EXAMINING FACULTY VOICE IN A CONTEMPORARY DECISION-MAKING CONTEXT:
EXAMINING PERCEPTIONS OF INFLUENCE ON CHANGES TO CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

by
JARRETT LAMONT TERRY
(Under the Direction of Robert Toutkoushian)

Abstract

This qualitative study examines the perceptions and expectations that faculty have regarding their role as quality assurance agents in higher education. As a case study, participation in the process to change the way remedial math is designed and delivered to under-prepared students at public, access institutions is examined. The topic brings the broader subject of shared governance to the forefront. The structure used to explore the topic begins with an examination of a changing environment in higher education and follows with a discussion of the faculty roles regarding curriculum and instruction. The study focuses on five access institutions within a 2-year and 4-year university system and the role that its faculty played in the strategy, development and implementation of a curricular change known as the transformation of remedial mathematics. The goal is to inform the literature regarding the management of faculty units affected by pressures resulting from support of strategies meant to improve higher education. These strategies include, but are not limited to, those that are focused toward

completion. Support for the research findings is collected from interviews, surveys, meeting minutes, published articles and reports regarding contributions to the effort from state institutions within this university system. In conclusion, implications are made regarding the authority, influence and power of the academic core.

The results show that faculty feel that although involvement is expected and perhaps realized, influence in the decision-making process is not expected nor perceived. Further, the responses in the study indicate a disconnect between faculty and those who were asked to represent them in the matter. This dissertation presents these results in context among theories that highlight why this might occur beyond this case study.

INDEX WORDS: Faculty, Governance, Decision-making, Faculty Influence, Power, Authority, Access Institutions, Contingent, Non Contingent, Faculty Roles, Transformation of Remedial Mathematics, Math

# EXAMINING FACULTY VOICE IN A CONTEMPORARY DECISION-MAKING CONTEXT:
# EXAMINING PERCEPTIONS OF INFLUENCE ON CHANGES TO CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

by

JARRETT LAMONT TERRY

BS, Southern Illinois University at Carbondale, 1994

MS, Southern Illinois University at Carbondale, 1998

A Dissertation Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the University of Georgia in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirement for the Degree

DOCTOR OF EDUCATION

ATHENS, GEORGIA

2015

EXAMINING FACULTY VOICE IN A CONTEMPORARY DECISION-MAKING CONTEXT:
EXAMINING PERCEPTIONS OF INFLUENCE ON CHANGES TO CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

by

JARRETT LAMONT TERRY

| | |
|---|---|
| Major Professor: | Robert Toutkoushian |
| Committee: | James Hearn |
| | Charles Knapp |

Electronic Version Approved:

Suzanne Barbour

Dean of the Graduate School

The University of Georgia

December 2015

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

## LIST OF FIGURES

# CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

## Statement of the Problem

Higher education is managing a crisis in the 21st century. The crisis is being portrayed as economic but the impact on its stakeholders is much more far-reaching. Motivated by completion agendas like Complete College America (CCA)[1], national economic health and development is at the front of both internal and external stakeholders' minds with external stakeholders making demands on colleges and universities to increase the number of credentialed citizens for the workforce (CCA, 2009). But is the increase in volume coming at the cost of quality? Although the numbers of degrees conferred are less difficult to quantify, measures of value are often ambiguous and the definition of quality is often varied. This makes quality assurance efforts in higher education difficult to defend and support. Therefore, are we sure that the increase in output is providing an increase in qualified contributors to the economy?

To determine the answer to these questions, we might first try to determine who is responsible for the well being of higher education itself? The answer is not simple. Ex-

[1]The CCA was established in 2009 as a national nonprofit with a single mission. The purpose of its initiative was "to work with states to significantly increase the number of Americans with quality career certificates or college degrees and to close attainment gaps for traditionally underrepresented populations (CCA, 2009)." The initiative was motivated by an agenda set by President Barack Obama earlier in that year to improve the economy through job creation, innovation, and workforce development. Workforce development was included in response to data collected showing that while undergraduate enrollment rates had increased over the previous forty years, degree attainment rates over the same period had remained unchanged. According to their website, one of the goals is "to reinvent American higher education to meet the needs of the new majority of students on our campuses, delicately balancing the jobs they need with the education they desire (CCA, 2009)." Another goal is to ensure a high-quality college education to students whose success will benefit all Americans.

amining *corporate governance* suggests that although governing boards typically have the ultimate authority, control, and responsibility for the health of an organization like higher education, certain aspects of organizational health and performance are often delegated to persons or groups to assist in the overall management of the organization. This distribution of authority and responsibility, along with the notions of autonomy and the power to significantly impact decision-making at local levels are what form the basis of *shared governance*. Shared governance is the theoretical concept from which many of the processes and practices used to manage higher education are developed. It is this model of governance that often makes answering the question complicated because the sharing and potential overlap of areas can result in blurred managerial boundaries. Further, the boundaries of management for higher education are somewhat semipermeable in that non-employees, like the general public, students, and other stakeholders can impact decisions that affect the industry's health.

Currently, all stakeholders are in discourse regarding the best strategies to improve performance in higher education. For example, various strategies have been employed recently to support enrollment management, including online learning technology, advanced data utilization software, and changes to admissions requirements. But, while these changes continue to impact the parameters of quality control, one set of stakeholders that is at the center of the process is faculty. Although faculty are directly responsible for the learning and achievement of the students that are educated through the process, is the faculty's input being applied or even considered with regards to student development and instruction? Even though the number of credentials, graduation rates, and workforce preparation is being argued publicly, what attention is being given to the effects that these quantity-based strategies have on learning? As Hurt (2012, p.122) stated, "In spite of their varied approaches, the same overarching theme appears

over and over again: through its attempts to ensure its own survival, the university has reshaped and exploited itself at the expense of students, faculty and the public good." Specifically, with regard to faculty, it has been argued that the quest for increased quantity and quality control may devalue the role of faculty in higher education altogether. Campbell and Slaughter (1999) warned that administrators are increasingly treating faculty in the same manner that industrial managers treat their employees and, as a result, faculty are losing ownership of their discoveries and autonomy over their professional lives.

Despite concerns, while structural and organizational decisions become increasingly affected by tighter economic constraints, faculty are continually pressured to produce graduates with fewer resources and less influence. More often, the role of faculty as described by the joint document prepared by the American Association of University Professors (AAUP), the American Council on Higher Education (ACE) and the Association of Governing Boards of University and Colleges (AGB), "to (set) the requirements for the degrees offered in course, (determine) when the requirements have been met, and to (authorize) the president and board to grant the degrees thus achieved AAUP, ACE, and AGB (1966:1990, p.221)," is being challenged. As a result, decisions related to curriculum and methods of instruction are being influenced by external stakeholders.

## Purpose of the Study

The study of organizational behavior and decision-making has a lengthy history. Studies on topics like salary equity and roles in governance are not new. However, the literature regarding these issues is often anecdotal or too general toward illustrating real characteristics and outcomes. This study adds to the literature by providing a practical

example of a decision-making process in which stakeholders try to make decisions while managing issues related to roles and responsibilities amidst growing pressures to meet goals that may appear out of alignment. Further, this case is of interest because it explores this process as managed within a particular organizational structure, where specific behaviors of the organization's decision-makers impact the process significantly. Within this kind of environment, the consequences of potential compromises and similar pressures can result in outcomes that impact future decision-making processes and the health of these types of organizations.

More specifically, the study adds to the literature regarding the management of higher education because it provides data that is practically linked to the organizational behavior theories that might help explain faculty perspectives on changes that are being initiated and implemented in their institutions. Although studies have looked at faculty issues like equal pay (e.g. R. K. Toutkoushian, Bellas, and Moore (2007)) and roles and responsibilities (e.g. Hearn and Milan (2012)), the literature is underdeveloped regarding these issues and their impact on faculty participation in response to national pressures to demonstrate improvement in performance metrics like cost reduction for students and student completion. There are but a few studies (e.g. Stewart, Oliver, and Stewart (2013)) that examine real situations in which faculty must meet the goals that align state pressures and public perceptions on accountability with little attention to the goals that might align with faculty motivations. This study seeks to add to this sector of the literature by providing insight on what those faculty motivations are, how faculty manage decisions that are ambiguously assigned to them, and how their level of participation is impacted by factors like structure, perceived roles and responsibilities, and their political and economic environments. The data and its analysis can be helpful

toward predicting the barriers and outcomes needed to guide future decision-making efforts toward success.

Another contribution to the literature pertains to the examination of a changing faculty composition. Concerns regarding the increase in contingent[2] faculty and their participation in shared governance and decision-making are being studied more often (Association for the Study of Higher Education, 2008). Although some researchers have examined the participation that adjunct faculty might have in typical matters of governance, very little attention has been directed toward issues that are considered the responsibility of a sector of the faculty that has been omitted historically from the decision-making process. This case explores such an issue in that the faculty members that are most closely connected with remedial math courses may often serve in contingent appointments and thus do not participate directly in changes to that specific curriculum or its instruction, if not by policy, then by practice. With these changes in the industry's faculty composition, the information gathered from this study may provide insight toward the future management of this large and changing component of the higher education labor force.

## Research Questions

The study examines whether or not faculty are aware of a shift in influence, power and authority, in agreement with this shift, or concerned that this shift will impact their position in the management of the American higher education system. Specifically, the study focuses on faculty perceptions of their own inclusion and participation in

[2]Contingent faculty are those faculty that have less permanent roles or less permanent intentions for employment. The term often refers to part-time instructors, adjunct faculty, and lecturers for example.

decisions made to improve degree completion in higher education. Therefore, a case study[3] regarding decisions made to change the delivery and instruction of remedial math courses has been conducted to answer the following questions:

1. What expectations do faculty have regarding making decisions about curriculum and instruction?

2. Regarding these matters, to what extent do faculty believe that their perspectives and suggestions are being considered?

**Research Design**

The study is of a mixed type and relies on concepts of organizational theories as applied to higher education. These theories pertain more specifically to faculty and decision-making and were used to explain the results of the comparisons of perspectives shared by participants in this decision-making process. Documentation generated during the decision-making process, as well as faculty appointment and assignment data, were collected to provide contextual insight on the environment in which these decisions were made.

