Faculty work on... Leadership and Organizational Change

**Organizational Change Strategies to Support the Success of Women Scholars in STEM Fields**

Ann Austin

This three-year project, funded by the National Science Foundation addresses the question: What has been learned about the effectiveness and long-term viability of organizational change efforts to create institutional environments that are conducive to the success of women scholars, particularly in STEM fields. In particular, through a mixed-method design using case studies, interviews, and document analysis, this project is examining the first nineteen institutions in the NSF ADVANCE Program to learn how universities can foster environments supportive of women’s success, how specific change strategies relate to organizational impact, how institutions use explicit change theories or rationales, and how institutional context influences the impact of particular change strategies. The projects will result in both scholarly publications and practical tools, including a website and handbook that highlight findings of use to higher education institutions.

**Student Involvement:** Two HALE students serve as half-time Research Assistants, participating in all aspects of the research, including data collection and analysis, site visits, conference presentations, and the writing of reports and papers.

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**Developing Instructional Capacity in Vietnamese Higher Education**

John M. Dirkx

As a developing country, Vietnam is relying on its educational system, and higher education in particular, to help address the rapidly growing demands created by economic development. While a few institutions of higher education within the country date back many years, most of the higher education infrastructure has emerged only within the last fifty years or so. For example, the community college system within the country is only about ten years old, and new universities are being created almost on an annual basis or are being created out of existing community colleges and polytechnics. Because of this rapidly changing landscape, concern has arisen about the overall quality of student learning within these institutions of higher education and government policy is encouraging attention to the overall quality of teaching in these institutions, as well as the preparation of their faculty members. This project focuses on the development and evaluation of an systematic approach to helping Vietnam’s institutions of postsecondary education build instructional capacity; that is, improve the quality of the preparation of their teachers and of their teaching. In this project, Dr. Dirkx is building on over four years of involvement with Can The University and The VU University in providing workshops for Vietnamese teachers within the Ministry of Education. A model has been developed, based on best practices in the fields of continuing professional development, faculty development, and teacher learning, for guiding the development and implementation of a more systematic approach to instructional capacity building. Dr. Dirkx is now actively seeking funding sources to further support the development, implementation, and evaluation of this approach. This project provides opportunities to learn more about organizational change within a rapidly changing landscape of higher education, how teachers in higher education learn to teach, and how they change.

**Student Involvement:** A HALE PhD student is working on this project as a Graduate Research Assistant, conducting a comprehensive literature review of approaches to faculty and professional development related to the improvement of teaching and instructional capacity building higher education, and helping develop a proposal to use in seeking external support.

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**Evaluation of the Business Solutions Professional Certification Program**

John Dirkx

The Business Solutions Professional (BSP) program was developed by faculty in the MSU School of Labor and Industrial Relations, in collaboration with South Central Michigan Works and the Michigan Department of Energy, Labor, and Economic Growth. The training program develops and certifies qualified individuals to perform the functions of the BSP Participants in the BSP Certification include workforce development professionals, economic development professionals, education and training professionals, and community partners. The intent of this program is to transform the ways in which practitioners in these disciplines approach the task of workforce development within the State of Michigan. The certification emphasizes teaching participants the Business Solutions Process, a business focused, demand driven approach to workforce and economic development. The evaluation questions include: a) What gains in knowledge and skills are derived from participating in the training? b) What outcomes or effects on practice result from the training, as perceived by the participants who are doing field work? c) To what extent is the training contributing to the development of a community of practice among BSPPs? and d) What is the impact of the BSP curriculum on the communities served by the BSP participants? The evaluation component of this project contributes to our understanding of how training fosters organizational transformation and the reconceptualization of one’s professional identity. Aspects of this work have been published in two articles and presented at the Midwest Research to Practice Conference.

**Student Involvement:** A HALE Graduate Assistant has been actively involved in all phases of the evaluation component of this program, including design, data analysis, and writing up and presentation of the findings.

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**Student Leadership Development for 21st Century Diversity**

Kristen Reen

This project includes a number of investigations of student leaders, leadership development, and identity-based student organizations. Recent publications have explored how participation in leadership of identity-based (e.g., race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation) student organizations relates to the development of the affiliated identity and of leadership identities. A related goal is to understand how diverse student leaders in any student organization develop social identities and leadership identities that they may then take into life after college. This work builds on previous studies of the identities of LGBT student activists and leaders.

**Student Involvement:** Graduate and undergraduate students have contributed to the design, data collection analysis, and publications/presentations of this multi-study project.

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**Higher, Adult, and Lifelong Education**

at Michigan State University