed About the Land-Grant Mission

Although some faculty members were unaware or had a very limited understanding of Extension, when asked if they had heard of the land-grant mission prior to participating in each respective focus group, faculty members from every college were at least aware of the land-grant mission.

Interestingly, COA faculty members assumed other college faculty members would be unaware of the land-grant mission. A COA non-tenure-track faculty member

put it this way, "I know Oklahoma State is a land grant institution. I personally know what that means, but I don't know that everybody else does." A COA tenure-track faculty member thought the value of the land-grant mission may be different across campus, "I often wonder if other faculty and other colleges on our campus also see the value of the land grant mission." Yet another COA tenure-track faculty member stated,

> I think there is some siloing that goes on our campus. And what I mean by that is you might ask some faculty in the college, in the Ferguson College of Agriculture and asked them about Extension and the tripartite model of the land grant, there would be a cohesive message. But, and then if you went to another college on our campus, I think you might get a whole different perspective.

Another non-tenure-track COA faculty member spoke of their own ignorance of others involved in Extension across campus,

> In a university-wide meeting someone from Human Sciences was talking about their Extension appointment, and I was like, "Human Sciences has Extension?" So, I would say that it's maybe at least in my case it is twofold. They didn't necessarily know about our Extension side, and I had no idea that they had Extension. I was equally as lost.

The heaviest skepticism about faculty member's awareness of the land-grant mission came from the COA. The subthemes related to this theme were concerns regarding public awareness and stakeholder priorities, and unawareness of Extension.

Priorities of External Stakeholders and Publics. Among other pressures, faculty members spoke of the different expectations of external stakeholders and the

opinions of the public. Faculty members were unsure if people understood or appreciated research. There was also concern the public was unaware of resources available to them through OSU. Faculty members viewed students as the main product the public judged OSU on. Some stakeholder groups have power and sway over decisions and services.

A CEAT tenure-track faculty member spoke of the perception of research throughout the state: "The average Oklahoman probably doesn't understand what research is, how it can help, or what it can accomplish." A COA non-tenure-track faculty member said something similar: "I think people have no understanding of why people are doing research, they think that's just a complete waste of money." An SB non-tenure-track faculty member spoke about the perceptions of advisory boards and alumni as it pertains to research:

> I think there's just great confusion. They just don't really understand why we are researching and what practical use it has. I don't think they really understand that the currency, at least within academia, is research. . . . Viable research really does have a practical application, but it's maybe a few steps along the way. So, I don't think our alumni or our stakeholders truly understand that our value really comes from publishing in these obscure top journals that only academics read and very few practitioners read or would understand.

A CEHS non-tenure-track faculty member spoke of the public unawareness of OSU and its resources: "There's tons of people that don't realize OSU is available to them." A COA non-tenure-track faculty member spoke specifically of Extension users:

Extension users I work with on a regular basis, their parents and

grandparents have been Extension users. They are completely bought in.

They trust their Extension educator. They have a relationship with them. If

they know us, they know us. And if not, they don't have, they really, I find

they simply don't know us and they're not utilizing our services.

Another COA non-tenure-track faculty member spoke of the unawareness of Extension

among Stillwater residents: "Even in Stillwater, when you tell people you work for the

university, they will say, 'Oh, so what do you teach?' 'I work for, you know, I work on

the Extension side.' They have no idea."

A COA tenure-track faculty member spoke about students being the main

interaction the public has with OSU:

The students we train take positions in [industry] and that's the product

from our department that is most generally affiliated with the quality of

the job that's being done at the institution. So, if some young person goes

out there and rocks it, we're rock stars. If they go out there and fall on

their face, we must not be doing our job.

A CAS tenure-track faculty member faced similar issues in their program: "Students

don't get licensed. If they get through our program, there's nobody to stop them from

going out and doing that job. And of course, blaming us as their school." Students were

the primary interaction with external stakeholders, but faculty also thought students were

very unaware of the land-grant mission. A CEAT tenure-track faculty member

specifically mentioned the student perspective saying,

In videos the president always mentions the land-grant mission, but you

know, if we ask the students how they feel, I don't know if they know

about it, or what their perceptions about it are. What is the mission of the

land-grant university in their mind?

An SB tenure-track faculty member interpreted the public's expectations to be

focused solely on the quality education of students: "I think if you walk up and down the

street and started talking to businesses they'd say 'It's just teaching. Just put out good

graduates that can get a job.'"

Some stakeholders had a bigger influence on the university than others. A COA

tenure-track faculty member described this relationship:

I think we have a pretty interesting relationship with our stakeholders in

terms of producer groups in Oklahoma. They were kind of on the front

lines of identifying a Dean and a Vice President. That's how tied in this

particular group of people is to this institution. I don't know if that

happens everywhere.

Another COA tenure-track faculty member talked about Extension stakeholders and their

territorial nature:

An interesting thing about Extension is stakeholders, certain producer

groups get kind of territorial. It feels like we belong to them. We're their

free consultants. And if they find out some people are helping some other

groups, especially if it's a group they don't really like, they don't like that.

And so, you know, there's the land-grant mission as it is stated, but who

else does out there in the state feels like we belong to them and who has

the political power? Because land-grant institutions can be very political.

Unawareness of Extension. When faculty members were asked about their

general views of Extension at OSU, many faculty members had an understanding and

were familiar with Extension. However, not all faculty members understood this leg of

the stool. A tenure-track faculty member from SB said the following when asked about

Extension:

So I have a naive question, but what does Extension mean exactly? To be

honest with you, my understanding of what a land grant institution is just

what I gleaned from the context when I hear the word. I have impressions

of what it means. So what does the Extension part refer to exactly?

A tenure-track faculty member in CEHS reported their experience with describing an

Extension appointment to colleagues,

I've run into faculty on our own college campus where I make the

statement of, "I have an Extension appointment," and they look at me like

I have a third head and they say, "What do you mean you have an

Extension appointment?"

Faculty members were not the only audience who was unaware of Extension.

Faculty members reported students were unfamiliar with Extension as well. A non-

tenure-track faculty member from the COA noted their unfamiliarity with Extension as a

student:

I graduated from OSU in '02. I didn't know what Extension was as a

graduate in the College of Ag . . . . I didn't know what Extension was until

I got asked to come back and interview for an Extension position and then

I researched it.

Another COA faculty non-tenure track faculty member mentioned that their own students

did not understand the structure of the land-grant

They never see the Extension people because at least within our

department, you're either research and Extension or teaching and research.

So, our students don't even know who those Extension faculty are and

have no idea of the actual structure of the university and the DASNR

system. They have no idea.

Extension, Outreach, and Service, Oh My! When discussing Extension,

outreach, and service, there was confusion among faculty members. Some faculty

members saw outreach as interaction with community, while others said using guest

speakers in their courses was a form of outreach. Other faculty members said outreach

was different than Extension, and was more related to offering online courses. Faculty

members were unsure if outreach was valued by the university and what activities were

considered to be Extension, outreach, and service.

A CAS tenure-track faculty member spoke about some efforts they engaged in:

"The university has programs such as Grandparent's University. And that's something

that I like for outreach because we get to talk to young kids and talk to their

grandparents." An SB non-tenure-track faculty member talked about engaging in

outreach through guest speakers: "In our classrooms, we're encouraged to bring in guest

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speakers, take students either on field trips or have them interview professionals. I assign an assignment where they go interview an entrepreneur. We try to really get into that." An SB non-tenure-track faculty member spoke about engaging with alumni and communities to build relationships:

> We do have a very concerted effort at engaging alumni, engaging the community to expose the students and to build kind a bridge between what's going on in the communities, as well as what's going on at Oklahoma State and bringing them together.

There was much discussion about the definition of Extension and outreach. This was a point of confusion for many. A CEHS non-tenure-track faculty member spoke about the nuanced differences between Extension and outreach:

> I think the idea of outreach and Extension have been invaluable for nutrition and education around the state. I'll speak more to outreach. One of the things you find is that you connect with different groups through networking or through word of mouth or even by personal invitation. And I think that really does help with our brand, particularly with the idea that they see a representative from Oklahoma State who really do have a connection with the communities that we speak to and serve. So, it's not just "we'll go to a random community," but we're germane to these communities. So, we understand the language, we understand the nuances, the trends, there's a personal connection and even a trust with what we bring to the table, and I think that helps tremendously.

A CAS non-tenure-track faculty member talked about the university's efforts in using the arts in outreach, "Now that we've got the wonderful orchestra hall, and we have all the great theaters, I see that as being a great, very public, form of outreach."

A CAS tenure-track faculty member spoke about engaging with communities via outreach and how students are also involved in those efforts:

> Outreach is seen as a good thing. And we definitely are encouraged to do things, and we provide a lot of community screenings. So, a lot of students also get involved with some of the outreach events that we provide. My personal experience, again, has been positive

A CEHS tenure-track faculty member was still trying to unpack what outreach or Extension was most relevant to their work:

> Something I had to really figure out was what is outreach and Extension? And how can I make my research relevant for the community I'm living in, even if I'm studying, you know, larger populations? The more community-based research I started to be involved in, the easier it became. Let's start with being involved with. But then I also had to figure out other ways to disseminate some national findings, whether it's through, you know, media requests or that kind of thing. I don't think it's as easy for everyone depending on what kind of research is or your population of interest.

A CAS tenure-track faculty member wanted to thoroughly define outreach: "Are we talking about outreach as going out and helping the public based on our expertise and

research? Or are we talking about outreach as in Arts and Sciences forcing some of our core curriculum classes online?"

A COA tenure-track faculty member used the terms Extension and service interchangeably and provided examples of things they considered to be in these categories:

> So in my particular appointment, a 100% teaching, my Extension and service kind of materializes through work I do out in the state as it relates to the youth development aspect of [discipline] in 4-H youth development. Whether that's serving as a judge or serving on a committee or, or sharing my expertise in some capacity through an invited lecture or guest presentation that tends to be the way that evolves.

Another tenure-track faculty member in COA talked about the fluid structure of the land-grant and its outreach efforts:

> Anytime we're sharing our research with anybody, that becomes Extension, and so sharing what those stakeholder groups that might be interested, of course, all of our traditional Extension products are research based, right? So, there's that built-in link between research and Extension, that's the purpose of Extension is to share the research. It feels kind of hard to parse it all out, right? 'Cause it's all just kind of fluid. It's designed to be that way.

Varying Definitions of the Land-Grant Mission

Participants proposed many different definitions of what the land-grant mission meant and its primary focus. The subthemes associated with this theme were the land-grant is about the land, the land-grant is for more than agriculture, the land-grant is successful when serving the state, the land-grant mission is intended to improve society, and the land-grant mission is delivering equal opportunity education

The Land-Grant is About the Land. Another interesting component of the land-grant mission and institution was the connection to land that faculty member associated with the land-grant mission. "I mean, there are institutions that where the land was set aside. I think too, for people to study the land in order to add to the betterment of that community" said an CAS non-tenure-track faculty member. A tenure-track faculty member from the CAS did not see their discipline as relevant to the mission, "My field doesn't have much to do with the land, so I don't worry much about land-grant mission."

A non-tenure-track faculty member in the SB associated land with the mission, but was unsure as to why the association between the two existed, "The land is the key to the land-grant, right? So, here's a chunk of land, do this mission. The mission is pretty boilerplate, but I don't know why the land always matters, but I always make that association." A tenure-track faculty member in CEHS spoke about the duty and responsibility that comes with the land-grant:

> I think about the fact that the university has been granted land, you know,
> we're sitting on space that was not the university's in the first place,
> whether that be even indigenous land. So, I think we need to honor that.

Then, how can we give back to the community to kind of pay back in

ways that we have been given.

The Land-Grant Mission is For More than Agriculture. Participants believed

the land-grant mission was meant to serve more than agriculture. A tenure-track faculty

member in COA described the land-grant mission this way:

> The purpose of it is not just to serve people in the agriculture, but we serve
>
> all of the people. So the idea is we are doing our best to create good
>
> information that impacts the daily lives of people and get that information
>
> to them.