The methods used to obtain perspectives included interviews of the committee members making the decision, surveys of the faculty that the committee was convened to represent, and an analysis of the literature regarding theories on faculty behavior and their roles in the operation and management of higher education. Although both interviews and surveys were conducted, interviews conducted with members of the committee were used primarily to support or contradict the findings obtained from the

[3]Merriam (2009) defines a case study as an in-depth description and analysis of a bounded system. In this instance, faculty represent that bounded system.

faculty surveys and the theories outlined in the literature that describe organizational behaviors. The data collection tools were sent to faculty members in mathematics programs at five of the university system's colleges and universities. Additionally, data was collected regarding changes related to remedial math in the state as a result of this process. These data include the following:

- new policies related to curriculum and instruction in remedial math
- information regarding reasons for these changes
- University System of Georgia (USG) reports and institutional Completion Committee meeting minutes related to remedial math curriculum and instruction
- university and college committee and senate meeting minutes regarding changes in the remedial math curriculum

**Summary of the Findings**

The results of this case study indicate a disconnect between the members of the committee in this case and the faculty they intended to represent. While the two were in agreement on some things, questions regarding whether or not the voice of the faculty was completely delivered were evident. Additionally, the decisions made were perceived by faculty to represent a specific agenda. Ultimately, the responses of both faculty and the representatives indicated an involvement in the process, but without significant influence on the decision.

## Organization of the Dissertation

The dissertation is organized in five chapters. The first chapter introduces the problem, provides the significance of the problem and outlines the approach taken to address the problem. Chapter 2 highlights the literature that provides background, theories and support for the questions and behaviors related to this research. Theories of professionalism, power and authority, behaviors under pressure and organizational structure are examined with a focus toward higher education and more specifically, faculty.

Chapter 3 describes the methodologies used throughout the study. Details are provided regarding the collection and comparison of data, including relevant theory and perspectives gathered from surveys and interviews. Further insight is given regarding the importance of the documents created during the process being examined. The analytical method used to compare the responses is also discussed.

Chapter 4 summarizes the results of the study and groups these results according to the categories used to organize the questions asked of the faculty survey respondents. These questions were asked to capture faculty perspectives on issues that inform the study. Within this section, these results are compared to the literature and theories that framed this study. The comparison is meant to shed light on the reasons for the outcomes. While the results are summarized in this chapter, in most cases, representations of the data are presented to assist in understanding the interpretations of the results.

In Chapter 5, conclusions reached with regard to the research questions are presented. These conclusions and the implications that can be made surrounding these

findings are explored and discussed within the contexts of faculty perceptions of power, authority, roles and responsibilities and the structural characteristics of higher education. Further, deeper connections are presented to illustrate the relationship between these implications and the theoretical framework. The contribution may assist in managing stakeholders in what may be a significantly changing governance model for the industry.

# CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

## Previous Approaches toward Studying Faculty-Related Issues

Change in the management of higher education is not a new topic. Several researchers have studied and provided meaningful insight toward how the role that faculty plays has changed. Kezar (2013) indicates that the role of contingent faculty is important in the culture of the academic department and that culture influences the role of faculty in general. In her extensive case study, she built upon a previous study, (Bland, Center, Finstad, Risbey, & Staples, 2006), on the impact that appointment has on faculty performance in research institutions. In that study, Bland et al. (2006) found that there is a significant difference between the performance of tenure and non-tenured faculty. Similar conclusions were made regarding length of employment in that role. Bland et al. (2006) informs this study by providing a framework. While the study focused on Doctoral research institutions, with emphases on teaching and research, this study will focus on the commitment to participate in policy and decision-making that frame how quality is maintained and delivered. In this regard, it is not an analysis of the differences between factions of the faculty, but rather an analysis of the collective position that faculty hold regarding quality control within the industry. The intention of this framework is, however, similar to Kezar (2013) and Bland et al. (2006) regarding quality assurance and therefore will provide insight toward the value of balance of faculty-types for the future of higher-education policy making.

These researchers used a quantitative approach toward understanding their topics. Previous efforts have used data from the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) and more specifically, the data found in the National Study of Post-Secondary Faculty (NSOPF), to answer faculty related questions. While similar statistical data will be used to guide and support this effort, the focus will be a qualitative study regarding the perceptions faculty have toward their influence on a current topic. Therefore, interviews and surveys will be conducted to obtain information regarding faculty participation in present changes. It will be necessary because "we cannot observe behavior, feelings, or how people interpret" the changes potentially caused by the completion agenda (Merriam, 2009, p. 88).

The collection and analysis of data will be greatly influenced by (Hearn & Milan, 2012) as well. Within their report, the authors used existing literature, quantitative data and interviews to investigate the increases in the appearance of contingent faculty in higher education. Similarly, the approach will seek to identify differences, albeit in perceptions, across institutions that fit different Carnegie Classifications and institutional missions. Strategies used by R. Toutkoushian, Porter, Danielson, and Hollis (2002); Porter and Toutkoushian (2005) to gather behaviors in higher education will be used as well. However, for this study, rather than focusing on research-related productivity, insight will be gained on service to the institution in terms of participation in decision-making via senate and curriculum committees. This information will provide insight on participation of faculty in decision making and the reasons for which that participation occurs. While the information will not be directly linked to the subjects being interviewed, an understanding of faculty participation by appointment and institutional type will help to provide a context for common responses.

Finally, the use of literature will be used to help inform the study. For example, recently researchers have used the implications of salary differences as identified by R. Toutkoushian et al. (2002); R. Toutkoushian and Bellas (2003) to explain differences in commitment. In this study, we wish to use the literature to offer similar implications specifically as relates to involvement in the management of higher education. A notable difference is that rather than focus on salary, this study focuses on the level of appointment as relates to commitment. The goal, therefore, is to explain why faculty participation in quality-related activities might be related to different levels of appointment and how that participation can ultimately impact quality in higher education.

**Behavioral Theories**

The environment and responsibilities that faculty share towards insuring the success of higher education, both implicitly and explicitly, are important to understand while examining this issue. Therefore, treatment of the research questions are informed by three theories on organizational behavior. The first theory relates to *power and authority* and provides insight on the behavior of some organizations when decisions are being made or need to be made under external pressure. It is not surprising to some researchers who have focused on the organizational use of power and authority that issues related to decision making exist in higher education (Pfeffer, 1981; Baldridge, Curtis, Ecker, & Riley, 1977; Koch & Fisher, 1998; Birnbaum, 2004; Altbach, Gumport, & Berdahl, 2011). Baldridge et al. (1977) and Hammond (2004) discuss the importance of power and authority through concepts of hierarchy in academia. Other researchers focus on issues related to structure in academic organizations. For example, Cohen

and March (1986b) discuss the inability of these types of organizations to make timely decisions and refer to it as typical in academia while others like Baldridge et al. (1977) characterize the structure of the academic institution as an *organized anarchy*[4] with political model traits and thus at times exhibit a lack of cohesion that relies on give-and-take to solve problems. The authors cite their own research to establish the principals of the political system, governance and decision making.

With regard to problem solving and decision-making, the authors provide the following insight regarding the use and development of power and authority: (1) in addition to functioning through a loose hierarchical system, academic units wait for policy to define the goals to which their organizations will commit; and (2) influence is extremely important and a continual struggle between influence and conflict fuel the need for new policy. These two theories help explain how the academic unit, as a part of an organizational structure, functions with regards to decision-making. Therefore, these theories were used to develop a portion of the framework used for this research. A development of this aspect of the framework is provided below.

**Power, Authority and Influence in Higher Education.** A distinction can be made between power and authority as relates to organizations in higher education. Pfeffer (1981) looks at the definitions that relate power to an interpersonal struggle, but later relates the definition to groups. He defines power to be an entity's ability to motivate someone or some group to do what they otherwise wouldn't do without that

[4]An organized anarchy is characterized by three general properties. The first is problematic preference. That is, reaching a solution is rarely based on a structure, rather a collection of ideas and little reasoning regarding preference of which idea is appropriate for the solution to the problem. The second is unclear technology. Within this context it means that the members of the decision making team lack an understanding of their own process and procedures. The third property is fluid participation. The summary of which is participation varies among members in the decision making team. (Cohen, March, & Olsen, 1972)

motivation. He further suggests that "power is, first of all, a structural phenomenon, created by the division of labor and departmentation that characterizes the specific organizations being investigated (Pfeffer, 1981, p.3)." Because power usually requires that something be given up in its application, thus perhaps lessening ones power over others, power must be used cautiously.

Authority is power legitimized. In higher education, the locus of that power is often difficult to determine. As a characteristic of shared governance in higher education, the implication is that significant responsibility be delegated to multiple subgroups of the organization. The result is a loose understanding of areas of authority within the organization. Pfeffer (1981) further notes that authority may build on to itself and, in contrast to power, may increase even if it is not used. An example given was that people who have the authority to evaluate, when they do, it is expected, but when they don't, authority may be lost. However, authority can erode as well when power is not used in times "when the issues at hand are relatively important (Pfeffer, 1981, p.4)". As a result, sectors of the organization may not even be aware of their responsibilities or may think that they are responsible for areas that are not within their authority.

An associated and important concept of authority is its origin. Within the context of higher education, Birnbaum (1988) found in his research that authority could be created from subordinates rather than organizational superiors. To illustrate, he gives a comparative example regarding two meetings. One meeting was called by a high level administrator and was accepted by faculty with acquiescence. The other meeting was called by a dean and was met by push back and negotiation. In this case, the acceptance of direction is determined by those being directed, not the directors. The work environment can function within both of these contexts at the same time. However,

the uncertainty regarding the source can often lead to loose definitions of hierarchy and ownership. In higher education, political and social factors, such as group membership, have an impact on the acceptance and commitment to decisions made (Baldridge et al., 1977; Cohen & March, 1986a; Chaffee, 1987; Hearn & McLendon, 2012).

Adding the findings of Pfeffer (1981) that organizational politics involve the use of power (through activities) to influence others toward preferred outcomes in the absence of an obvious choice, one might see the development of a decision-making environment that threatens the faculty role in shared governance in this case study. With regards to compromise, for instance, due to perceived lack of action, the completion agenda may signal that faculty have lost trade value in this economic crisis. While all stakeholders are concerned with the well-being of higher education, the federal government, for example, holds influences on funding-related issues, but "the government's authority over programming and strategic approaches is much more limited (Hearn & McLendon, 2012, p.17)". According to the American Association of University Professors (AAUP), the responsibility should fall to the academic core (AAUP et al., 1966:1990). However, because more recent pressures to perform are not being directed from academic perspectives (i.e. learning, curriculum relevance, and program revitalization), but are rather coming from stakeholders with corporate perspectives (i.e. economics, facilities, and workforce-readiness), faculty members may be uncertain as to whether or not current changes to higher education are issues in which they have a voice.

Furthermore, understanding the difference between having the authority to do something and having the power to do something may not be trivial. Faculty may be struggling with questions of when and how to act as relates to quality in higher education. This would not surprise some researchers who have focused on the use of power

and decision-making processes. Cohen and March (1986b), for example, suggests in a reference to the "garbage can model" approach to decision-making, that some organizations often develop solutions to problems even prior to the problems presenting themselves. Conversely, not often is there a problem presented that organizations with symptomatic behaviors of organizational anarchy, actually approach with the intention to solve. Rather, because there are so many solutions out there, the likelihood is that one of the existing solutions will be adequate for the problem it accidentally confronts. Outcomes of this study illustrate this possibility with regards to the decision, decision-makers, and the solutions posed to solve this problem.

To determine how decisions were made to change remedial math in this case, these theories suggests therefore, that an analysis of faculty's active and passive behaviors toward making decisions and the use of its perceived power and authority is needed. While power is often seen as active, analogously, authority is often considered passive. The "garbage can" model may be a passive approach by faculty at problem solving in this regard. To determine whether or not faculty participate in decision-making, we must also discuss how they approach the responsibility. Some researchers look at two models of choice, rational and bureaucratic, to inform how organizations make decisions. The rational choice model is described as "behavior that reflects purpose or intention (Pfeffer, 1981, p.18)." Decisions reflecting bureaucratic models are often made according to the rules and processes which have worked in the past. "This is what we've always done before", may be a frequent response in this case. Faculty may have a reputation for this attitude and it aligns well with the "garbage can" model. Again however, Pfeffer (1981) suggests that using organizational politics (e.g. compromise) will result in preferred outcomes when solutions are not obvious. That said, some

suggest that power and position may not play a role in decision-making at all because usually, preference doesn't guide decision making, rather, decisions guide preference.

Disagreements like these are strengthen the need for studies like this one. Understanding the boundaries of the problem and how solutions are determined will add to the context regarding faculty involvement in this process. With regards to faculty roles in the completion agenda, goals are constraints and decisions are made quickly based on satisfying the problem. Often the decisions made by faculty are made based on solutions for similar problems or familiar strategies used previously to reach desired outcomes. Collectively, the idea of goals as constraints in the context of shared governance is interesting because often goals and objectives may not be the same on either side of the shared governance trinity (as described by AAUP et al. (1966:1990)). Analyzing the current pressures on performance, the academic core might heed the words of Cohen and March (1986a) who warn that profit and efficiency act as minimizers to the role of power and politics in organizations. If economics are currently the major metric for performance and quality, one could theorize that if faculty, or managers of faculty, are trying to have an influence on the outcomes, they might find the use of power in decision-making to have a positive effect on the level of authority a stakeholder might possess.

Complex hierarchy and lack of participation in institutional decision-making due to focuses on subunit issues also complicate control and ownership of academic territory. The goals of each subunit are often given priority and due to exhausting political exchange, often don't provide time to pursue overarching goals for the institution. This then leads to a lack of understanding of institutional-level issues and isolates the academic core from effectively participating in top-level decision making. Baldridge et al.

(1977) suggest that control was being lost over areas traditionally governed by concepts of shared governance in part due to this phenomena. They noted, even then, that the environment was changing and that an increase in external stakeholders including interest groups, accreditation agencies and the states were beginning to exert influence on decisions made at academic institutions. Peterson (2000) noted that internal administrative staffs have continued to increase since the 1950's as well while illustrating that the level of control continues to decline. With increases in student options creating greater competition and increases in economic stressors limiting resources, academic institutions are making decisions more quickly than ever regarding methods of instruction, program offerings and staffing. Traditionally, these decisions were greatly influenced by the academic core. Now these decisions are being influenced largely and swiftly by external (public, corporate, and government) stakeholders through state boards and upper administration.

The authors further point out that the ego associated with expertise makes traditional management hierarchies difficult. The effects are sometimes unclear because different organizations have different structural frameworks. Most note that although academic institutions have similar characteristics in structure to corporations, at times, there are significant differences that affect governance (Baldridge et al., 1977; Cohen & March, 1986a; Chaffee, 1987). These differences in structure may contribute more specifically to faculty authority as well. Departmentalization, tenure, and the lack of individual accountability have been used to explain the effectiveness of faculty authority (Koch & Fisher, 1998; Birnbaum, 2004; Altbach et al., 2011). Although one might assume that seasoned faculty members might hold influence in institutional decision-making, some researchers have found otherwise. For example, Hearn and McLendon (2012, p.72) write that "traditional forms of shared governance that vest authority

largely in tenure-line faculty housed in degree-oriented departments may be not only removed from innovative organizational trends on campus but actively resistant to those trends." Baldridge et al. (1977); Cohen and March (1986a); Chaffee (1987) all further suggest that one of the major characteristics of higher education is goal ambiguity in that it is important to structural agreement. If the goals are unclear, all tend to agree.

**Professionalism.** Characteristics of ego and levels of expertise are important toward another theory that helps to explain and predict faculty behaviors. The third theory that is used to inform the topic is the *theory of professionalism*. The theory of professionalism can be used to describe stakeholder attitudes regarding pride and ownership in the way work is performed (Goode, 1957). This theory is explored in order to understand what motivates certain sectors of the workforce to perform their duties and to stay engaged. The expectation is that the understanding gained will provide insight toward the behavior of faculty. Faculty are noted for taking immense pride in their craft and the value of academic freedom in regards to their work. Central to this study is the influence of pressures related to the completion agenda. The completion agenda is largely motivated by industry interest and workforce development (CCA, 2009) and by most accounts was not motivated by faculty. With regards to faculty working with industry, Campbell and Slaughter (1999) state that conflict may reveal itself in cases where "corporations become increasingly interested in intellectual property and close involvement with university researchers, often precipitating conflict between business and academic values." Often this can be observed when faculty participate in decision-making matters regarding institutional change. For example, at a recent conference, the Tennessee AAUP announced plans to help government officials, the media and the general public understand the important role the faculty plays toward our students becoming better citizens and more competitive in a global economy. Specifically, they

expect to serve as much needed advocates for the faculty, especially now when state support for higher education is falling and the proportion of monies being spent on actual instruction has also steadily declined (T. AAUP, 2013). This response is similar to a directed defense of member or program value to the organization when reductions are being made in industries that have often avoided the ups-and-downs of the economy.

This study, therefore, examines whether or not faculty feel that their institutions' values align with what motivates them to perform. Perceptions are captured regarding the importance of their roles by level of appointment and experience. The theory of professionalism provides insight on why this is important. Similar organizational groups, identified as professions, share characteristics that separate them from other labor groups. Typically, the members of the profession are motivated by customer well being (Goode, 1957). Doctors for example tend to focus on the health and safety of the patient, while lawyers focus on the rights of its clients. Further, these groups develop respect among themselves and govern themselves in that way. That is to say that doctors and lawyers, noted professions, tend to try to impress other members of their profession rather than the manager of the firm or hospital, unless it is with regards to the canons of the profession. Faculty behave in a similar manner. Like the other afore-mentioned professions, reporting structure within the membership really doesn't exist except by achievement and perceived integrity toward the canons of the profession, (i.e teaching, service, and research). Further, the reward for doing well in the membership is rarely monetary. Instead, levels of acceptance (tenure and promotion) within the membership or peer group are based on a loose set of criteria that is usually less important than the general feelings of worth expressed by the member's colleagues.

It is for this reason that level of appointment and years service is important to this study. If faculty don't feel that what motivates them to perform and meet their responsibilities is valued, junior and senior faculty may withdraw from the pursuit of inclusion or lose interest maintaining position in the profession altogether, especially if different values are being put in place ahead of their own. Within this context, the perceived value of learning is discussed and compared to perceptions regarding graduation and course completion, signifying the completion agenda. The results show a distinction that may provide understanding regarding the level of participation. Finally, the behaviors of participants in the study are also examined within the context of this theory. All of the committee members were faculty members previously and have now become administrators. Interesting findings regarding their perceptions, compared to the faculty survey responses, were obtained. The information helps to understand the boundaries of the profession by examining the alignment between permanent and non-permanent faculty, tenured and non-tenured faculty, as well as current faculty and those representatives that had previously held the position. Faculty perspectives may have changed with the times, and more insight on those changes are provided in the section regarding changes to the faculty landscape.

## The Changing Landscape for Faculty

The environment has changed regarding voice, performance and security for faculty. It is important to understand what changes have occurred that impact traditional faculty roles if faculty are going to participate in making improvements to higher education. Economic constraints, changes in hiring practices and focus on graduation rates have increasingly affected the performance of the academic core. During the time that this

research was conducted, the completion agenda was a game changer with regards to the assessment and management of higher education. Therefore, to provide insight, an examination of typical faculty roles in the management of higher education and an examination of the effects and implications of one of the more recent and significant pressures on the management of higher education is provided.

**The Faculty Role Defined.** To better understand the impact that changes in faculty motivation levels as a result of perceptions of influence might have on quality in higher education, the role of faculty in higher education must be understood. In higher education, many institutions follow a model of shared governance as outlined by the AAUP, the American Council on Education (ACE) and the Association of Governing Boards of Universities and Colleges (AGB). The joint statement defines the roles of the governing board, a president and its staff or cabinet, and faculty to manage academic institutions. In addition to the definition of these roles, goals, responsibilities and levels of influence are explained as relates to insuring the success of the academic institution (AAUP et al., 1966:1990). According to the document, the role of faculty is "to (set) the requirements for the degrees offered in course, (determine) when the requirements have been met, and to (authorize) the president and board to grant the degrees thus achieved (AAUP et al., 1966:1990, p.221)." Areas related to curriculum and the method of instruction are responsibilities as well.