A tenure-track faculty member in CAS described the multifaceted nature of the land-

grant mission like this:

> I know a lot of land grants started as A&M institutions, but clearly we're
>
> doing so much more than just, agriculture and [mechanics] now. We are
>
> covering almost every academic field at OSU. And I think that's what the
>
> modern land grant institution should be: cheap, affordable, diverse, and
>
> encouraging a diversity people from all different walks of life.

A few faculty shared some dissenting thoughts. One CEAT tenure-track faculty

member associated the land-grant exclusively with the COA, "Of course the land grant

mission is associated with agriculture, I guess." A non-tenure-track CAS faculty member

had similar sentiments stating, "We are the institution that has been built to study the land

and to promote the people who have been working it for the long."

The Land-Grant is Successful When Serving the State of Oklahoma. Faculty members saw serving the broader state of Oklahoma and its population as an essential part of the land-grant mission. "OSU is able to provide research-based information basically to anybody in Oklahoma" said a CEHS non-tenure-track faculty member. A non-tenure-track faculty member in CEAT spoke of the benefits of having experts in the state: "The fact we have so many knowledgeable people this close to home, and also provide these resources to the rest of the state is super important."

A non-tenure-track faculty member in the CAS spoke of maintaining the original mission of the land-grant: "The school was built here to help the people here and the area here. And I don't think we should lose sight of that." Another non-tenure-track faculty member, this time in the COA described how he described his role to stakeholders:

> I, as a representative of OSU in this area, am ears, eyes, and boots on the ground for my institution. So, I am going to bring knowledge from there to serve you. And I'm going to take your queries back there to find solutions. We are always ready to work for you and work with you.

A CAS tenure-track faculty member described the mission of LGIs and its connection to the state:

> The mission of our school should be to help improve our democracy, particularly in Oklahoma. For my role, that means teaching them how to get information from government, how to attend the right meetings, the meetings they're entitled to, knowing what those laws are, their right to know is not taught anywhere in this state at any level . . . . That's what a

land-grant does is try to improve society and to me it means helping our

Oklahomans participate in their democracy.

Finally, a CEAT tenure-track faculty member described the land-grant mission's fierce
dedication to the state in which it lies:

We're a state college. We are this state's university. We're not a donor's

university. We're not Boone Pickens' university, we're the state's

university. And that's in every regard, to educate all of our students, all of

our college-age students and anyone that wants to come back to school to

learn a new skill. We're here to research any needs of the state to help

build economic development for the State. We're here for outreach to

make sure farmers and industry have access to the best experts in their

field to help make their processes better. That is our mission. Our mission

isn't to serve ourselves or to serve the elite.

The Land-Grant Mission is Intended to Better Society. The idea of the land-
grant mission being a duty and responsibility also carries into this theme. Many faculty

members see the land-grant mission as a duty and responsibly to better the world and

society. "It has some responsibilities and duties towards the society, and it's fulfillment

with its three branches" said a non-tenure-track faculty member in COA. A tenure-track

faculty member from CAS explained it this way:

A land-grant institution is one that is supported by the people of the state,

through the taxation or other means. And it is our duty to serve them. We

have a responsibility because they are paying for us basically . . . . we

have a responsibility to make sure that their lives are better, that we
contribute.

A non-tenure-track faculty member from SB described the contribution to society by saying "The land grant mission is a mandate to create and disseminate new knowledge that is for the betterment of society, for the betterment of Oklahoma, and humankind."

Other faculty members described the land-grant mission as preparing students for society and providing practical knowledge for society. A non-tenure-track faculty member in COA saw their role as "turning out students that are well-rounded, that don't necessarily remember everything I've ever taught them, but are functional members of society." A CAS tenure-track faculty member said "being a land grant institution means research should be focused on the practical aspects of work. So for instance, working on something that could make an impact in society, make it a little bit better in a sense."

The Land-Grant Mission is Delivering Equal Opportunity Education. Many faculty members described the land-grant mission as providing education to students and the general population in an equal way. "Our purpose is specifically to provide higher education for the common man, so that higher education doesn't become some kind of exclusive unattainable thing that only the rich can have," said a non-tenure-track faculty member in the SB. Another non-tenure-track faculty member in SB said, "We're here for all Oklahomans and it's important we provide education for the common man."

A non-tenure-track faculty member in CAS described the mission by saying, "we're offering a robust educational opportunity that ideally is affordable to people from the state or the local community." A tenure-track faculty member in CAS emphasized increasing opportunities for citizens as paramount in the land-grant mission, "Increasing

everyone's opportunities through education and serving the populations of the state equally or equitably."

Faculty members also discussed the varying levels of students that are educated at OSU. Faculty members prioritized serving those students equally. "Making sure every student has the same opportunity to succeed when they get out of here because they come here very different ways," was the goal of one CEAT tenure-track faculty member. "I want all my students to be at the same spot. I want to make sure they're all going to come out on an equal playing field, so they all have the same opportunities for internships and jobs."

RQ3. How do Faculty Members Translate the Land-Grant Mission in Their Work?

To understand how faculty members interpreted and expressed the land-grant mission in their everyday work, participants were asked to reflect on teaching, research, and Extension, and how they integrated the missions. The primary themes associated with this research question were evaluation and expectations of faculty members guide their behavior, performing outside of actual appointment, missions must be integrated, applied and practical research, industry connections, and difficulties in fulfilling the land-grant mission.

Evaluation and Expectations of Faculty Members Guide Their Behavior

Most faculty members were aware of the land-grant mission. However, most faculty members stated the way they were evaluated was more likely to influence their behavior than the overarching mission of the institution. Faculty members mentioned

both on an annual basis and through the tenure and promotion process was. A tenure-track faculty member in CAS admitted,

> I didn't actually have any idea what land-grant meant or that OSU was one
>
> when I came here. Maybe it's the department I'm in, but it wasn't
>
> anything that had really much relevancy or continues to really have a
>
> whole lot of relevancy in what we're trying to do, or if I'm honest, how
>
> we're being judged.

Another tenure-track faculty member in the CAS actively turned down opportunities to execute the land-grant mission in order to fulfill requirements:

> I have personally turned down opportunities to work with Native Nations
>
> in the state, which should be a part of our land grant institution, our land-
>
> grant mission of you know, serving the whole state, including the large
>
> proportion of the state, which is Native Americans. But that would take so
>
> much time away from how I'm being evaluated to keep this job that I had
>
> to choose to put that off.

When tenure-track SB faculty members were asked about their outreach or Extension efforts, they claimed it was not encouraged by their college, "[Outreach] can be done, but I just find the incentives don't always line up to do it." Another SB tenure-track faculty member echoed the sentiment:

> I know the university would say they prioritize, or they care about
>
> outreach, just as a PR thing, or just creating awareness about what's going
>
> on at the university. But, you know, at the end of the day, there aren't

really incentives for that, at least in terms of at least at the individual

faculty level.

CAS tenure-track faculty member also agreed saying evidence did not exist to prove

OSU valued outreach, particularly within Oklahoma:

Whether the university actually values that, I'd say no. When it comes to

research, you're expected to have stuff in your A&D documents that talk

about international impact. And we've had to really fight to point out it's

important to serve Oklahomans who are taxpayers . . . But the evaluation

is international. And for that matter, the outreach is probably valued more

when you can say you're working with other countries or the federal

government.

Faculty member from several colleges complained of unclear expectations and

unwritten rules associated with their appointments and assignments. A tenure-track

faculty member in CEHS said, "But then you would have to evaluate people based on

their appointment. And currently we don't have that. If you evaluated people based on

their appointment, that would be fine." A tenure-track faculty member in the COA with a

heavy teaching appointment and a smaller Extension appointment had verbally been told

their expectations were very different than their appointment

I've been verbally told that it is still a 100% teaching appointment. And

I'm like, "How does that work?" That's not how it works for research-

teaching splits. I [have a large teaching load], like I teach a full-time

teaching load. So that's a point of confusion.

A tenure-track faculty member in CAS debated with her colleague saying,

> But you are not actually rewarded for that outreach effort. You spend a ton
> of time on it, and it's not a part of your job. So I agree that you've done
> great things and our department, absolutely praises outreach, but I would
> say that it's not a part of my job. It is 0% of my job. Like sure, I could say
> the outreach that I might do counts as service, but I'm already doing 150%
> of the service I should be doing just in my department alone.

Participants mentioned offering hearing screenings, hosting writing workshops, performing river clean-ups, and working with local community leaders as examples of service activities.

Performing Outside of Actual Appointment

Faculty members spoke about the efforts they engaged in outside of their actual appointment. Faculty members also mentioned assignments can be different than your appointment. This distinction was a point of confusion and contention.

A non-tenure-track faculty member in in CAS saw this as a positive saying "any research that I do is completely independent of my departmental obligations. I've gone to conference every year, but it doesn't show up on my A&D form. It's all just bonus and it's, it's never expected." One COA tenure-track faculty member was happy to contribute to Extension efforts "Even though I don't have an Extension appointment, I'll tag along and give a presentation or have my graduate students give presentations at our field days held throughout the state."

Other faculty members saw performing outside of their appointments as more neutral, "I don't have a research or an Extension appointment, but I feel like I am required to do research. I feel I'm required to do Extension," said a COA non-tenure-track faculty member. A COA tenure-track faculty member also said, "I'm a hundred percent teaching, but that doesn't give me a pass as it relates to research or service." A tenure-track faculty member in SB saw performing outside of their formal appointment as a natural product as academia, "My primary or focus, I guess you might say is teaching, but obviously being a member of the faculty and a professor, I've had to do research and outreach service and all that other stuff." A COA non-tenure-track faculty member had similar thoughts,

> I don't have a teaching appointment, but I feel like you get sucked into all
> the missions. Even if you're not an Extension appointment, you get sucked
> into doing some Extension. And if you're not a teaching appointment, you
> are still at some degree mentoring and teaching.

In a COA tenure-track session, a participant said, "Only one person in our session said he had a three-way appointment, but it turns out really everybody does."

Still other faculty members were hostile about being asked to perform outside of their appointments. A CAS faculty member said, "Until I got to OSU and it's become worse at times, I've never had a job where I'm expected to do things for which I am not judged and not paid." A CEHS tenure-track faculty member spoke about appointment splits this way, "it's really 100, 100, 100 of everything."

A COA tenure-track faculty member explained the difference between a faculty member's appointment and assignment:

We have appointments that are split between these three components of

the mission. Helping a brand new assistant professor try to get their head

around the fact that their appointment is teaching, but they're also

supposed to conduct research and they're also do service? Well yes, that's

because you're at a land-grant institution. That's your assignment. You've

been assigned to do those things.

Finally, a COA non-tenure-track faculty member suggested the formal structure may not

be necessary,

[The land-grant mission] was always described to me as a three-legged

stool, and the stool will not stand without any one of the legs. But I feel

like when you come in as faculty, they tried to peg you into one of those

three legs . . . but then I think we all have kind of said we're involved in

every mission in some form, so I don't know that is it necessary to keep

that structure.

Missions Must be Integrated

Faculty members often spoke of the importance of integrating each mission –

teaching, research, and Extension – with one another. Participants thought this was the

best way to deliver quality education, cultivate meaningful research, and provide relevant

information to non-academic stakeholders. A non-tenure-track faculty member in CEHS

spoke to the advantages of attending an LGI as an undergraduate student: "Being able to

learn about it, being able to experience it and then being able to use it . . . being able to

apply learning is a great opportunity for a student." They went on to talk about the

importance of faculty members working together to achieve the land-grant mission and pursue applied research: "I think that's why it's really important that everybody works together because when we're all trying to make it work so we can cover that land grant mission. We start really focusing on is our research usable and applicable."

A non-tenure-track faculty member in CEAT described integrating the missions as a necessity:

> Well, I really think they're all kind of circular. We can't just teach the same thing because there's new applications. There's new material that's always coming out from research. Then to either be giving back to the community on campus or in Stillwater or in the state, you can get data, and it can improve all three of those aspects together.