With regard to the validity of this definition, in this analysis, it would be irresponsible to omit that the AAUP is an organization largely devoted to protecting the interest of the academic core. Additionally, in Georgia, the AAUP's influence may be difficult to assess because of its distinction as a right-to-work-state. The implication may be that it is less obvious that faculty have a union-like support that strengthen the ideals

of shared governance. However, many stakeholders accept the role of faculty as defined by this organization. Former research university president John Lombardi discusses the university as a quality engine and within this context the knowledge transferred as components of that quality (Lombardi, 2013). Extrapolating that context to include teaching and comprehensive institutions as well, he views the role of faculty as quality managers. While developing the faculty's responsibility to manage content delivered and to self regulate, he writes that "astute investment in the capital assets of faculty produces the institution's value to its constituency and owners (Lombardi, 2013, p.63)." He further notes that "quality speaks to the university's commitment to deliver products and services that are nationally and internationally competitive (Lombardi, 2013, p.116)."

Although Lombardi speaks to the ideological attributes of the faculty as relates to shared governance, more recently, researchers have begun to question the practical place for faculty in the guidance of higher education. Being unable to take swift and necessary action is often a criticism when speaking about the application of the responsibilities of faculty. As a result, other stakeholders have become disenfranchised with the academic core in the context of shared governance. Birnbaum (2004) points out that non-academic stakeholders focus on making changes through the external environment because faculty cannot respond to the requirements to make decisions in a timely manner. Others suggest that it is difficult for faculty to come to agreement at all except for in times of potential crisis (Hearn & McLendon, 2012). Still others suggest that the role of faculty to make decisions is weakened because of faculty selfishness rather than selflessness toward the larger institution (Kerr, 2001). This sentiment is interesting when consider in the context of professionalism and its characteristics of pride and the public good.

The apathy derived from this condition can translate to problems being ignored in general if shared governance is required in order to develop solutions. Workarounds and concessions become prevalent in most forms of problem solving when the proper tools aren't used or the appropriate experts aren't consulted. Some authors suggest that a redefinition of faculty roles and responsibilities in shared governance is occurring due to lack of practice and training. Gary Olson, provost and vice president for academic affairs at Idaho State University quoted a seasoned department head and a dean in a recent editorial who both determined that faculty don't have the same understanding of shared governance that they as administrators hold (Olson, 2009). This lack of agreement toward the definitions and practice of shared governance may result in the redefinition of traditional attributes of quality and the voice of the academic core to lose its influence. With this in mind, the next section illustrates the current environment for faculty by reviewing the completion agenda as an example of recent and significant pressures toward performance in higher education.

**Performance Pressures.** A national analysis of the state of education sent shock waves throughout the country and states including Georgia were affected (Spelling, 2006; Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia, 2007). Discourse regarding the performance of the american higher education system had become increasingly difficult to ignore. In this regard it continues to be asked to prove whether or not colleges and universities are worth the investment. The most recent measure has been preparation of the students that leave with a degree to move into the workforce. Surprisingly, little has been written recently from the perspective of the employer; yet much has been inferred regarding the quality of college graduates from other stakeholders. In an essay written by the Association of American Colleges and Universities AAC&U regarding the importance of a college education, the authors suggests that business leaders in a wide

array of sectors are identifying analytical, contextual, integrative, scientific, and creative thinking as the keys to fueling our economy (Humphreys & Davenport, 2005)." As a result, employers are looking for skilled communicators with a global understanding of culture and diversity that can solve problems with increasingly complexed characteristics. This means that the technical skills desired must include attributes necessary to foster innovation. Academic and AAC&U president, Carol Geary Schneider, agrees concluding that "the real key to economic opportunity and advancement depends not on whether the student possesses a credential, but rather on whether students actually leave college with that rich portfolio of learning that employers seek and society urgently needs: broad knowledge, strong intellectual and practical skills, grounded commitments to personal and social responsibility, and demonstrated capacity to deal with complex challenges (Schneider, 2012)."

To meet these needs, new research studies directed toward learning and contribution to society and culture are being assessed to show the benefits of higher education. Data is being collected by various groups to support this academic perspective. Ewell (2009) discusses the major external players in higher education that have stimulated institutions to engage in assessment and the kinds of information about performance on which they do or should focus. The groups include state government agencies, the federal government, regional and specialized accreditors, and the public interest represented by consumer demand for information and third party judgments (e.g., rankings) about institutional performance. His work makes specific reference to the United States' completion agenda and recent federal reports. He uses the findings in Spelling (2006) to respond to the policy maker and business community concerns that will continue to press higher education for accountability in ways that were inconceivable two decades ago. In that report, the commission concludes that many students graduate

college with literacy issues and a lack of the skills needed to move the economy forward (Spelling, 2006). Ewell is one of many users of the NSSE data related to interpersonal skills, including communication, critical thinking and cultural awareness, often desired by employers trying to assess and improve the quality of higher education (Kuh, 2001).

There are several agencies that are focusing on helping faculty to align their practices and goals with assessment measures that lead to completion as well. The National Institute for Learning Outcomes Assessment was established in 2008 and supported by Lumina specifically to work with academic institutions to improve assessment and reporting internally and communicate externally with external stakeholders. As mentioned earlier, Lumina and the AAC&U have committed to restoring the academic voice as relates to quality by showing that what happens during the educational experience is not only useful but quantifiable. However, much of the literature is focused toward the tools used to quantify and compare the values of this stakeholder in context with the goals of academe. Little is directed toward the alignment of workplace competencies with the learning outcomes of a college program. Rather, it is often the opposite, such that the assessments are geared toward how well the learning outcomes align with the competencies that aren't well defined nor understood by academia. For example, while Aper (2010) notes that often industries don't find what they want in our students, he does not specifically demonstrate that 'technical know how' is not the problem. Further, he examines the gathering of data and implies that employers are requesting simpler mechanisms toward evaluating what really matters in industry. He implies that what is being offered through higher education may not match what is being requested. More academics should approach this subject as it is critical to maintaining authority. "Nowadays, not only is there less criticism of quality mechanisms but also academics have started internalizing its own values (Henkel, 2000)".

Although many stakeholders (i.e. states, the general public, students, and corporations) are included implicitly or explicitly in the mission statement, partnership with faculty is not mentioned. What is mentioned, however, is a goal of quality that has historically been the responsibility of faculty, as was discussed previously. After close review of speeches, publications, and advertisements of the CCA, one struggles to find how quality will be managed within the agenda (CCA, 2009; Jones, 2012, 2014). For example, according to the website, a six part system is being used to improve performance. It is unclear as to if faculty involvement is a direct priority or if it is even directly required in this effort. Within the context of performance based funding, the graduation rates and economic reward are the focuses.

Within the contexts that affect students the most, speed and efficiency toward navigating the process seem to be the focus. For example, clear pathways to completion, appropriate placement based on entrance metrics, course loads consistent with a four year completion goal, and in-place remediation for students that lack preparation are noted as essential to success. Exploration of learning outcomes that align well with the requirements of the workplace and a more innovative and global society, on the other hand, seems to be absent. Also missing is a discussion about innovative changes to delivery and continued improvement strategies to assist in keeping faculty current and effective. There are several considerations that could be made related to what happens inside the classroom. Any mention of these, however, seems to have been omitted.

**Examining Faculty-Driven Responses to Completion Pressures.** Regarding the roles, powers and level of authority that faculty hold, decisions regarding the completion agenda that might be affected by faculty involvement are numerous. Recent changes to the metrics regarding state and federal allocations to higher educa-

tion have created an uneasiness among educators. Pressures to increase the numbers of credentialed persons have been coming from several stakeholders (Obama, 2009; USG & TCSG, 2012; CCA, 2009). Corporate stakeholders have joined the fray and are questioning the role that colleges and universities play in preparing the workforce. In fact many of the players in this initiative have actively pursued their own interests by raising awareness, funding, and support for the goals set by the agenda. As a result, many colleges are practically changing their missions in response to these and other mounting pressures. In the struggle to adjust however, it is difficult to determine how faculty have actively participated in the decision making process that results in the changes that are occurring. It is unclear as to whether the academic core is accepting the changes with little influence to protect the interest of their role as the academic core and thus quality assurance agent. Are we seeing consequences of inactivity as relates to power, authority and ultimately the security of shared governance as a viable model in academia?

Faculty and faculty supporters for improved quality in education as well as improved completion rates are actively informing the discourse. There is strength in alliances and as mentioned previously, the CCA has an alliance of over thirty states. A potential response to the CCA may come from the AAC&U's development of the LEAP States Initiative. The AAC&U and Lumina are leaders in a growing push to align learning outcomes with what external stakeholders report as the outcomes they expect. The group is growing quickly and includes over ten states with two others in the pipeline. The alliance is focused on systematic change and the creation of the quality collaboratives. These collaboratives are necessary to develop meaningful contributions to recent policy recommendations regarding the future of higher education.

Although academics are pursuing quality, structurally, financial constraints are guiding the strategies related to performance. Because dollars and cents decisions are 'click of the button' in nature in comparison to some pedagogical decisions as relates to time to implementation, faculty have not had time to think about the best ways to preserve quality in the face of such changes. Changes like new financial aid limitations, access improvement demands, and performance based versus enrollment based funding perceptions have left some faculty scrambling to fill their own classrooms and defend the relevance of their own courses. Some have turn to AAC&U's initiative on student success, "Liberal Education America's Promise (LEAP)" for help and support. Participating in LEAP gives faculty members a network of colleagues across the country too refer too when asked questions related to how quality can be maintained in the throws of economic transition. Additionally, resources are disseminated and made available to assist faculty in managing potential quality crises.

While these resources exist, some of the issues related to proving the effect that faculty have on quality are difficult to approach because of ownership. For example, faculty have problems across the system related to data. Managing big data and trying to determine what impacts who is a data driven problem that requires a significant investment from external stakeholders. The investment must be financial, in technology, and in personnel. Currently, faculty are learning how to use data centered systems to report, track and address student performance issues that will help raise success rates. More technology is being used as well to help students communicate with faculty regarding what methods are successful and what needs improvement. Additionally, data is being collected to help assess what institutional and community involvement is proving useful in the education of our students. But, are there indicators that suggest that these and other factors are preventing faculty from controlling the quality

of the higher education system. Further, are all of these new considerations to prove value negatively impacting faculty motivations toward continuing in the profession. An examination of Georgia's completion agenda and a look at a specific example within it illustrates how faculty participate and fulfill their role in this environment.

**Remedial Transformation and Georgia's Completion Agenda.** Georgia's completion focus is to "outline a collaborative process to guide the work of their respective 60 institutions of higher education to rapidly increase the proportion of young adults with a certificate or degree, while maintaining a commitment to quality (USG & TCSG, 2012). In Georgia, as the perspective of higher education in crisis escalated to a national level, the academic core has released more of its responsibility to control quality and curriculum to the USG by focusing on the value of external testing, high school preparation, and the completion agenda. In accordance with the agenda, in January 2013, a USG task force was established to examine ways to improve success rates in gateway mathematics courses. The eight member task force was appointed by the Vice Chancellor and Chief Academic Officer of the USG to develop a recommendation before the following academic year. The eight members were all tenured Mathematics Professors within the USG. The system office provided administrative support and tasked Associate Vice Chancellor for Student Achievement and Interim Assistant Vice Chancellor for General and Transitional Education and Professor of Learning Support Mathematics with leading the endeavor. Three external consultants, Higher Education Policy and Strategy Lead, Jenna Cullinane and Professor of Mathematics and Public Affairs Philip Uri Treisman from the University of Texas at Austin and the Vice President of Complete College America, Bruce Vandal were requested as well to facilitate the transformation (University System of Georgia Task Force on Transforming Remediation, 2013).

The summary of the recommendations were to focus on the following:

1. credit-bearing, gateway mathematics courses
2. alignment of mathematics requirement with appropriate majors
3. implementation of a co-requisite approach to remedial math requirements with gateway courses
4. development of a year-long mathematics recovery plan for under-prepared students
5. development of a more robust set of measures to identify students for remedial courses
6. termination of the current exit examination process
7. alignment of outcomes of the gateway math courses with the Common Core
8. improvement of advising for students in need of remediation

Several approaches have been pursued and as technology improves, better resources are being developed to solve the problems associated with college readiness and access. As a consequence of increased access when enrollment was the strongest measure for funding, academic institutions spent significant time working with students that were underprepared for college level mathematics, reading and writing. No longer is this an option when the state adoption of performance-based funding is becoming a stronger possibility (CCA, 2011). To date, the transformation of remediation has moved to self-paced remediation and online instruction for those students who likely need the greatest face to face attention, to providing remediation concurrently with college level

courses, or to simply eliminating Learning Support all together. It is not coincidental that these changes have occurred while performance-based funding models that reward completing a degree in a shorter period of time are being considered. Very little has publicly been addressed regarding the impact on quality that many of these initiatives will have on the success and performance of higher education.

While the issue is not debated publicly, significant effort is being given to the re-design of remediation efforts. Remedial classes are designed to prepare students for college level work. In the USG, one out of every five students beginning in the 4-year institutions and one out of every three students in the 2-year system are required to exit Learning Support prior to taking many of the college level-courses needed to graduate with a degree. Specific programs were created to support mathematics and English (reading and writing). For mathematics, because the courses were often four credit hour courses that were not covered by financial aid, the financial impact on attending college, especially 2-year institutions, was not trivial. Furthermore, while grades have traditionally been given to students to serve as a measure of success, no credit toward graduation in any program was given. In other words, students were taking courses that cost money but did not count toward a degree. Remedial transformation seeks to fix this shortcoming.

To date, three entry level mathematics courses, college algebra, mathematical modeling and quantitative reasoning, have been added to the curriculum based on perceived requirements for a student's career goals. Co-requisite courses are now in place that supplement two of these three courses, arguably affecting classroom efficiency. Finally, a new index has been created that significantly reduces the weight of math placement exams and relies more on indicators like standardized test scores, high school grades,

and previous higher educational experience. While the additional components of the index may provide more support for math placement in general, the lack of control by each institution may result in students being improperly placed and underprepared to succeed.

Transfer issues are a concern as well. Course equivalency and program consistency are problems that need to be considered. Students are moving from institution to institution for a variety of reasons and without a clear understanding of the competencies needed to reach their goals in a new environment. The level of preparation is critical for all students and for all faculty to properly address the classes being taught. Course assessment is not being done very well or at all in many cases (Ewell, 2009). Common course objectives are not very common across the systems, probably not even across institutions in practice, but this leads to competency issues for students transitioning to the next class, let alone new colleges or universities. The issue is not trivial as keeping academic freedom while ensuring that students are prepared is complicated in that regard. Common Core is an example of where faculty may not have felt included. It seemed to be handed down to faculty and many faculty found this to be the call to arms they needed to address the completion agenda.

Indeed a shift has occurred regarding the importance of student preparation and faculty roles toward educating our citizens in Georgia's colleges and universities. In the nineties, emphasis was clearly placed on access. During that time, faculty guided the process to increase opportunities for citizens of the state to pursue and education, while maintaining quality by establishing processes, like remediation, to assist in making sure students were prepared to complete college level courses successfully. As the political landscape changed, more emphasis toward financial issues and less attention

to quality by the state seemed to become evident. As a consequence of the completion agenda and economic constraints, the administrative core seems to show less concern on preparing students to succeed in college level courses and more emphasis on students completing college. The evidence shows that the requirements for exit from remediation have been weakened over the last eight years, and more opportunities to circumvent standards set at the institutional level were created (Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia, 2003, 2005, 2007; University System of Georgia Task Force on Transforming Remediation, 2013).

This dissertation hopes to determine if faculty feel that not only were they involved, and continue to be involved, in the strategies and changes to these components of the completion agenda, but that they were influential in making improvements toward Georgia's higher education performance as a result of the involvement. Having a basis for how the faculty works and analyzing the perceptions they have within that context will help to frame a rich picture. Reviewers of this work may begin dialogues concerning the pace of the agenda, quality control, and the role that faculty play in keeping value in higher education. Further, the understanding gained regarding what motivates and limits faculty to participate will be valuable to the management of a changing faculty composition in the american higher education system.

# CHAPTER 3: METHODS

## Participants

To answer the research questions, interviews and surveys were conducted with mathematics faculty and administrators from five institutions[5] from the USG. The institutions chosen for this study were of varying Carnegie classifications. Four of the institutions were classified as public institutions offering associate's degrees with two of those four offering some baccalaureate degrees. The service areas of these medium-sized institutions varied between rural, city and suburban classifications. The fifth institution was classified as a public institution that offered baccalaureate degrees in diverse fields. Its campus setting was regarded as large suburban. These study sites were chosen because (1) these institutions had representatives on the remedial transformation task force, (2) these institutions had students taking remedial math courses, and (3) these institutions had faculty teaching remedial math courses. The surveys were administered to all mathematics faculty at these institutions in an effort to capture all of the personnel that would have had direct and relevant experience with remedial math.

Interview participant selection was based on site selection criteria. Eleven members were on the committee responsible for designing the new curriculum and delivery methods regarding remedial math. Of the eleven, five were selected to represent the committee. The remaining members were omitted because they did not have students

[5]The site names were omitted to provide anonymity to the institutions. The focus of the study is not to compare occurrences between any institution or within any particular state, but rather to provide a general case study.

in learning support at their institutions or were not representative of the state. While their perspectives may have been different from those members of the committee that had remedial math students on their campuses, they were not included in this study because the perspectives of the individuals who represented the faculty who were teaching remedial math courses were critical to this study.

## Measures

The following measures were used to answer the research question.

**Interview.** A semi-structured set of interview questions was used to interview the members of the transformation of remedial math committee. The interviews were conducted to identify themes that inform the study. The questions asked referred to ownership of curriculum and instruction, faculty participation and influence in this decision, and initiation and motivation to make this decision. The interviews were approximately 45 minutes and were conducted in-person or via Skype. See Appendix B for the list of interview questions.

**Survey.** Surveys were conducted regarding the perception that faculty have related to their influence in the decision making processes surrounding Georgia's remedial math curriculum. The surveys consisted of 26 questions, divided into five sections: (1) faculty duties and responsibilities, (2) classification and length of employment, (3) perception of faculty authority regarding curriculum and instruction, (4) perception of influence on changes to curriculum change (remedial math) and (5) perception of institutional focus on quality in instruction regarding remedial math. The questions were asked and scored according to a Likert scale, quantifying the level of agreement from "Strongly Disagree" to "Strongly Agree". Respondents were also asked to select

appropriate responses for appointment and length of employment and were given the opportunity to provide an open response at the end of the survey. The survey was designed to be completed in approximately 15 minutes and was administered through Survey Monkey.

**Documentation.** Several institutional documents were reviewed to provide context about the environment in which this decision was being made. Reports, campus policies, faculty work assignments and committee meeting minutes were analyzed to illustrate the practices shared by the USG and its institutions. Specifically, campus policies and faculty assignments were reviewed to illustrate the ownership and responsibility of faculty to design and maintain the mathematics curriculum. Reports and meeting minutes were reviewed so that discussions between and perspectives of the members of the committee regarding the important components of the change in policies could be considered. Meeting minutes were collected from several years prior to the implementation of the completion agenda through the time of this study.

## Procedures

This study was reviewed by the Institutional Review Board of the University of Georgia to insure that procedures met standards for the responsible and ethical conduct of research with human subjects. Prior to participating in this study, all participants provided consent to participate in this study according to these standards. Solicitation for participation and consent forms are provided in Appendix A.

**Interview Protocol and Coding.** Five interviews were requested for this study. A 60.0% participation was determined necessary to inform the study and 100% of the interviews were conducted. The interviews were conducted in person with 4 of the

5 committee members while the remaining interview was conducted via Skype due to the proximity of the institution. To begin the interview, responses were requested affirming that consent had been provided and that the consent was still given for the interview. An iPhone application was used to capture the audio of each interview and the audio files were transcribed by a transcription service (REV.com). After transcriptions were returned, they were pre-coded to be categorized according to the five sections of the surveys. Further coding was done that resulted in the extraction of themes that were in common among each respondent. The interview responses were further coded to compare with contexts derived from theories found in the literature review.

**Survey Protocol and Coding.** Due to the nature of the study, an exact number of responses needed to fully answer the research questions could not be given (Merriam, 2009). However, given the abundance of surveys currently being collected on matters of higher education, 25% return was expected. This would have resulted in approximately 35 returned surveys from faculty that met the selection criteria. While 141 faculty were surveyed, 42 faculty responded to the survey and 36 faculty answered all of the questions with 39 answering most questions. This return met the expectation and represents enough of a return to inform the question.

The first question was made available to allow for consent to be given prior to any other questions to be seen. After consent was given, subsequent questions were provided one-at-a-time until all questions were viewed. Participants were not required to answer any of the questions. The last question prompted a participant to add any information that the respondent felt was important to include. These responses were treated like interview data and coded accordingly.