One COA non-tenure-track faculty member described an LGI as a vehicle: "So it's kind of working like a vehicle where research is your engine, teaching is your oil, and funding is your fuel, Extension is your tires . . . . Working together it all moves forward." Another COA non-tenure-track faculty member referenced an analogy made by an Extension administrator:

> Dr. Doye's statement about really braiding that all together I think is a better analogy than a three-legged stool. Because I feel like those three legs, yes, they're all needed, but they all kind of stand separately. But a braid is just so intertwined that researchers should be thinking about the end user. Together through education, we can make that happen and make a difference in communities educationally and economically.

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Faculty members recognized the interdependence and necessity of each mission. A CEHS tenure-track faculty members put it this way:

> I don't see it as, as which one's more important either. They all go hand in hand, but you have to have the research first before you can teach the results of the research, before you can take it to the community and do the Extension part of it. But I know faculty get ideas for research from their students and Extension work all the time.

A CEHS tenure-track faculty member admits it is not a perfect system:

> Even though a lot of us are doing research with members of the community, sometimes there is a gap between what we study and what they're interested in. Or we're not providing the findings that we're discovering in a way that the general population can learn what those are. Just publishing journal articles is not gonna really reach the public. So I think that's a recognized gap, but I think that we've been purposeful to try to address and improve that.

Students and Service. One of the ways faculty integrated missions together was by using student organizations as a form of outreach. A COA tenure-track faculty member said, "We rely on our student organizations to go into the Stillwater community to provide services and school activities, things like that." A non-tenure track CEHS faculty member talked about encouraging a life-long desire to serve communities, "because of the *Cowboy Way*, they are really being encouraged to serve their community after they get their degree . . . to go back and serve their hometown." Finally, a CEHS

tenure-track faculty member talked about how they incorporated classroom teaching

with service to communities,

> Our students are put into small groups and work with the same community
>
> organization over a two-semester period, they are able to apply what
>
> they're learning in the classroom. They do a needs assessment, develop,
>
> implement, and evaluate a program. Then they have something to leave
>
> with the community that hopefully can be used again. I've been really
>
> impressed at how the students have connected with the people and
>
> communities.

Applied and Practical Research

Faculty members recognized applied and practical research as a cornerstone of

LGIs. Applied research is helpful to students and state-wide stakeholders. A CEHS non-

tenure-track faculty members said, "One of the things we offer is an evidence-based

approach with our research component and the land grant mission." Another CEHS non-

tenure-track faculty member talked about using this research in their classroom:

> In my courses I try to start them off with an evidence-based guidelines
>
> lecture so that they understand they'll read things in the text, and to look
>
> for citations. However, we want to make sure that you're up to date. So, I
>
> pull a lot of articles that are current or germane to topics.

A COA non-tenure-track faculty member spoke about the meaningfulness of

applied research, "You are doing science that means something, that goes out and is used

in agronomy, used by community for health, and improving farm income and stuff like

that. . . . Research at OSU is meaningful research." They went on to say even though research often starts at the basic level, its overall goal is to be used by society: "You do start from the basics, but there is an overall goal that it eventually goes out to the people, to the society." Participants used many different words in connection with this concept including applied, practical, evidence-based, informed practices, industry-inspired, real-world research, and problem-solution-oriented research.

However, not all research is seen as practical or applicable. A SB non-tenure-track faculty member spoke to the varying levels of applicability based on discipline: "[Some] research is very practical, very concrete, and some fields definitely represent a much more tangible application of the land grant mission to improve society, to improve everything." Another non-tenure-track faculty member in SB stated, "We need to be probably even more practical than what we are. I think sometimes our research, at least in business gets a little bit . . . little heady, it gets a little useless from a practical standpoint."

Industry Connections

When considering the land-grant mission, faculty members also referenced a connection to industry. Faculty members talked about bringing guest speakers from industry into classrooms, using their own industry experience as classroom examples, partnering with industry stakeholders on research, and the role private industry served in delivering the land-grant mission. A COA tenure-track faculty member spoke of industry research and how that is shared: "We do a lot of industry specific research for companies. So that's obviously shared proprietarily, in-house, with them directly." Another COA tenure-track faculty member stated,

I think OSU has done a really good job of keeping that industry link a priority. Some projects that I've been involved with in animal and food sciences, a lot of those are industry sponsored. They're not only sponsoring the work to get the results, but they're sponsoring student education. I think that's a really important link because some of those students go on and work for those industries.

Another COA tenure-track faculty member spoke about the value to industry research paired with applicable research, "We have a really good connection with industry whether it's doing Extension and research, but I think OSU is truly one of the institutions that is trying to strive to do things that are applicable to their stakeholders."

CEAT tenure-track faculty members spoke about the value students see and gain from industry connections: "[Students] always value the connection and interaction with industry. They always are very interested in having guest lectures from the industry. Then they can have this kind of a network connection with the industry." They also said, "I come from an industry background before I joined OSU, so I always involve students or show them what was done for what's done in industry."

There was some dissent among SB tenure-track faculty members who were not as engaged with industry, "As far as research goes, the only resource they want is a business plan. It doesn't go much further than that. Once they realize I'm not going to do draw up a business plan, there's no interest." Moreover, industry connections are not always positive. A COA non-tenure-track faculty member talked about the competition from private industry, "There's a little bit of competition as well from industry. For example, if

a farmer purchases seed from somebody, they probably will also provide them a little bit of service."

Difficulties in Fulfilling the Land-Grant Mission

Some faculty members experienced difficulties when attempting to fulfill the land-grant mission. These difficulties came from expectations from other academics, departmental politics, and the changing needs of audiences. A COA tenure-track faculty member talked about the challenges of publishing applied research in academic journals:

> At least in my field, it's hard to do research that Extension and people
>
> value because it's hard to publish the work. The journals don't appreciate
>
> it. And so for those two things to work well together, you have to have
>
> administrators who value that type of research and are willing to reward
>
> you based on that to make up for maybe not being able to get into as good
>
> of a journal.

A SB tenure-track faculty member also shared these sentiments: "In terms of getting tenure, the number one sort of requirement is publications. And in addition, preferably publications in top outlets, those don't always lend themselves to doing research that is immediately relevant."

Available funding for applied and practical research can be limited. A COA tenure-track faculty member commented on this limitation by saying,

> Some of the research that might be what the public wants to see doesn't
>
> have the funding. That's where the problem lies because our department
>
> has a ton of research money, but it's coming from federal grants, and those

don't look at basic science. So our research has to be up here to compete

with other institutions, but then our Extension is down here. Because

producers want to know how much fertilizer or how many plants to put

out in the field. They don't want to know what the metabolic rate of

something is. So very different points of view.

A non-tenure-track COA faculty member spoke to the changing audiences that the

land-grant mission should be serving:

I think that we have to look at the rural divide. We have less people living

in our rural areas. I think people in our rural areas know more about the

land-grant mission and about the research that's going on. So, how do we

educate our other stakeholders of what we're doing and how do we

embrace them as our clientele meet their needs?

Finally, a CAS tenure-track faculty member was quite blunt about the land-grant

pertinency in their department, "For better or worse, the land grant perspective for our

department is next to irrelevant."

RQ4. What are Faculty Members' Opinions Regarding the Future of the Land-Grant Mission?

To understand faculty member's opinions about the future of the land-grant

mission, participants were asked what they envisioned as the future of the LGI, obstacles

and challenges that LGIs would face, and goals for the future. The primary themes

associated with this research question were concern for the future; land-grant the internet:

a love hate relationship; communication of the LGI should increase, corporatization and commercialization of education; and what makes an LGI work.

Concern for the Future

Faculty members spoke of the future with general concern. Those concerns were targeted at the future of Extension, the land-grant as whole, and the future of higher education. A COA tenure-track faculty member spoke about future challenges

> I think we have a big challenge. It's going to be relevance. We're a model
> that has been around a long time. It's had its ups and downs. A lot of
> people would point to the days of jumping on that train and going from
> place to place and showcasing the research to individuals as some of our
> best days. Now we, have this struggle to get citizens to drive to Extension
> offices.

A non-tenure-track faculty member in the COA spoke of the future of Extension with trepidation:

> I have a real concern over the future of Extension . . . . I don't think
> Extension has ever been branded really well for people to know what
> Extension is. And so I can see that word going away and that appointment
> going away and just being part of faculty and research . . . . I think what
> we're doing will still be there, but I think if you're holding strong to your
> title as an Extension educator, I feel like that title is going to go away. The
> structure across the state has already changed with county offices and
> stuff. And I understand why that's happening.

A CAS tenure-track faculty member shared their concerns about the future of all higher education saying, "I'm actually apprehensive about our future in general, based on how things are going, not just like the land-grant institution, but just how the amount of budget cuts that have happened in higher education over the years."

A CEHS tenure-track faculty member disagreed and saw the future of the land-grant as bright:

> I think we really have the best case for why members of the community or external stakeholders might want to contribute some of their tax dollars to a university in their state. Because when all three of these components exist, then you are funding faculty members to produce research that can have a positive impact. And they're teaching students who are going out and working in all of the fields, like education, nonprofits, or business who need quality instruction to be effective workers in the community. I really worry a lot about the future of higher education in the coming decades, but I think if anyone has a case to make, it's those of us in land grant universities.

Land-grant and the Internet: A Love-Hate Relationship

Faculty members spoke about the internet and its advantages and disadvantages for LGIs. For instance, the internet can make the work of an LGI more visible, however, the internet provides enough information to make some degrees and Extension efforts obsolete.

A tenure-track faculty member in SB spoke about the challenges the internet presents for higher education:

You can essentially get a pretty decent education for free by accessing

YouTube videos and reading. But I don't think it's going to make these

places like OSU or other land grant schools close the doors and shut it up

anytime soon. But I think it's certainly going to change things. You could

argue Google is fulfilling the mission better than OSU is. Information is

widely available. It's very easy to get to. And if that's our mission, they're

doing a better job. Maybe we should think about what our mission is.

Faculty members also discussed the ways the internet was reducing the use of

Extension educators. A non-tenure-track faculty member in COA said,

I think that Google has a pretty big damper on Extension. You used to go

to your Extension agent for everything, whether you had a bee problem or

you couldn't get your cow to milk or had this weed growing in your yard,

but now everything is so instant. Like you can just Google it. And so

maybe you don't need Extension quite as much as you used to.

On the other side of the coin, faculty members talked about how much social

media has improved the prominence of some Extension programs. A tenure-track faculty

member in COA said,

Social media platforms have revolutionized Extension and getting that

message out. It seems to me the stronger Extension programs are

connected to a large number of followers. That's a good way of getting

messages out immediately. I see really good Extension work being done

that way. There's a magnifying effect. That's hard to quantify, but I

believe in it.

Communication of LGI Should Increase

Faculty members from every college expressed the need to increase the communication efforts to either increase awareness of the land-grant mission among external audiences or to increase communication among internal audiences. Participants hoped that improving interdepartmental and intercollege communication would increase the effectiveness of the land-grant mission.

A tenure-track faculty member in CEAT spoke about college efforts to increase awareness of some college activities: "We're trying to just have a better presence on social media, but the research hasn't quite made its way into that yet, except through maybe like student work or activities." A CAS non-tenure-track faculty member wanted to see a more concerted effort in the promotion of research done at OSU, "I'd like to see the university advertised in a way that we can be proud of the innovation that's happening here. Most of the research that I know about is because it's the research that my friends are doing."

A CEHS tenure-track faculty member stressed the importance of increased communication within departments:

> I think having more collaboration, cooperation, and communication
> between faculty with all three of those appointments would be beneficial,
> so someone who is doing the research is communicating with the person
> doing the Extension, and they work together and support each other. I
> think we could do more of that within our department.

There were also concerns about communication within colleges as well. A CEAT tenure-track faculty member talked about the limited opportunities to get to know faculty members in their own college:

> For example, my office is one floor above each of yours, and I don't know any of you. I wouldn't know you if you walked down the hall. I think that's unfortunate. So, to your point, we aren't able to engage with [external] stakeholders, but I think we don't do a good job even engaging among ourselves.

Another CEAT tenure-track faculty member said, "Across university connections would create invaluable connections." A CEHS non-tenure-track faculty member gave an example of the lack of collaboration across campus and the redundancy of efforts. She had written a series of articles describing the parameters of a federal act and what it meant to the average Oklahoman. Later, she found an agricultural economist had published something similar.