**Documentation Review and Coding.** The purpose of reviewing any documentation was to uncover any causes for change or influence to the remedial math curriculum if any existed. Once collected, the relevant documentation and the interviews and surveys conducted underwent a process of triangulation as described in Merriam (2009). The goal was to find evidence that could answer one or all of the research questions according to both theory and practice. Documents, including articles in periodicals, meeting minutes, and committee reports, collected in support of this study as well as the organizational theories themselves were analyzed for specific themes. Specifically, the organizational theories that guided this development and became the basic categories for analysis were taken from Cohen et al. (1972); Cohen and March (1986a, 1986b); Pfeffer (1981); Hearn and Milan (2012); Kezar (2013); Goode (1957).

As the other documents were analyzed, words and phrases that shared similarities to those words and phrases found in the theoretical literature were grouped. While these groups were expected to inform a majority of the themes found in the study, it was expected that other themes would emerge from interviews and surveys. After interviews were conducted and survey data was collected, analyses of these recordings and transcripts were taken. The themes that emerged from these analyses were compared to the themes found in the literature regarding the organizational behavior of faculty groups.

## Research Bias and Assumptions

As a former remedial math instructor with both full-time, permanent appointment and part-time appointment, I have had several experiences regarding the instruction,

outcomes and changes associated with remedial math courses. Additionally, as an assistant dean of a college that houses a mathematics program, I have significant experiences with the success strategies used to improve student outcomes with regards to remedial math courses. In addition to that, I have had practical working experience helping student find success in STEM based careers at one of the 2-year and one of the 4-year institutions. While it was expected that the connection would be beneficial toward receiving responses to surveys and interviews, some of the respondents could have participated with different levels of comfort and thus could have responded at significantly different levels of enthusiasm, especially with regards to follow up questions.

Per my experiences, I might also have an expectation that faculty participate less regarding decisions related to remediation. The bias may be further evident when considering different levels of institution (e.g. 2-year institutions versus 4-year institutions). To meet this bias, a review of the questions as well as my personal communication mechanisms was conducted. The goal of this review was to filter bias in the questions and any bias that may have emerged in body language or inflection.

A related limitation is the inability to assess the isolated effect of certain policies, like completion agendas, on faculty perspective. While several pressures can be attributed to the completion agenda, not all can be determined to have originated within it. For example, economic pressures to limit cost and raise affordability have existed for some time. To address this concern, questions pertaining to the knowledge of the completion agenda were tied to the responses referring to the completion agenda. For example, rather than asking a question: *How satisfied are you with the policies made at your institution?* The following question was asked *How satisfied are you with the policies made regarding the completion agenda at your institution?*. These questions

were preceded of course with questions regarding knowledge and familiarity with the completion agenda, its impact on faculty roles, and the perception of changes related to policy that impact faculty roles and responsibilities.

# CHAPTER 4: RESULTS

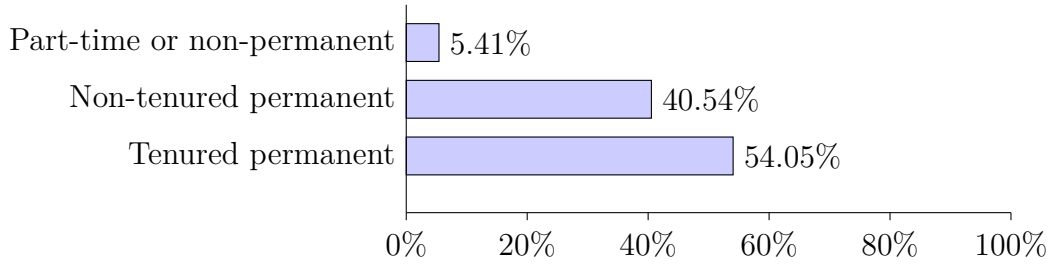
The summary of the results of this study are organized according to the categories that were used to conduct the survey. In addition to the numerical data found in the survey, excerpts of relevant data taken from the open-ended responses to the survey, interview responses and collected documents (e.g. meeting minutes and policy manuals) are reported verbatim. First, data describing the participants of the study as well as their perspectives on the connection between their attributes and this decision-making process are presented. The information is important toward connecting the theories of professionalism and organized anarchy, as outlined in Chapter 2, to perceptions in this study. The categories presented in this section include: (1) appointment, length of employment and experience teaching learning support math; and (2) faculty duties and responsibilities.

To further explore potential connections to these theories, numeric survey results are paired with themes found in the responsive data and collected documents that characterize the perceptions that participants had regarding this decision-making process including: (1) perception of faculty authority regarding curriculum and instruction; (2) perception of institutional focus on quality in instruction regarding remedial math; and (3) perception of influence on changes to the remedial math curriculum. Although the survey used a 5-point Likert scale ranging from “Strongly Disagree” to “Strongly Agree”, the two extreme categories were collapsed to efficiently present the data when there was little variability in response. That is “strongly disagree” and “disagree” and

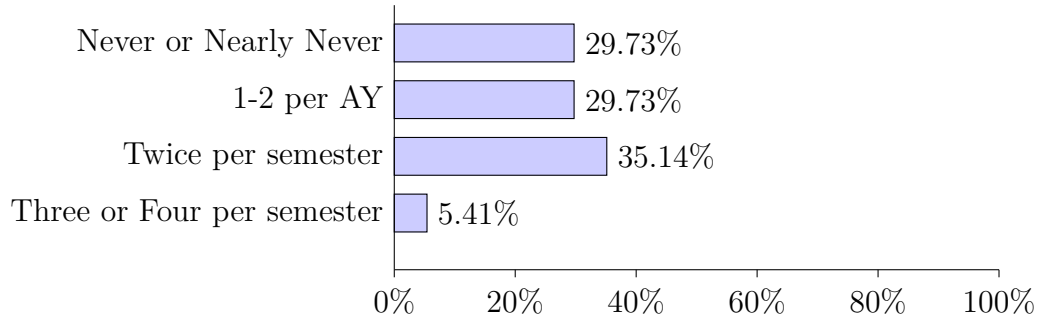
"strongly agree" and 'agree' were aggregated when appropriate. In all instances, data reported in figures represent the percentage of respondents who chose the indicator.

**Participant Attributes**

The composition of permanent faculty as stakeholders in this sample were represented well according to the survey, with 54% of the respondents being tenured faculty. Further, expertise related to the focus of this decision was well captured as 70% of the respondents were currently teaching remedial math courses, with more than 40% teaching two or more remedial math courses per semester (see Figure 1).




(a) Faculty appointment (Q22)




(b) Current teaching load(s) for remedial math (Q24)

Figure 1. Survey participant descriptives

The diverse representation of faculty across rank and years of experience with remedial math was important to the study as well, because the responses from the participants that have different historical perspectives provided some of the contextual information needed to interpret answers to the research questions (see Figure 2).

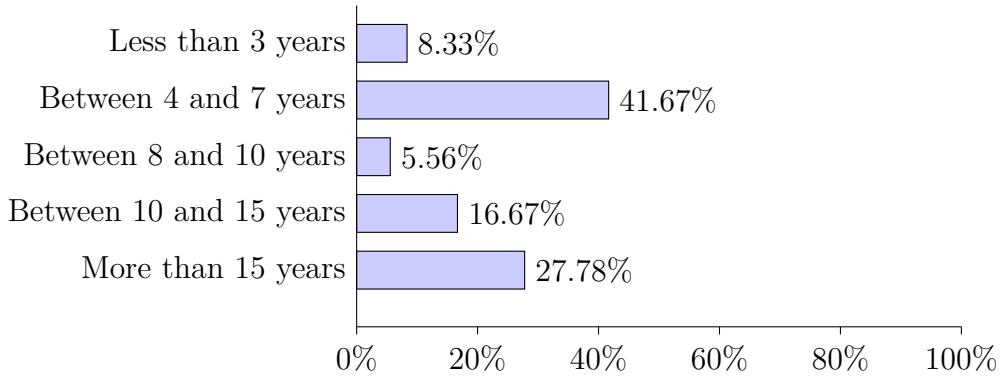



Figure 2. Length of employment (Q23)

Despite this diversity in participants, in response to questions about remedial math expertise, the committee's perception regarding who was expected to teach remedial math was often more directed toward a specific group of academic personnel, as exemplified by two of the committee members.

> *"At our institution, our learning support faculty are non-tenured. They're permanent but non-tenured. And, like most institutions, we fill in with part-time."*

and

> *"As far as full-time, part-time, there may be more [a] higher percentage of part-time instructors teaching the success courses, the learning support courses."*

Pairing these findings with the survey participant descriptives indicates that although the appropriate faculty representation was achieved in this sample, faculty with current experience with remedial math may not have been largely represented because they are more likely to be found among non-permanent and less experienced faculty. Unfortunately, very few non-permanent faculty participated in the study and thus the voice of a portion of the faculty may have been missed. Their absence is not trivial, as the inclusion of these experienced faculty in the decision-making process is intuitive. The results of the study shed light on the absence, however, specifically within review of interviews and policies, indicating that part-time faculty often

> *"... only get involved as much as they want to get involved and so a large number of faculty across the state probably don't even realize how this transformation came about/took place because they aren't interested in getting involved moreso than they already are. At least, that is the case for many of the faculty, especially part timers who often end up teaching the learning support math courses...".*

In fact, according to Board policy, the lack of participation of this group connected to some of the characteristics of the organizational structure of higher education in this state in that

> *"... persons holding adjunct appointments or other honorary titles shall not be considered to be members of the faculty" (Vice Chancellor Nels Peterson, 2009, Sec 3.2.1).*

and thus, these faculty members may have not felt as if they had very much to offer to the study.