> And he didn't know. Sometimes we miss the boat. We miss each other going this way because we're both, or sometimes we're doing the same work in different divisions or different departments, and we don't make connections with each other. Now it's probably, it's my fault. 'Because I didn't make connections with him, but he didn't seek out my information either. And I don't even think he even knew who I was to tell the truth.

Faculty members were also concerned about how the land-grant mission was being communicated to internal audiences. Questions about the way new faculty members are trained or taught concerning the land-grant mission arose. A CEAT tenure-

track faculty member wondered about the onboarding process for new faculty members: "I don't know how we bring people onboard and teach them about the land grant mission. Do we do that well? I'm not sure we do."

Branding in the Eyes of Faculty Members. Participants mentioned branding several times during the focus group sessions. There were both positive and negative sentiments regarding branding shared. A COA non-tenure track faculty member shared their frustration with how the recent OSU rebrand effected the COA branding, "I got frustrated when they rebranded with the new OSU symbol. They took away our triangle. I wish we'd get the triangle back for our letterhead." A tenure-track SB faculty member spoke about the cost associated with the rebranding efforts, "The emphasis in the last two years on having one brand has cost us a lot of money. As someone in business I think about those things."

A tenure-track faculty member in COA spoke about the disadvantage a consistent university brand can have for Extension and reaching new audiences:

> As much as we try to brand everything and make it all look nice and white and orange, people don't want sterile information. They want information from their neighbor or their neighbor's friend that knows something about gardening. They want information that is approachable. We need to find a way to take Extension and make it relatable to everybody, not just the producers that we typically work with.

Another tenure-track faculty member in COA agreed saying,

> I will say that "being on brand" is probably the most annoying phrase I hear as an Extension person. Because you want to get a fact sheet out, so

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you post it in on Twitter. Then you get slapped on the wrist because you

put your own photo that is related with the research up on Twitter instead

of the picture that just says, "OSU." Well, which image is going to make

someone want to click it more, a logo or a photo of the crop?

A non-tenure track faculty member in CEHS spoke very positively of the

rebranding efforts at OSU and described it as a point of pride among colleagues at other

institutions:

We were having some meetings and I have a Zoom background that has

the logo. A colleague from OU asked me about it and I said, 'Oh yeah it's

the new logo.' So then I told her, 'Yeah, OSU created a new branding

campaign, they basically went away with all other logos and this logo is

used by all of the colleges and programs.' And she was like, 'Oh my God,

I'm so jealous of you guys, because we feel like the OU health science

center is totally different from like the OU campus in Norman.' And then I

explained to her, you know, the new branding campaign. That made me

feel even more proud that we have one cohesive brand. I mean, it really

helps with visibility.

Corporatization and Commercialization of Education

The corporatization and commercialization of education was a major theme

within this study. Faculty members had concerns over students' expectations and the cost

of higher education. Faculty members often mentioned that students prioritized a letter

grade over the actual learning that occurred in a course. A CAS tenure-track faculty member said,

> I think there's just such a push about getting A's all the time and not really learning the material and maybe spending time on the feedback shared by the instructors. And I don't know if it's an OSU exclusive phenomenon or if it's a generation thing, but I just think that when you're teaching classes and if all the students care about is getting an A then is it meaningful?

A non-tenure-track faculty member in SB commented that students did not expect to work hard for grades or learning:

> At the freshmen level, I think they are used to or expecting a certain level of work, which is not very much. And so in my introduction class freshman always have a little bit of shock and awe. I do expect them to read their textbook, which is a little surprising to them.

A CEAT tenure-track faculty member specifically mentioned the disadvantage of the fee structure of their college:

> We're at a disadvantage for credit hours. I have students who are interested in taking my class, and then they find out CEAT has these extra fees. And oftentimes means they aren't going to take my class. Our fee structure means I can't attract students from microbiology to take my course . . . it's funny because we have this competition and then our fees are made so that we can help pay for our faculty, et cetera, but then we're going to lose money.

What Makes an LGI Work

Although faculty members had to contend with several previously mentioned challenges, they also had insight about what makes an LGI work. Supportive administration, collaborative colleagues, everyone working toward a common goal, and establishing trust with stakeholders were some of the things that made the land-grant mission possible to achieve.

A CEHS tenure-track faculty members spoke about the role administrators play in recognizing academic efforts of faulty members:

> I mean the journals we publish in to try and get to our end user, have some
> of the lowest impact factors. I don't get dinged for that at the moment.
> And I hope that doesn't change with us trying to move to a more kind of
> prestigious level of research because that will badly hurt the outreach side
> of things. And it will really hurt me. I appreciate that I can really focus on
> targeting [public service audiences] that are completely out of my realm
> and have low impact factors. I appreciate that I can get my product to
> them. So it's used, and I hope we don't lose that.

Another CEHS tenure-track member agreed with their colleague saying,

> As long as our administrators and decision makers remember that and
> honor it, it will be okay. But if we turn to simply counting number of
> publications and dollars of external funding and impact of research
> journals, it has potential to harm our service arm of our land grant mission.

A COA tenure-track faculty member said a collegial atmosphere was key to creating a successful LGI. However, this faculty member thought the informal connections were the most effective connections:

> The thing I'd add about the three segments, research, Extension, and teaching, working together, I find its main benefit tends to be the informal ways they work together. Like you rarely see like big projects where we strategically put research and Extension and teaching together. But when you get people who are in Extension and people who do research together, you tend to get a different type of research. And it kind of changes the whole flavor of how things are done.

A SB tenure-track faculty member talked about the importance of working in collaborative teams to execute the land-grant mission:

> Time is limited. For any one person to do all of that is close to impossible. It's unrealistic to think that every single person should do all of that. I think that's why we have good teams. I think in general; our teams and our departments do a good job as a whole providing all of those different elements.

A COA tenure-track faculty member said all faculty members engage with every part of the land-grant mission, "All of us do every part of the mission. Some of us may have more focus on a certain area, whether it's teaching or research or Extension, but all of us do the land-grant mission." Another COA tenure-track faculty member agreed the land-grant works best when missions are integrated, and everyone is working toward a cohesive vision:

I think OSU is still doing the land-grant mission very well. I think they are

truly an institution still doing that in a more integrated fashion than other

institutions. I think overall no matter what your appointment is, you

should have that land-grant mission as a priority.

Another COA tenure-track faculty member said, "When you come to work at a place like

this, you get to do all of it. You're not just assigned to one." A COA non-tenure-track

faculty member shared similar sentiments saying, "Those appoints don't really mean

much."

A COA tenure-track faculty member spoke about the trust between the public and

deliverers of the land-grant mission necessary to execute the land-grant mission:

It's taking the university with people and building trust. There's a certain

trust factor here that's immeasurable feature about what we do. The last

thing I want to do is violate that trust because if I violate that trust, then

I'm useless. I just think that's really important, not how we do it, but

whatever you're doing, it's gotta be done by building trust.

A COA non-tenure-track faculty member also pointed out how building trust in

local communities could encourage enrollment at OSU. "I think it's often in that local

community where people gain trust of Oklahoma State University and say, 'This is where

I want to send my child.'"

Summary

Participants viewed the OSU brand as related to its major brand identifiers like

university colors and mascot. Participants also recognized major donors, prominent

academic programs, athletic programs, and the campus atmosphere as calling cards of the OSU brand. The university's connection to Stillwater was also mentioned as an important identifier of the university. The values of the university greatly influenced the brand of the university. Participants had many different definitions of the land-grant mission. Although all participants had at least heard of the land-grant mission, not all participants were completely aware of all its pieces, especially Extension. Some participants did not completely understand their own relationship with and responsibility as it pertained to the land-grant mission.

Participants expressed the land-grant mission through their work in different ways. The expression of the land-grant mission was often dependent on faculty members' appointments and how they were evaluated. Participants believed that when they integrated the three missions – teaching, research, and Extension – together they were more efficient and successful. Participants claimed their work translated the land-grant mission through applied research and remaining connected to the industry. Participants also faced challenges when attempting to fulfill and embody the land-grant mission. There was a general state of concern for the future of LGIs. Participants were concerned for the future of Extension, higher education, and adjusting to changing audiences. Participants also recognized key components that helped an LGI function and would help sustain LGIs in the future. Participants recognized a need for trust between employees of LGIs and external stakeholders.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS, DISCUSSIONS, IMPLICATIONS AND

RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to conceptualize how the land-grant mission shapes

the internal brand of OSU and explore the land-grant brand identity among faculty

members at OSU. This chapter will include conclusions, discussions, and the implications

this study developed for theory and practice. Lastly, the chapter will conclude with

recommendations for future research.

The following research questions guided the study:

1. What are faculty members' perceptions of the OSU brand?

2. How do faculty members conceptualize the land-grant mission?

3. How do faculty members translate the land-grant mission in their work?

4. What are faculty members' opinions regarding the future of the land-grant

   mission?

Conclusions and Discussions

To conceptualize how the land-grant mission shapes the internal brand of OSU

and explore the land-grant brand identity at OSU faculty members were asked

questions related to their work. The responses to these questions were used to develop themes. This section details the application of this study to previous literature. There are many instances of this data supporting past research but contradicting others. This study presented new information for the internal branding of universities and LGIs.

## *RQ1: What are Faculty Members' Perceptions of the Oklahoma State University Brand?*

This study focused on faculty's role in brand co-creation, which has not been thoroughly explored (Yang & Mutum, 2015). Faculty members viewed OSU as related to major brand identifiers like university colors and mascot. Faculty members also recognized major donors, prominent academic programs, athletic programs, and the campus atmosphere as calling cards of the OSU brand. The land-grant mission was mentioned as an important component of the brand. The university's connection to Stillwater was mentioned as an important identifier of the university. The values of the university greatly influenced the brand of the university. The major themes associated with this research question included OSU's brand identity, Stillwater connection, and university values. Subthemes of university values included teaching as a primary motivator for faculty, varying levels of students, increased emphasis on research, and chasing funds and grants. These were recognized by faculty members as values of the university.

When asked what first came to mind when thinking about OSU, faculty members mentioned the color orange and Pistol Pete. These visual identifiers would be considered the corporate visual identity of OSU (Dowling, 1986; Melewar & Akel, 2005; Olins, 1995). The "Cowboy Code," was mentioned by faculty members as an important part of

the OSU brand. The Cowboy Code was inspired by the book *Cowboy Ethics: What Wall Street Can Learn from The Code of the West* by James P. Owen. This code, shown in Figure 3, is intended to guide student and faculty conduct at OSU. The use and communication of this code could be considered internal branding efforts (Chapleo, 2010; Whisman, 2009). These types of efforts are important and essential in the building and managing of overall brands (Chapleo, 2010; Whisman, 2009).