### Perception of Faculty Roles and Responsibilities

The study also explored the perceptions faculty have regarding their roles in decision-making, particularly when decisions are being made concerning the curriculum and its delivery. Faculty members and committee members agreed with the generally accepted policies of shared governance, as outlined in AAUP et al. (1966:1990), that faculty should be responsible for curriculum and instruction and the changes to these components of higher education (see Figure 3). However, the perception of faculty involve-

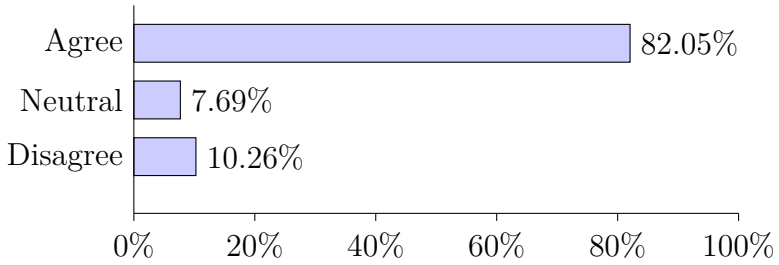
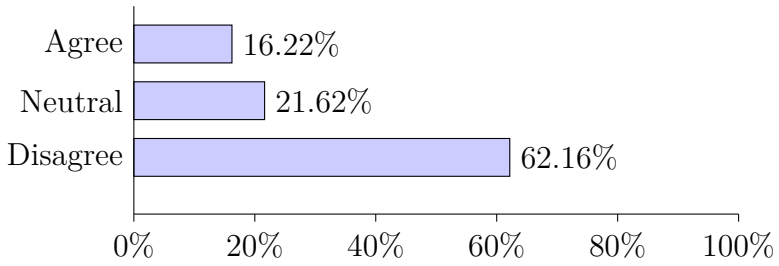


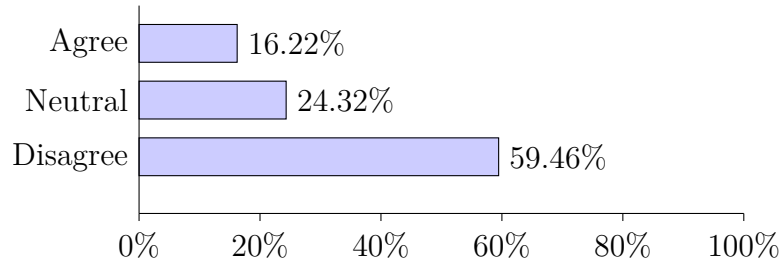
Figure 3. Faculty are responsible for curriculum and instruction. (Q2)

ment in practice did not agree with this finding. According to the survey, less than a third of the respondents felt that they were actively responsible for the management of the curriculum at their institution. Moreover, the perceived level of faculty involvement in the decision to make a change to remedial math was low (see Figure 4). Less than

20% of the respondents agreed that faculty were policy drivers toward or even voted on the changes to remedial math.




(a) Faculty were policy drivers for changes in the remedial math policy. (Q9)




(b) Faculty voted on the changes to the remedial math policy. (Q11)

Figure 4. Perception of faculty influence on changes to the remedial math curriculum

This finding did not align well with the responses offered by the committee members charged to represent the faculty in this decision. For example, when asked who would be responsible for curriculum, instruction and quality in this decision-making context, a committee member provided this response:

> *"..in general, I would say that the faculty have control, should have control of the curriculum and should be responsible for assessing the quality of that curriculum. So certainly, it will be a faculty responsibility in my mind."*

According to Cohen et al. (1972), this type of disconnect concerning responsibility and authority is characteristic of organized anarchies as discussed in Chapter 2.

**Faculty Expectations of Expertise in Decision Making**

Data regarding expertise and rank was also collected from responses to the *participant descriptives* portion of the survey and has been previously presented (see Figures 1 and 2). When explored in context with the responses that committee members and some of the survey participants provided regarding quality control and roles and responsibility, an interesting result emerged with regards to the role of part-time faculty. The data shows that all personnel that perform the duties associated with a faculty position do not have the same expectations of responsibility regarding the decisions that impact the curriculum. At short glance, this perception would not seem to align with characteristics of professionalism (i.e. collective ownership of service to insure the highest quality for the customer). However, the responsibility to deliver that curriculum with the highest level of professionalism was determined to be an expectation and does align well with the theory. An attitude exemplifying this was found in the following open-ended response:

> *"There is little delineation between PT [part-time] and FT [full-time] faculty efforts to ensure that students are well-prepared and have mastered those competencies needed for success in for-credit math courses."*

The respondents noted that the remedial math curriculum is more often taught by contingent faculty. This conflicting characteristic of the organizational structure could explain, in part, why faculty don't feel as if they are influential in this case. That is,

while respondents agreed that both ranks can effectively provide quality instruction and further recognized the likelihood that non-permanent teaching staff would teach remedial classes at their institution, all respondents spoke more openly about their lack of involvement in the decision-making process, especially with regards to non-permanent teaching staff. Therefore, many of the experts or at least those most familiar with curricular and instructional issues are not participating in the process. This concession is not just a perception. A review of associated policies also supported that these findings, regarding influence in the decision-making process, related to the subject matter for which ownership could be inferred (e.g., remedial math). That is, while,

> *"The faculty....., shall, subject to the approval of the president of the institution, prescribe regulations regarding .....classes, courses of study, and requirements for graduation; and, make such regulations as may be necessary or proper for the maintenance of high educational standards." (Vice Chancellor Nels Peterson, 2009, Sec 3.2.4),*

part-time instructors are not consider faculty by policy and are, therefore, not guaranteed the same roles and responsibilities of their permanent counterparts as provided for in the following policy statement:

> *"Full-time professors, associate professors, assistant professors, instructors, lecturers, senior lecturers, and teaching personnel with such other titles as may be approved by the Board, shall be the Corps of Instruction....and.... Persons holding adjunct appointments or other honorary titles shall not be considered to be members of the faculty." (Vice Chancellor Nels Peterson, 2009, Sec 3.2.1).*

As such, although part-time personnel are active in the implementation of changes as recommended by permanent faculty, department chairs and administrators, and other stakeholders, they often are not given an opportunity to participate in the identification or analysis of the problem to be solved, nor the strategy by which to solve the problem.

This presents a conflict between structure and the characteristics of a *profession* in that while there is not a directive for the "experts" to be responsible for the management of remedial math, in this case, part-time faculty are involved but have little authority to impact the decisions related to their area of expertise in ways that align with their motivation (e.g. service to the student and quality of instruction). The consequence of this conflict may have been an underlying cause for the perceptions that faculty and committee members had regarding the level of participation in the decision-making process.

**Faculty Perceptions of Participation in the Decision-Making Process**

Although expectations of involvement were aligned, both faculty and committee members were in disagreement when asked if they thought that they were influential decision-makers in the process. The data showed that faculty perceived that they were active in curricular decision-making (see Figure 5).

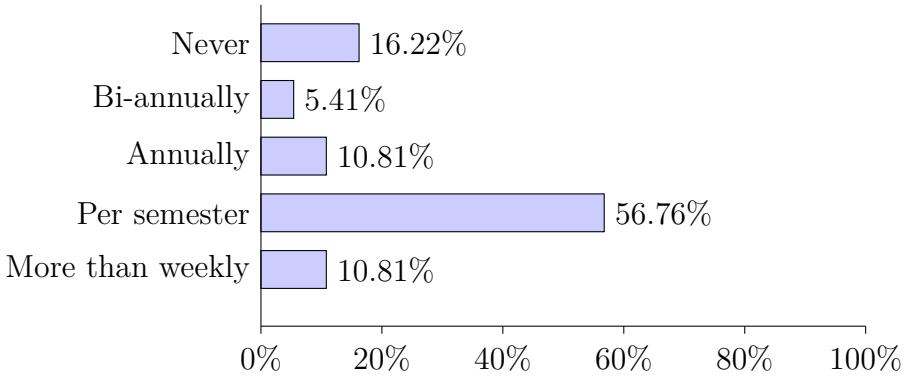


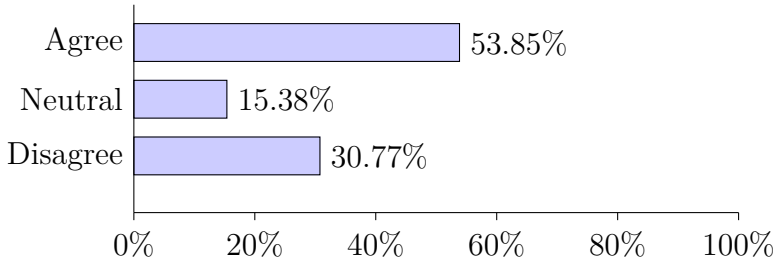
Figure 5. Frequency to which faculty make curricular decisions (Q25)

However, only 50% of the survey respondents indicated that faculty participated in activities that likely influenced the outcomes of changes to curriculum and instruction (see Figure 6). This divided response was collected despite full agreement that there was ample time to participate in the process and that the amount of changes in this case were significant (see Figure 7).

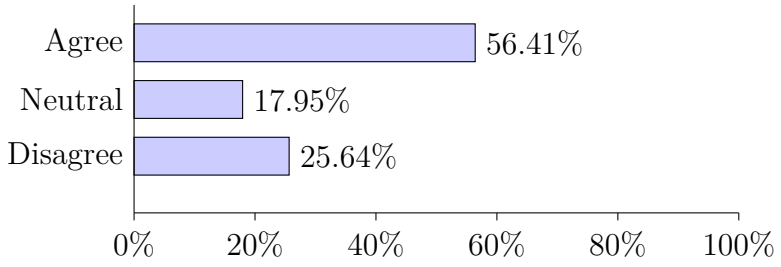
The following survey response illustrated a common perception faculty had in this case that provides further insight toward this finding:

> *"Many decisions are made top-down. The USG makes a decision, and we must follow it. The curriculum committees take that charge and then make corresponding decisions. Individual instructors have a voice in what's left, but we have to stay within the confines of the decisions made."*

This sentiment is not unfounded, as the following committee meeting excerpt characterized this specific process as one already having a solution that needed to be implemented:




(a) Faculty participate in defining college-level math requirements. (Q7)




(b) Remedial math faculty participate in defining remedial math requirements. (Q8)

Figure 6. Perception of faculty participation regarding changes to the remedial math curriculum

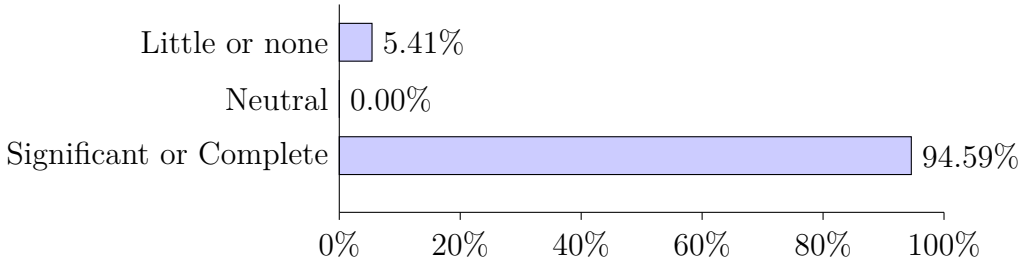



Figure 7. Amount of changes made to the remedial math policy and curriculum (Q10)