Figure 3

The Cowboy Code (Oklahoma State University, 2021b)
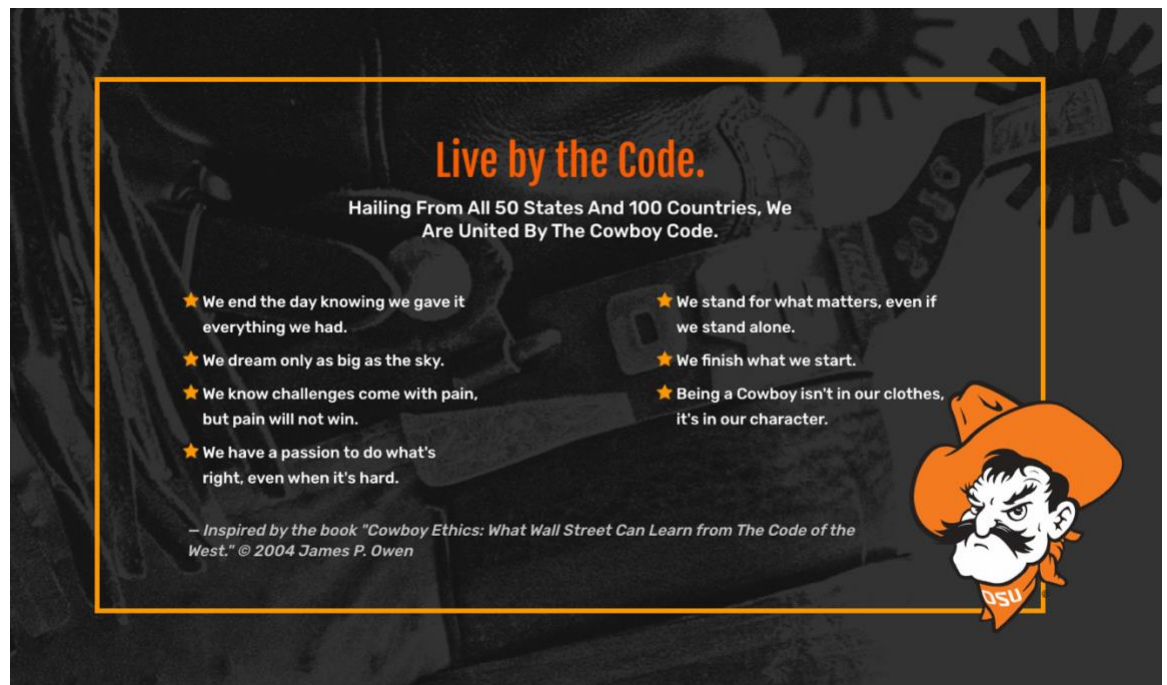
Athletic endeavors, community, and a friendly campus atmosphere were mentioned as prominent features of OSU. Past research states these components influence student views of a university brand (Jevons, 2006; Pinar et al., 2014; Wood, 2000). Faculty members mentioned being aeronautical engineering, petroleum engineering,

agriculture, and fire programming as key programs at OSU. Homecoming was mentioned as an important event at OSU. The ambience on campus was mentioned as feeling like home; ambience is an example of a unique way universities can brand themselves as compared to corporations (Drori et al., 2013). The land-grant mission or being an LGI was also a key characteristic mentioned by faculty members.

Faculty members mentioned the land-grant mission as part of the brand identity of OSU, this is in accordance with Hatch and Schultz's recommendations that an organization's brand comes from the history and heritage of an organization (2008). Faculty members' perceptions of the OSU brand being inclusive, accessible, and providing a high-quality education is in line with the mandate of LGIs according to Simon (2009). Faculty members described OSU as a unique institution with a positive brand image. This is desirable considering past research has indicated having a unique (Jevons, 2006) and positive brand image (Chen & Chen, 2014) increase the appeal for students and employees.

Faculty members recognized OSU as synonymous with Stillwater. They also said external stakeholders viewed Stillwater and OSU as a single entity. This finding aligns with past findings that indicate a brand cannot be separated from its environment (Franzen & Moriarty, 2009). This close connection between the college and "its town" is more prevalent in more rural places. Colleges in non-metropolitan areas become physically, economically, and socially embedded in the town in which its located (Almond, 2020; Becker, 1993).

Another major theme of the study was faculty members' perceptions of university values. They perceived the university valued tradition; integrity, honesty, and inclusion;

people; and teaching. A strong brand is reflective of an organization's vision and culture (Hatch & Schultz, 2008). Most of what faculty members shared as their perceptions of the OSU brand aligned with the stated mission of OSU. For example, heritage, teaching, learning, and research are all mentioned in OSU's mission statement (Oklahoma State University, 2020d). Faculty members' perceptions that OSU valued and promoted tradition is interesting as past research has suggested "if a university wishes to promote itself in the European market, it needs to emphasize its traditions" (Bulotaite, 2003, p. 450).

Serving communities was also cited as an important value of OSU. These activities included things like providing hearing screenings, hosting writing workshops, river clean-ups, and so on. Faculty members expressed a level of public responsibility and passing it on to students. This behavior has been encouraged by previous research (Bonnen, 1998; Ng & Forbes, 2009).

Although the terms faculty members used to describe OSU were mostly congruent with OSU's stated mission and much of its online content, faculty members did not specifically mention Extension when asked about OSU. As university brands should be consistent with its offerings and missions (Black, 2008), one could argue the internal branding of OSU as a whole institution could be improved. This inconsistency is not surprising considering the multiple layers of OSU and the multiple audiences it serves (Sujchaphong et al., 2015).

Faculty members were passionate about teaching and creating high-quality interactions with students. This is beneficial to the brand of OSU as it encourages a positive interaction between employees and "customers" of the organization (Schmidt &

Baumgarth, 2018). Moreover, faculty members mentioned OSU prioritized students'

experiences. This is beneficial as past research shows the educational experience of

students is imperative when branding a university (Ng & Forbes, 2009; Pinar et al.,

2014). Faculty often spoke of the varying levels of students at OSU; most credited this to

the fulfillment of the land-grant mission and offering education to the sons and daughters

of the working class. Recent research indicates presidents and chancellors at other LGIs

felt their institutions no longer focused on reaching all students but rather were increasing

admission standards, offering more merit-based scholarships, and less needs-based

scholarships (Gavazzi & Gee, 2018). LGIs were focusing on these types of students to

increase overall university rankings. "The result is that land-grant universities have . . .

failed to provide opportunities for the very people who originally were intended to

benefit from the land-grant university" (Gavazzi & Gee, 2018, p. 75). If the goal is to

reach all students, it is encouraging faculty members saw OSU as fulfilling this part of

the land-grant mission. Past research supports this practice as quality of teaching and

student experience is an important component to consider when branding universities to

appeal to students. Research is not often mentioned in university branding research as a

draw for students (Dean et al., 2016; Mazzarol & Soutar, 2002; Mourad et al., 2020).

Faculty members felt the same pressure referred to by other scholars to pursue

grant funding (Collins, 2015). Moreover, faculty members also referred to the lack of

funding for applied research or research external stakeholders were interested in

(Flanagan et al., 2013). The items described above were considered to be the overall

brand identity of OSU. However, a brand is all encompassing (Franzen & Moriarty,

2009). All other data presented should also be acknowledged when considering the overall brand of OSU.

RQ2: How do Faculty Members Conceptualize the Land-Grant Mission?

Faculty members had different definitions of the land-grant mission, which included different ways the land-grant mission manifested itself at OSU and in their work. Although all faculty had at least heard of the land-grant mission, not all faculty were completely aware of all its pieces, especially Extension, or their own role within the land-grant mission. The primary themes associated with this research question were aware of but uninformed about the land-grant mission and varying definitions of the land-grant mission.

The subthemes related to this research question were concerns regarding public awareness and stakeholder priorities, unawareness of Extension; Extension, outreach and service, oh my; the land-grant is about the land; the land-grant is for more than agriculture; the land-grant is successful when serving the state; the land-grant mission is intended to improve society; and the land-grant mission is delivering equal opportunity education.

All faculty members were aware of LGIs and had heard about the land-grant mission prior to participating in the study. This contradicts the findings by Zagonel et al. (2019), but this could be attributed to a difference in population and institution. Zagonel et al. studied the awareness of the land-grant mission among printing and mailing personnel of K-State Research and Extension, with many participants unaware of the land-grant mission or LGIs. Moreover, they did not necessarily see themselves as active contributors to the land-grant mission (Zagonel et al., 2019). It should be noted that

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although faculty members in my study were aware of the land-grant mission, not all faculty members had a firm grasp of what the land-grant mission meant. They particularly had low understanding of the term "Extension" and its implications. Researchers have suggested "Extension" could be confusing to external audiences (Settle et al., 2016). In this study it was also confusing for internal audiences. Many faculty members were confused about the differences between Extension, outreach, service, and engagement. This is not surprising as the organizational chart for OSU is quite complicated and does not account for Extension leadership. Further, this is concerning as branding research recommends that terms be as simple, descriptive, and consistent as possible (Franzen & Moriarty, 2009). Although faculty members were aware of the term land-grant mission, there was not always a deep understanding of every piece of the land-grant mission. This is problematic as faculty members must fully comprehend and embody the land-grant mission for this to be carried out effectively (Gavazzi & Gee, 2018). These faculty members demonstrated low brand understanding (Piehler et al., 2015).

Several COA faculty mentioned they thought faculty in other colleges were either unaware of the land-grant mission or did not care about or see how it applied to their academic pursuits. This opinion was a direct contradiction of most participants' responses from other colleges. Literature related to this concept was not found. This disparity is concerning as it could create a chasm between disciplines and colleges. This could lead to a disconnect about the value and execution of the land-grant mission. Moreover, it could lead to ill will between colleagues that could value professionally from collaborating across campus.

In regard to external audiences, faculty were concerned they did not understand or appreciate the depth and breadth of services, information, or products available from OSU, this aligns with assertions of previous research (Campbell, 1995; Gavazzi & Gee, 2018). This could be at least partially attributed to the less than prolific understanding of land-grant mission among faculty members; past literature states that when internal stakeholders are aware of the brand mission and align their behaviors to it, effective brand communication is increased (Piehler et al., 2015). Participants were unsure if the public or students understood the extent of the work done at OSU. Researchers assessing other LGIs have reported similar findings (Abrams et al., 2010). This is problematic as past research has shown a positive relationship with community members and media is important for universities to succeed and maintain funding (Mourad et al., 2020). This problem is further exacerbated by faculty members' unfamiliarity with all aspects of the land-grant mission as evidenced in this study and past research (Gavazzi & Gee, 2018).

Faculty members perceived students and undergraduate education as the primary product that OSU was known for. Past research has not explored this topic but has instead focused more on relationships with alumni and how a university's reputation affects students' desire to attend. Faculty members also spoke of hyper-involved stakeholder groups that had power over university decisions, especially in agriculture. There is evidence of external stakeholders having more sway over decision makers in a European study (Amaral & Magalhaes, 2002).

In the present study, many faculty members were invested in the land-grant mission and saw themselves as pivotal deliverers of the mission. However, some faculty members did not see their work as directly applicable to the land-grant mission. Faculty

members invested in the mission are examples of strong internal branding (Schiffenbauer, 2001; Thomson et al., 1999) and could be the result of internal brand strategies, but that may not be the case as awareness was not consistent across the organization (Meyer et al., 2002). Those who saw themselves as deliverers of the land-grant mission could be considered brand ambassadors or truly living the brand (Ind, 2008). These types of behaviors could also be considered brand-supporting behaviors (Punjaisri et al., 2008) or brand citizenship behavior (Burmann & Zeplin, 2005). Understanding and committing to the brand makes employees better brand communicators and interpreters.

Faculty members had multiple definitions of the land-grant mission and what the land-grant mission meant to them as faculty members. Previous literature supports this multifaceted understanding of the land-grant mission (Bonnen, 1998; Collins, 2015; Flanagan et al., 2013; Nevins, 1962; Stephenson, 2010; Sternberg, 2014). Just as faculty members defined the land-grant mission as serving the citizens of the state of Oklahoma, previous literature echoes these sentiments by asserting LGIs are meant to serve communities in the state in which each LGI is located (Bonnen, 1998; Jamieson, 2020; Nevins, 1962; Stephenson, 2010; Sternberg, 2014). Past studies found people from different employment categories (i.e., faculty vs. non-faculty and state vs. county) held different beliefs about Extension (Settle et al., 2016). In my study, faculty members from different colleges had different views of the land-grant mission as a whole.

Faculty members defined the land-grant mission as bettering society as a whole, which is reflected in past literature (Flanagan et al., 2013; Garris, 2018). The notion the land-grant mission is centered around delivering equal opportunity education was a major theme of study supports past publications (Collins, 2015; Simon, 2009). Faculty members

agreed with the notion agriculture and applied research have been a cornerstone of LGIs but is not necessarily the primary focus of the system (Bonnen, 1996). A study in North Dakota assessed the perceptions among Extension agents, faculty, staff, and students also found LGIs were not viewed as exclusively serving agriculture (Kirkwood, 2018). The only conceptualization of the land-grant mission not supported by past literature was the claim that the land-grant mission was about the land on which the institution was built. Interestingly, this connection was not necessarily related to agriculture.

Finally, some faculty members did not think the land-grant mission was pertinent to their department's mission or fields of study. Researchers have reported other LGIs experience similar problems citing agriculture, education, and business as the most connected colleges to the land-grant mission (Gavazzi & Gee, 2018). The findings of this study contradict this as faculty members in the school of business did not see their work as applicable to the land-grant mission.

RQ3: How do Faculty Members Translate the Land-grant Mission in Their Work?

Faculty members expressed the land-grant mission through their work in many different ways. The expression of the land-grant mission was often dependent on faculty members' appointments and how they were evaluated. Faculty members found when they integrated the three missions – teaching, research, and Extension – together they were more efficient and successful. Faculty claimed their work was a translation of the land-grant mission through applied research and remaining connected to the industry. Faculty members also faced challenges when attempting to fulfill and embody the land-grant mission. The major themes associated with this research question were evaluation and expectations of faculty guide their behavior, performing outside of actual appointment,

missions must be integrated, applied and practical research, industry connections, and difficulties in fulfilling the land-grant mission.

Faculty members reported engaging in the behaviors by which they were evaluated, but they reported evaluation standards were not necessarily tied to the land-grant mission as they perceived it. From a branding perspective, this is problematic as past research suggests a brand's values should be translated into everyday activities and standards (Punjaisri & Wilson, 2007). From the land-grant perspective, this is an issue many LGIs cope with, particularly related to community engagement. Past research has shown that while research is readily rewarded and recognized, community engagement is given "vacuous lip service" (Gavazzi & Gee, 2018, p. 214). From both the branding and land-grant perspective, it is vital faculty members can relate their everyday tasks and their evaluation with the brand's vision.

Although the land-grant mission did not specifically influence what behaviors faculty members engaged in, it did seem to affect how faculty members did those things. For instance, faculty members were quick to adjust the way they taught to be more inclusive of students with varying academic backgrounds. This demonstrates an understanding of what LGIs embody and therefore could be evidence of a strong internal brand. According to past research, an organization's brand and how people feel about it affects the behaviors of employees (Smith & Oliver, 1991). This may indicate the land-grant mission is so ingrained into the brand culture of OSU, faculty members engage in brand-supporting behaviors without knowing it. This could be further explained by the influence LGIs have had on the structure of all higher education in the U.S. and thereby the training of most future faculty members (Johnson, 1981).

Faculty members often engaged in behaviors outside of their official university appointments. Faculty members' perceptions of the expectations of administration did not always align with a faculty members' contractually stated appointments. Some faculty members were more than happy to comply with these expectations and serve the greater cause of the land-grant mission, while others were not. According to past branding literature, employees who go above and beyond their contractual obligations are supporters of the brand (Ind, 2008; Thomson et al., 1999). Therefore, faculty who were willing to perform outside of their contractual appointment were exhibiting brand supporting behaviors. It is likely these employees were deeply invested in the land-grant mission and brand. There are several possible explanations for this investment: the internal branding efforts at OSU are strong and well delivered, or the respective faculty members have similar values to the land-grant mission and identify closely with it (Anwer et al., 2020; Burmann & Zeplin, 2005; Natarajan et al., 2016; Punjaisri et al., 2008).

Some faculty members thought integrating all three missions of LGIs was essential to deliver quality education, cultivate meaningful research, and provide relevant information to non-academic stakeholders; this was consistent with past research (Goldstein et al., 2019) Moreover, past research recommends integrating missions to deliver higher quality and more usable content for the communities LGIs are mandated to serve (Gavazzi & Gee, 2018). Some participants saw this integration as beneficial for undergraduate education as students can participate in all aspects of the land-grant mission while in school. Faculty members also used Extension and teaching efforts to

inform their research. Furthermore, faculty members used service learning to integrate the service and teaching missions of LGIs.

In the present study, applied research was considered a cornerstone of LGIs. This parallels the results of a 2013 study in which employees of Extension in Florida viewed their organization as one providing research-based information to solve problems and provide expert knowledge (Settle et al., 2016). Similar results were found in North Dakota in 2018 where the term "applied research" was most frequently used to describe the land-grant mission (Kirkwood, 2018). As past research has also indicated, applied research was described by faculty members as readily usable by communities and industry (Gavazzi & Gee, 2018).

Faculty members agreed with Bonnen's (1998) statement that private industry, especially in agriculture, is fulfilling some of the land-grant mission more effectively than LGIs themselves. Other research has indicated the relationships between industry and LGIs are positive as it encourages industry leaders who are interested in collaborating with top notch researchers to move or establish their businesses geographically closer to LGIs (Gavazzi & Gee, 2018). A previous study examined the opinions of presidents and chancellors of LGIs regarding the future of these unique institutions found economic development of each LGI's respective state may play a key role in an LGI's success (Gavazzi & Gee, 2018). By cultivating relationships with industry, LGIs can demonstrate their worth, which could encourage increased donations by industry and encourage industry leaders to promote their work to lawmakers and budget distributors (Gavazzi & Gee, 2018).There are also examples of industry and university connections which have produced biased research findings. For instance, there

have been university studies funded by industry that reported no link between sugary beverages and poor health, which contradicted 26 other studies conducted by independent researchers (O'Connor, October 31, 2016).

Although the land-grant mission necessitates applied research, some academic journals do not accept that type of work. The contention between applied and basic science is not unique to OSU. Many LGIs cope with this issues (Gavazzi & Gee, 2018). Availability of funding for applied research was also a challenge many faculty members faced. Articles in the Chronicle of Higher Education illustrated the decline in state and federal support of higher education. This decline ranged from -3.7% to -35.9% depending on the state. In the instance of OSU, state support has been cut by 26% between 2002 and 2018 (The Chronicle of Higher Education, 2021). Faculty members also commented on the inefficient and nonsensical metrics used to gauge their performance, like teaching evaluations (Collins, 2015; Muller, 2018).

RQ4: What are Faculty Members' Opinions Regarding the Future of the Land-Grant Mission?

There was a general state of concern for the future of LGIs. Faculty members were concerned for the future of Extension, higher education, and adjusting to changing audiences. Faculty members also recognized key components that helped an LGI function and would help sustain LGIs in the future. Faculty members recognized a need for trust between employees of LGIs and external stakeholders. The major themes for this research question were a concern for the future; land-grant and the internet: A love-hate relationship; corporatization and commercialization of education; communication of LGI should increase, and what makes an LGI work.

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Faculty members were concerned about the future of Extension and the LGI. They did not think it was widely understood or used by the public. In 1998 Maddy & Kealy suggested Extension engage in intentional branding. Their goal was to make Extension "a household brand name associated with quality and accessible education programming that helps put knowledge to work" (para. 21). More than 20 years later, that goal has yet to be realized. In fact, Extension is often referred to as "the best kept secret" internally (DeBord, 2007, para. 1). In the present study, faculty members mentioned users of Extension found it to be highly useful and trustworthy. This echoes the perceptions found in Florida where the brand image of Extension was found to be strong and have positive reputation among those familiar with it (Baker et al., 2011). Internal audiences in Kansas also had similar sentiments (Ray et al., 2015). In fact, other studies have found despite Extension's relative obscurity, it is one of the most trusted public organizations in agriculture and natural resources topics among those who are aware of the organization (Settle et al., 2017).

Faculty members also expressed concerns Extension was not properly serving all citizens of Oklahoma, particularly those in urban settings. This was a concern in Adkins' 1980 study. Faculty members suggested Extension could serve as recruiting tool for undergraduate students. This is similar to findings of another study which concluded Extension personnel are often public representatives of the LGI brand (Settle et al., 2016). Participants were concerned free online resources would replace higher education and Extension. Past research has encouraged Extension to engage in communication with constituents via the internet (Tennessen et al., 1997).

Faculty members were concerned with what Barnett (2019) described as the corporatization of education. Participants said students saw education as transactional rather than transformational and focused on the letter grade, rather than the learning experience. This was concerning for faculty members who wanted students to deeply learn content. Faculty members also pointed out the issues between departments and colleges in the current funding model while competing for students and credit hours.

Faculty members were also concerned about the level of communication both internally and externally about the work done at OSU. Participants recommended interdepartmental, intercollege, interuniversity, and interinstitutional communication increases. This parallels past recommendations suggesting collaboration and communication among university colleagues could increase the efficiency and value of LGIs (Campbell, 1995; Gavazzi & Gee, 2018). Faculty members also wanted external communication about the land-grant mission to increase. This aligns with past research encouraging LGI stakeholders to communicate about the value of LGI's value, not just supply information (Baker et al., 2011).

Faculty members offered many suggestions to improve communication, the structure of OSU, and the pursuit of the land-grant mission. This employee investment in the improvement of the overall brand is known as brand development (Piehler et al., 2015). An employee's emotional attachment to a brand, known as brand commitment, seemed to be more directly linked to their actual work (i.e., teaching, research, Extension), topic area, or individualized career than to the land-grant mission or even OSU. This has been a common theme in past research (Vasquez et al., 2013). However, faculty members who were self-identified alumni of OSU had high levels of brand

commitment to the university (Burmann & Zeplin, 2005; King & Grace, 2012). It is important for organizations to promote brand commitment as it increases employees' desire to go the extra mile to reach the goals of the brand (Burmann & Zeplin, 2005).

Faculty members expressed a level of frustration with branding in general. They were supportive of having a unified voice but did not necessarily want to follow all guidelines. This finding of mixed feelings supports the findings of past studies where faculty may recognize the value of branding efforts but do not appreciate the top-down approach usually taken with university branding efforts (Gray et al., 2003; Vasquez et al., 2013).

Despite these concerns, faculty had developed strategies or recognized important components that helped LGIs function effectively. Faculty members spoke of the importance of public approval and trust in the execution of the land-grant mission (Kang & Hustvedt, 2013). This level of trust is particularly important in the current environment of distrust in science-related communications (Birkland, 2011). Trust and a strong internal brand are essential for organizations like OSU that are primarily service based and depend on the interaction employees have with customers (e.g., students, taxpayers, Oklahoma public, etc. (Schmidt & Baumgarth, 2018).

Similar to studies in other states, faculty members had relatively positive things to say about OSU and their work (Ray et al., 2015; Settle et al., 2016). Faculty members felt their work was meaningful. However, they did express concerns about the external awareness of the brand, which paralleled findings in Kansas (Ray et al., 2015).

Faculty members spoke positively about engaging with communities in the state but did not necessarily participate in that engagement. This is similar to another study

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finding faculty members did not view outreach and engagement as a priority for faculty

members (Holesovsky et al., 2020). However, they did view it as important and engaged

in it regularly (Holesovksy et al., 2020). In my study, faculty members often cited student

organizations as a primary vehicle of public engagement.

Recommendations

This section addresses recommendations for both practice and future research

based on the results of this study. Recommendations for practice can be used by LGI

faculty members, LGI administrators, university communicators, and branding decision

makers. Researchers in agricultural communication, agricultural education, higher

education, and branding may be interested in the research recommendations.

Practice

First and foremost, I recommend OSU and all LGIs base their brands around the

land-grant mission. LGIs are the product of public mandates and social responsibility

(Campbell, 1995; Flanagan et al., 2013; Garris, 2018; Gavazzi & Gee, 2018). LGIs

should honor their calling and funding by translating the land-grant mission, and consider

the burdens of the common people in their work. In this study, faculty members who

fully understood the land-grant mission were passionate about honoring this mandate.

Furthermore, even when faculty members were not entirely fluent in the mission of land-

grants, they were still performing pieces of it. For instance, faculty members who did not

entirely understand the land-grant mission were still changing their teaching styles and

schedules to fit the students they were serving, thereby fulfilling the land-grant mission.

It is important to embrace the land-grant mission as the primary driver of the brand

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because branding is an approach that helps define what the institution is, stands for, what it strives to become, and serves as a guidepost for all decision making (Black, 2008). The land-grant mission should be the brand promise of all LGIs. Even though it is encouraging faculty members seemed to be performing land-grant supporting behaviors, whether consciously or not, it is important that administration, faculty members, and staff are on the same page when it comes to the brand of the institution. This sets the stage for a more successful brand (Temple, 2006). Brands which are well known and supported within an organization are more likely to be well and supported outside the organization (Sartain & Schumann, 2006).

Improving the overall internal brand at OSU should begin by ensuring all employees have a comprehensive understanding of the institution and its missions (Punjaisri & Wilson, 2007). By improving the internal understanding of the land-grant mission at OSU, the likelihood external stakeholders will engage with and understand the land-grant brand are increased (Balmer, 2013; Piehler et al., 2015; Punjaisri & Wilson, 2007). If OSU and its land-grant components are well-received, this could improve the brand image by showing what the university provides beyond education of students.

OSU currently uses the term "land-grant mission" consistently in its communication. I recommend continuing to promote the heritage of OSU (i.e., the land-grant mission) as it may offer a substantial advantage when attracting students and employees alike (Bulotaite, 2003). This study indicates communication efforts could be enhanced by detailing what the land-grant mission actually means.

Faculty members should consider the way their work serves as brand building blocks. As not all faculty members felt their work was relevant to the land-grant mission,

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it is recommended faculty members are made to feel empowered and responsible for brand creation and the execution of the land-grant mission (Endo et al., 2019). When faculty members are involved in the building of a brand, it is more likely the brand will be successful (Moorer, 2007). Some faculty members were passionate about and valued the land-grant mission. Encouraging all faculty members to foster a deep investment in the mission would be beneficial (Gavazzi & Gee, 2018).

This study did not directly assess student awareness, but many faculty members in this study reported student awareness of the land-grant mission was low. Therefore, it is recommended students be more overtly informed about the land-grant mission. If faculty members intentionally communicated about the land-grant mission in classes, the brand knowledge of all stakeholders may increase. If these concepts are not already discussed, new student orientation and freshmen seminar classes would be ideal avenues to introduce new students to land-grant concepts. If they are currently discussed, it may be wise to communicate them more clearly.

LGIs are complex because they are made up of many departments, colleges, divisions, and missions (Gavazzi & Gee, 2018; Nevins, 1962; Ng & Forbes, 2009). It is important to define and clarify the structure of OSU in a way that faculty members can understand. This is especially important when it comes to Extension, outreach, service, and engagement. Faculty members were confused about the definitions of these terms at OSU. Moreover, these terms have different definitions at other institutions which exacerbates the issue. Outreach has different definitions depending on the academic college at OSU. The term service does not have universal definition either. The term Extension was not widely understood by faculty members at OSU. There were concerns

among faculty members that the public did not readily understand the term Extension.

Past research also supports this notion (Settle et al., 2016). All things considered, these

terms are not well understood or defined. It would behoove OSU administration to clarify

or rename these components. It may also be helpful for these components to have names

consistent with peer institutions.

To increase the strength of its overall brand, it is recommended OSU modify

evaluation guidelines to match the overall university and land-grant mission and equally

value each branch of the LGI (Black, 2008). This would encourage faculty members to

live the brand and authentically deliver the brand mission. These types of behaviors

strengthen the brand image in the eyes of consumers and when consumers see brands as

authentic, brand loyalty grows (Fritz et al., 2017). Evaluation standards should reflect the

land-grant mission. Although all participants were aware of the land-grant mission and

believed in its premise, the parameters used to measure their annual performance or

determine their status of promotion and tenure were more likely to influence their

everyday activities. Faculty members specifically commented despite their appointments,

research was always required for promotion, but Extension efforts were often perceived

as counting as "extra" or "not counting for as much." Participants also said teaching was

not as widely incentivized as research. Past research recommends LGIs like OSU adopt a

posture of servant leadership and community-engaged scholarship (Gavazzi & Gee,

2018; Mehta et al., 2015). To ensure the success of the land-grant mission, administrators

should incentivize Extension, outreach, community engagement, and teaching at the same

level of peer-reviewed research. If these topics are equally incentivized, there is clearly a

perception problem among faculty members. The gap between perception and reality should be addressed.

OSU administration should consider the branding of the institution from a systems approach. In this branding practice, every single employee and stakeholder is an integral part of the brand as a whole (Franzen & Moriarty, 2009). A systems branding approach to an LGI would mean each faculty and staff member had an understanding of how their work contributed to mission as a whole, students would understand their role and the goal of their education, and citizens of Oklahoma would be aware of the mission and how they could utilize its resources. It is essential to understand employees' perceptions of the brand and help them to feel invested and interested in the brand (Bolman & Deal, 2008).

Universities often have difficulties distinguishing between one another (Sataøen & Wæraas, 2013). If OSU is interested in distinguishing itself from other state institutions, it should consider promoting its distinguishing features such as applied research programs, Extension, and other hallmarks of its brands. This can help students make informed choices about college selection and help Oklahomans utilize the resources available to them.

Given the less than prolific understanding of the land-grant mission among faculty members, internal communication of the land-grant mission should improve. When creating the material for onboarding new faculty members or educating current faculty members, it is important to foster a sense of belonging and buy-in for the brand and land-grant mission. It is also important to establish an environment where colleagues can overtly communicate about their contribution to the land-grant mission and what that

means to them, meaning they would be engaging in brand co-creation (Black & Veloutsou, 2017). This will increase employees' understanding of and investment into the brand (Punjaisri & Wilson, 2007).

Faculty members had many suggestions to improve the communication of the land-grant mission at OSU. One of those was to increase the communication with their colleagues all across campus. OSU should continue to host events where faculty members could get to know each other in a professional setting, like lecture series or teaching workshops. It would be helpful if these events were to integrate colleges. This would help to increase collaboration, eliminate silos and division and strengthen the internal brand overall (Sartain & Schumann, 2006). This would also enhance brand co-creation (Chapleo, 2011).

I recommend land-grant brand ambassadors be identified throughout the university. These people would be those who are already invested in the mission and have a deep understanding of the brand. They could work with other faculty members in their departments or through campus to enhance knowledge of the brand. Furthermore, these employees could also help in brand development and enhance overall brand commitment (Schmidt & Baumgarth, 2018; Xiong et al., 2013). The land-grant brand ambassadors could engage others in significant conversations about brand values and brand identity. This would help others to become more aware of the land-grant mission and what it means in their own discipline. Based on my research, these people already exist within many departments. This could be an informal system or the already existing brand champions could be recognized by the university. This is an example of brand co-

creation and could increase faculty members' feelings of moral responsibility for the brand (Black & Veloutsou, 2017; Chapleo, 2011).

An alternative idea to create brand buy in for the land-grant mission is to establish a summit of land-grant scholars. This annual summit could be a place where faculty members discuss their efforts related to the land-grant mission, present relevant topics, network with colleagues from other departments and colleges, and learn more about the land-grant mission in action at OSU. This could establish an award or recognition structure related to the land-grant mission which may incentivize its delivery.

Brand co-creation is a social process, therefore increasing opportunities where faculty members can socialize with one another in a meaningful way could help enhance the land-grant brand at OSU (Dean et al., 2016). Activities like Research on Tap allow for those types of interactions. I recommend OSU encourage faculty members to attend this event and host similar events for teaching and Extension work. Moreover, it would be beneficial to host events where faculty members could present their work that integrates all the missions of LGIs.

Past research shows prioritizing student education experience can help when building a university's brand (Ng & Forbes, 2009; Pinar et al., 2014). It is recommended OSU continues to prioritize this but also engage with other external stakeholders with just as much intention (Mourad et al., 2020). As an LGI, OSU has many audiences to consider. To demonstrate to disengaged faculty members how their work can impact the land-grant mission, I recommend OSU work to improve it brand by creating and widely distribute the guiding philosophy, values, and goals of the organization to all employees.

These guiding points should also be used to develop performance indicators and setting priorities as an organization (Smith & Oliver 1991).

Researchers

If researchers are interested in conducting online focus groups, I suggest limiting participants to the previously recommended three to eight participants (Poynter, 2010a). This allows participants to fully share their opinions and allows for the greater number and longer duration of silences that are more prevalent in online focus groups. According to follow-up responses, participants were comfortable with the online setting and felt it was similar to in-person data collection. However, participants did report being easily distracted by other things on their screens or their environment. Future researchers should consider asking participants to close all other programs on their computer such as email. Furthermore, I suggest encouraging participants to use the chat function of the Zoom platform to offer remarks of support or agreement with other participants' opinions. This could help capture more representative data and cut down on participants repeating previous responses.

This study addressed the internal branding of an LGI. While the internal brand of universities has been studied, the internal branding of LGIs has not been extensively explored by researchers. Although this study addressed the brand perceptions of a single LGI's faculty audience, further studies would inform the branding of LGIs.

The qualitative nature of this research means the results cannot necessarily be applied to all LGIs. Each LGI is intended to adapt to the needs of the citizens of its state and therefore is very different (Campbell, 1995; Gavazzi & Gee, 2018). Consequently, it is recommended this research is repeated at other LGIs, including 1890 and 1994 LGIs.

Due to the purposive sample and qualitative nature of this study, results may not be representative of all opinions at OSU. A follow-up, quantitative survey of faculty members addressing this study's themes of brand perceptions, values, and expression could offer a more representative and generalizable view of OSU's internal brand and inform branding efforts (Leijerholt et al., 2019).

Faculty members are an important vehicle of OSU's brand promises, but other audiences should also be considered. Future research should examine university's staff perceptions of the OSU brand and the land-grant mission. Administrators' perceptions should also be examined. Brands are not exclusively controlled by the organizations and its employees. Future research should examine the perceptions of students, alumni, and external stakeholders (Black, 2008). Student opinions could be assessed through a quantitative survey or focus groups. The opinions of alumni and external stakeholders should be examined through surveys. External stakeholders could be further categorized into Extension users and non-Extension users. It may be important to collect qualitative data from these audiences to fully understand their relationship (or lack thereof) with Extension.

Internal branding focuses on the way brand promises are communicated or executed by employees to external audiences and how communication affects the expectations for future interactions (Punjaisri et al., 2011). A content analysis examining the onboarding and internal branding efforts of LGIs could help researchers understand how faculty brand perceptions are formed.

Summary

     To conceptualize how the land-grant mission shapes the internal brand of OSU and explore the land-grant brand identity at OSU, faculty members were asked questions related to their work. This study focused on faculty members' role in brand co-creation, which has not been thoroughly explored (Yang & Mutum, 2015). When asked what first came to mind when thinking about OSU, faculty members mentioned the color orange and Pistol Pete. Faculty members mentioned the land-grant mission as part of the brand identity of OSU, which is in accordance with Hatch and Schultz's recommendations that an organization's brand comes from the history and heritage of an organization (2008). Although the terms faculty members used to describe OSU were mostly congruent with OSU's stated mission and much of its online content, faculty members did not specifically mention Extension when asked about OSU. As university brands should be consistent with its offerings and missions (Black, 2008), one could argue the internal branding of OSU as a whole institution could be improved. This inconsistency is not surprising considering the multiple layers of OSU and the multiple audiences it serves (Sujchaphong et al., 2015). Faculty members mentioned OSU prioritized student experience. This is beneficial as past research shows the educational experience of students is imperative when branding a university (Ng & Forbes, 2009; Pinar et al., 2014). Faculty members felt the same pressure referred to by other scholars to pursue grant funding (Collins, 2015). Moreover, faculty members also referred to the lack of funding for applied research or research external stakeholders were interested in (Flanagan et al., 2013). All faculty members were aware of LGIs and had heard about the land-grant mission prior to participating in the study, but not all faculty members had a

firm grasp of what the land-grant mission meant. They particularly had low understanding of the term "Extension" and its implications. Participants were unsure if the public or students understood the extent of the work done at OSU. Researchers assessing other LGIs have reported similar findings (Abrams et al., 2010). Faculty members had multiple definitions of the land-grant mission and what the land-grant mission meant to them as faculty members. Previous literature supports this multifaceted understanding of the land-grant mission (Bonnen, 1998; Collins, 2015; Flanagan et al., 2013; Nevins, 1962; Stephenson, 2010; Sternberg, 2014).

Although the land-grant mission did not specifically influence what behaviors faculty members engaged in, it did seem to affect *how* faculty members did those things. For instance, faculty members were quick to adjust the way they taught to be more inclusive of students with varying academic backgrounds. This demonstrates an understanding of what LGIs stand for and therefore could be evidence of a strong internal brand. There was a general state of concern for the future of LGIs. Faculty members were concerned for the future of Extension, higher education, and adjusting to changing audiences. Faculty members were also concerned about the level of communication both internally and externally about the work done at OSU. Participants recommended interdepartmental, intercollege, interuniversity, and interinstitutional communication increases.

There are several recommendations for practice and future research based on the results of this study. Results indicate internal understanding of the land-grant mission at OSU could improve. This could help improve external understanding of the institution (Punjaisri & Wilson, 2007). Faculty members should be empowered and responsible for

brand creation and execution of the land-grant mission (Endo et al., 2019). When faculty members are involved in the building of a university's brand, it is more likely the brand will be successful (Moorer, 2007). To increase the strength of its overall brand, it is recommended OSU modify evaluation guidelines to match the overall university and land-grant mission and equally value each branch of the LGI (Black, 2008). Given the less than prolific understanding of the land-grant mission among faculty members, internal communication of the land-grant mission should improve. When creating the material for onboarding new faculty members or educating current faculty members, it is important to foster a sense of belonging and buy-in for the brand and land-grant mission. I suggest hosting an annual summit of land-grant scholars where faculty members could discuss their efforts related to the land-grant mission, present relevant topics, network with colleagues from other departments and colleges, and learn more about the land-grant mission in action at OSU. This could establish an award or recognition structure related to the land-grant mission, which may incentivize its delivery.

Future research should explore the internal brand perception of other LGIs. A follow-up quantitative survey of faculty members addressing this study's themes of brand perceptions, values, and expression could offer a more representative and generalizable views of OSU's internal brand and inform branding efforts (Leijerholt et al., 2019). Future research should examine university staff members' perceptions of the OSU brand and the land-grant mission. Administration's perceptions should also be examined. Student opinions could be assessed through a quantitative survey or focus groups. The opinions of alumni and external stakeholders should be examined through survey. A

content analysis examining the onboarding and internal branding efforts of LGIs could

help researchers understand how faculty brand perceptions are formed.

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APPENDIX

APPENDIX 1: IRB Approval

Oklahoma State University Institutional Review Board

Date:	06/03/2020
Application Number:	IRB-20-273
Proposal Title:	It's Complicated: Exploring the Co-Creation of Land-Grant Brand Identity Amongst Faculty Members
Principal Investigator:	Audrey King
Co-Investigator(s):	
Faculty Adviser:	Quisto Settle
Project Coordinator:	
Research Assistant(s):	
Processed as:	Exempt
Exempt Category:	

Status Recommended by Reviewer(s): Approved

The IRB application referenced above has been approved. It is the judgment of the reviewers that the rights and welfare of individuals who may be asked to participate in this study will be respected, and that the research will be conducted in a manner consistent with the IRB requirements as outlined in 45CFR46.

This study meets criteria in the Revised Common Rule, as well as, one or more of the circumstances for which <u>continuing review is not required.</u> As Principal Investigator of this research, you will be required to submit a status report to the IRB triennially.

The final versions of any recruitment, consent and assent documents bearing the IRB approval stamp are available for download from IRBManager. These are the versions that must be used during the study.

As Principal Investigator, it is your responsibility to do the following:
1. Conduct this study exactly as it has been approved. Any modifications to the research protocol must be approved by the IRB. Protocol modifications requiring approval may include changes to the title, PI, adviser, other research personnel, funding status or sponsor, subject population composition or size, recruitment, inclusion/exclusion criteria, research site, research procedures and consent/assent process or forms.
2. Submit a request for continuation if the study extends beyond the approval period. This continuation must receive IRB review and approval before the research can continue.
3. Report any unanticipated and/or adverse events to the IRB Office promptly.
4. Notify the IRB office when your research project is complete or when you are no longer affiliated with Oklahoma State University.

Please note that approved protocols are subject to monitoring by the IRB and that the IRB office has the authority to inspect research records associated with this protocol at any time. If you have questions about the IRB procedures or need any assistance from the Board, please contact the IRB Office at 405-744-3377 or irb@okstate.edu.

Sincerely,
Oklahoma State University IRB

Internal Branding of Oklahoma State University: Focus Group Follow Up

PROJECT TITLE: Internal Branding of Oklahoma State University: Focus Group
Follow Up

INVESTIGATOR: Audrey E. H. King, Oklahoma State University

PURPOSE: This study will ask questions about the focus group process and offer an
opportunity to give additional comments regarding the internal brand of Oklahoma State
University.

WHAT TO EXPECT: You will be asked to complete a series of questions. It should take
about 5 minutes to complete the questionnaire.

RISKS OF PARTICIPATION: There are no known risks associated with this project that
are greater than those ordinarily encountered in daily life.

CONFIDENTIALITY: The records of this study will be kept private. Your responses will
be completely confidential. Research records will be stored on a password protected
computer in a locked office and only the researcher will have access to the records

COMPENSATION: You will not be compensated.

CONTACTS: You may contact the researcher at the following address and phone
number, should you desire to discuss your participation in the study and/or request
information about the results of the study: Quisto Settle, Ph.D., 441 Ag Hall, Dept. of
Agricultural Education, Communications, and Leadership, Oklahoma State University,
Stillwater, OK 74078, (405) 744-6548. If you have questions about your rights as a
research volunteer, you may contact the IRB Office at 223 Scott Hall, Stillwater, OK
74078, 405-744-3377 or irb@okstate.edu

 Please take all the time you need to read through this page and decide whether you
would like to participate in this research study

Do you agree to participate in this research?

○ Yes (1)

○ No (2)

Were there opinions or ideas you did not feel comfortable sharing during the focus group session you'd like to share now? If so, can please describe them below?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Have you ever participated in an in-person focus group session?

○ Yes (1)

○ No (2)

Was this the first time you participated in an online focus group?

○ Yes (1)

○ No (2)

What did you think about the virtual focus group?

_____

_____

_____

How do you think the focus group would have been different if had occurred in person?

_____

_____

What do you think could have been done differently to improve the online focus group?

_____

_____

If you have any additional comments about the project or virtual focus groups, please share them below.

_____

_____

_____

I cannot thank you enough for your participation in my focus group sessions and this survey. Please feel free to reach out to me with any questions or concerns at audrey.king@okstate.edu.

APPENDIX 3: Moderator's Guide

Hello, welcome to our focus group session. Thank you for taking time to join our discussion today. My name is Audrey, and I'll be moderating the discussion. _____ will be assisting and taking notes. We have invited you here today because we are interested in understanding your views and perceptions of Oklahoma State University. My role here is to ask questions and listen to your opinions. I won't participate in the conversation and neither will my assistant. Because we are from different backgrounds, different people will have different points of view. Please feel free to share your point of view even if it differs with what others have said. Please be as honest as possible. Sometimes in such discussions there is a tendency for some people to talk a lot and some people to say less. However, for effective results we would like to hear from each of you due to your different experiences. So, if you are sharing a lot, I may ask you to let others respond. On the other hand, if you are not saying much I may ask for your opinion.

We welcome everyone's opinions. We promise to keep them confidential, and we also encourage you all to keep this discussion confidential. There is no particular order for the responses, and there are no correct or incorrect answers. We will record the session to enable us to review your opinions later. For clarity purposes, please be loud and clear. And remember you should only speak one at a time. The session will last 2 hours, and we will take a break halfway. If you have your cell phone with you, we will really appreciate if you switch it off or have it in silent mode to avoid any distraction during the discussion. I hope everyone will feel free to share their opinions as we

proceed and also feel comfortable during the process. Your continued participation in this session implies your consent. Any questions?

ICEBREAKER/GROUP INTRODUCTIONS/Opening Question

Let's introduce ourselves to each other by going around the room one at a time.

- Tell us your name, your department, your role, and your appointment split.

With the introductions over, let's begin our discussion

Introductory Questions

To start us off in our discussion today I would like us to discuss your general perceptions of Oklahoma State University.

- What comes to mind when you think about Oklahoma State?

- What do you think Oklahoma State is known for?

- What do you think Oklahoma State values as an institution?

Teaching

Thank you for sharing your general opinions about Oklahoma State. Now we are shifting our discussion specifically to teaching and working with students

- In general, what are your thoughts about teaching at Oklahoma State?

- What does Oklahoma State offer to students that is most valuable?

- What do you value for students?

- What do the students value?

- What do the university administrators value for them?

- Describe how you incorporate service to the community into your teaching?

- Describe how you incorporate research into your teaching?

Research

For the next segment, we are going to talk about research.

- What are your thoughts about research at Oklahoma State?

- What does OSU offer researchers that is most valuable?

- What do you value as a researcher?

- What do the university administrators value in research?

- Describe how you incorporate teaching into your research?

- Describe how you incorporate outreach into your research?

- Describe how you incorporate service to the community into your research?

- What do you think students think about research at OSU?

- What do external stakeholders think about research at OSU?

Extension

For the next segment, we are going to have a conversation about outreach and

Extension.

- What are your thoughts about outreach and Extension at Oklahoma State?

- Describe how Oklahoma State reaches people off-campus.

- Describe how Oklahoma State shares research findings/results/best practices
  with industry.

- Describe how you incorporate research into your outreach/Extension efforts.

- Describe how you incorporate teaching into your outreach/Extension efforts.

Land-Grant Mission

For the last segment, we are going to discuss the land-grant mission at Oklahoma State.

- Describe how you see teaching, research, and extension working together at Oklahoma State.

- How important is it that these branches work together?

- Is it necessary for these branches to work together?

- Does one have priority over the others?

    o To you?

    o To students?

    o To administrators?

By show of hands, how many of you have heard of the land-grant mission before today?

So that everyone is on the same page, I'll provide a definition of the land-grant mission:

The land-grant mission is to "provide an environment in which faculty and students can discover, critically examine, organize, preserve advance, and transmit the knowledge, wisdom, and values through teaching, research and public service that will enhance and sustain survival of present and future generations as well as help improve the quality of human life." (Campbell, 1995, pp. 231-232)

Is this the way that you've interpreted the land-grant mission prior to hearing this definition?

- What does the term land-grant mission mean to you?

- As faculty members, what is your role in the fulfillment of the land-grant mission?

- Describe how the land-grant mission is currently manifested at Oklahoma State?

- What do you see as the future of the land-grant mission?

- What, if any, challenges do you see in terms of faculty members carrying out the land-grant mission?

- Do any of these challenges affect you personally, and if so, how?

All-things-considered question:

Suppose you had thirty seconds to describe the land-grant mission to someone who is unfamiliar with the work that our university does on a daily basis. What would you say?

Conclusion

Is there anything that we haven't talked about that you would like to share before we finish up?

I'm going to summarize the main points of today's discussion [summarizes]

How adequate is this summary?

Thank you for taking time out of your day to come here and speak with us. Your participation is greatly appreciated.

VITA

Audrey E. H. King

Candidate for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Dissertation: IT'S COMPLICATED: EXPLORING THE CO-CREATION OF LAND-GRANT BRAND IDENTITY AMONGST FACULTY MEMBERS AT OKLAHOMA STATE UNIVERSITY

Major Field: Agricultural Education

Biographical:

Education:

Completed the requirements for the Doctor of Philosophy in Agricultural Education at Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, Oklahoma in May, 2021.

Completed the requirements for the Master of Science in Agricultural Education and Communication at Kansas State University, Manhattan, Kansas in 2016.

Completed the requirements for the Bachelor of Science in Agricultural Communications and Journalism at Kansas State University, Manhattan, Kansas in 2013.

Experience:
Graduate Research Associate, August 2018 – May 2021, Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, OK, Department of Agricultural Education, Communications and Leadership

Graduate Research Associate, March 2020 – May 2021, Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, OK, Oklahoma Water Resources Center

Communications Coordinator, August 2018 – May 2021, Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, OK, Rural Renewal Initiative

Professional Memberships:
American Association of Agricultural Education
Association for Communication Excellence in Agriculture, Natural Resources, and Life and Human Sciences