> *"To improve college completion, aspects of higher education must be redesigned within the context of creating a more effective system. This plan includes work to improve performance in three ways: 1) transforming remediation, 2) shortening the time to degree, and 3) restructuring delivery" (USG & TCSG, 2012).*

Moreover, this excerpt exemplifies the variety of participants and guests at these meetings, who often included external stakeholders that greatly influenced the decision-making process:

> *"After a brief and unstructured discussion about redesign of Learning Support mathematics courses and placement, the committee broke out into its subcommittees meetings followed by a dinner and presentation by Dave Spence, President of the Southern Regional Education Board, on the Gates Foundation College Readiness Transitional Course Project. The meeting then adjourned for the evening" (Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia, 2012).*

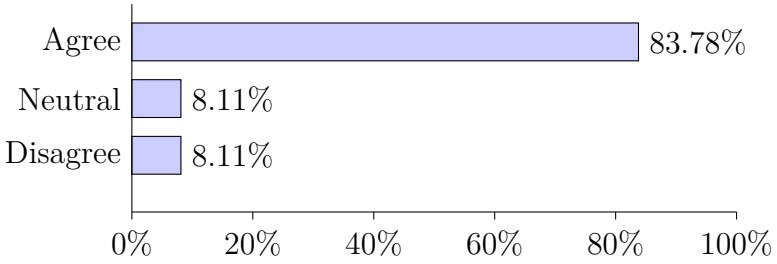
Further study of the timeline associated with these findings indicates that prior to participation in this process by faculty, identification of remedial math as a sub-problem of the larger issue of college completion and its need to be solved was presented (USG & TCSG, 2012). The involvement of the other stakeholders, especially those stakeholders that were out of state or part of a larger agenda, also supports the perceptions that some faculty may have had regarding influence versus participation in this case.

The importance of this finding is outlined in the theories of *professionalism* and *power and authority*. As discussed in Chapter 2, members of professions have very specific interests and motivations. The control and authority over these areas of interests are important and a lack or decrease in control may result in an apathy toward the subject matter. If faculty in this case sensed that the motivation to improve remedial math was not aligned with their own motivations, this may explain some of the findings

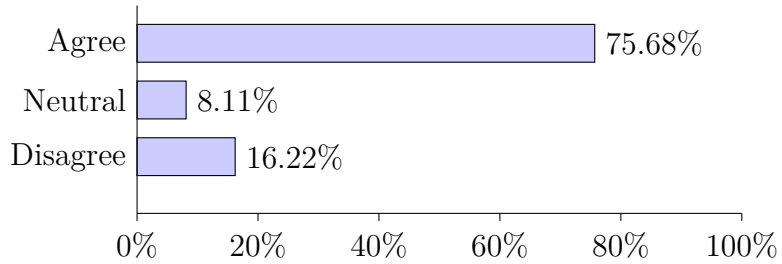
regarding involvement and satisfaction. The next section explores the findings related to perceptions of the purpose for the change and to remedial math.

### Perceptions of Quality and Motivation

An important purpose to this study is to gain insight toward the management of future faculty members. To manage employees effectively, it is important to understand what motivates people to excel in their roles. With regards to motivation and quality, and within the context of this study, Figures 8, 9 and 10 offer support to explain why faculty perceive that they were not as engaged as they should be in this decision. The majority of survey respondents agreed that learning, understanding course content, and graduation rates were all important at their institution. Yet, there was less agree-




(a) Course success rates are important at our institution (Q19)




(b) Graduation rates are important at institution (Q18)

Figure 8. Perception of important metrics regarding academic success

ment that student mastery of the content (learning) was important to the institution if compared to agreement regarding course success and graduation rates.

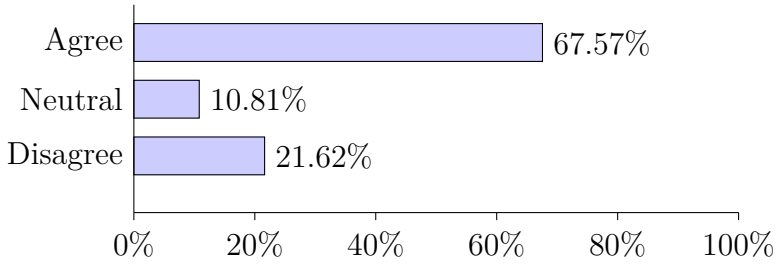
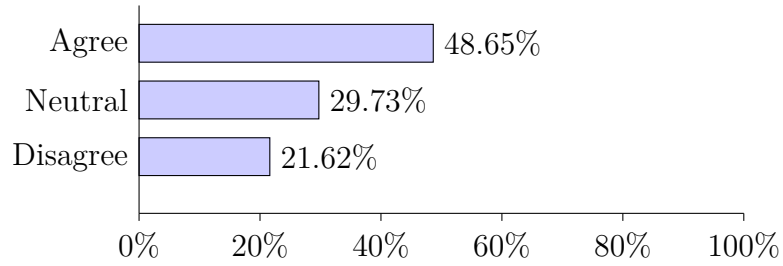
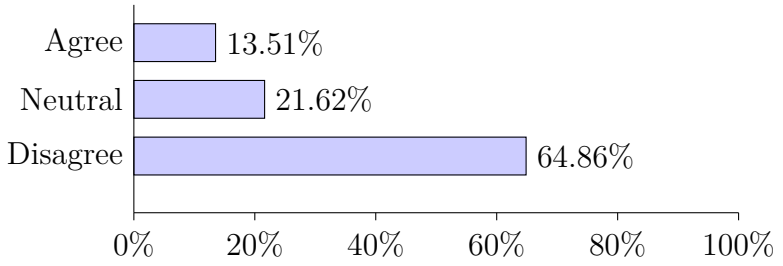



Figure 9. Student mastery of the content is important at our institution (Q15)

Further, less than 50% of faculty felt that course success and learning were directly related. Less than 15% of the faculty felt that they were rewarded for improvements in learning. In general, faculty perceived learning as less important to the institutions than advancing students toward a degree. Again, relating this to the theory of profes-



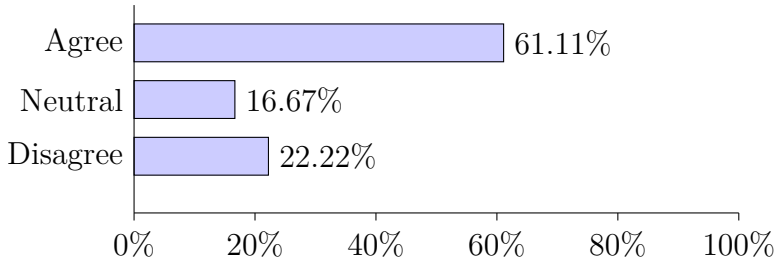

(a) Course success rates and learning are directly related. (Q21)



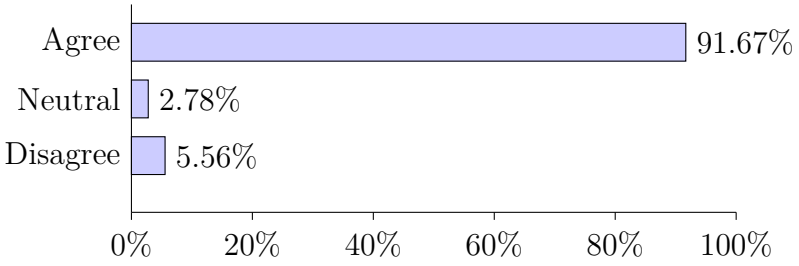

(b) Faculty are rewarded for improving learning. (Q16)

Figure 10. Implicit Value Given to Learning

sionalism, members of professions tend to act when areas of interest are central to the decision. The perception of faculty, in this case, was that completion was the motivation for change, not improvement in the service to students nor learning in general (see Figure 11). That is not to say that these components of quality improvement were




(a) Change was motivated by improvement to student learning. (Q17)




(b) Change was motivated by completion rates. (Q20)

Figure 11. Perception of motivations to change remedial math

not a part of the agenda, but rather that they were not central to the decision. The results showed that some faculty were even frustrated as well in this regard. In fact, faculty indicated that they had concerns about whether or not quality was disregarded or even considered in this decision in open-response to the survey. For example:

> *"Although we had a mandate to change remedial math classes, some faculty piloted software ahead of time. When it came time to make decisions, a curriculum committee met to discuss possibilities. Sadly, many faculty members were only interested in increasing passing rates, not in improving*

> *student learning. This lead to the lowering of standards. After that, decisions made by the committee were overturned by administrators (dean and department chairs), none of whom had ever taught the class. After a disastrous semester, the committee had to rework all the policies. The dean has more say over what happens than the committee of faculty that teach the course. Administrators talk about how much passing rates have improved, but how could they not when the more difficult half of the course material is taken out."*

These kinds of apathetic perceptions could be found in other responses that further indicated issues related to motivation as well:

> *"I'm not sure it's really going to make a difference in the success rate of students who formerly would not have succeeded in the former learning support classes."*

This attitude represents a sense of powerlessness toward making a difference. That sentiment carried over into the analysis of perceptions of power and authority regarding this decision.

**Perceptions of Power and Authority**

Perceptions that faculty have regarding their own levels of power and authority in the decision-making process were also analyzed in this study. Although 95% of the faculty acknowledge that a significant or complete change to the remedial math curriculum had occurred (revisit Figure 7) less than 50% of faculty felt that they were

involved in changing remedial math policies (see Figure 12). Even more noteworthy is that faculty were not only in disagreement with where they could exert power, but also, that they were not confident that they could participate in the implementation of changes within their own perceived areas of responsibility (see Figure 13). These results align well with those found in Figures 6 and 7 and committee responses like this:

> *"Faculty can initiate and approve changes to curriculum but final approval lies with the faculty as a whole subject to USG policy and core curriculum guidelines."*

as well. The contrast and complication represents result in confusion regarding two significant metrics of power and authority, influence and control over areas of responsibility.

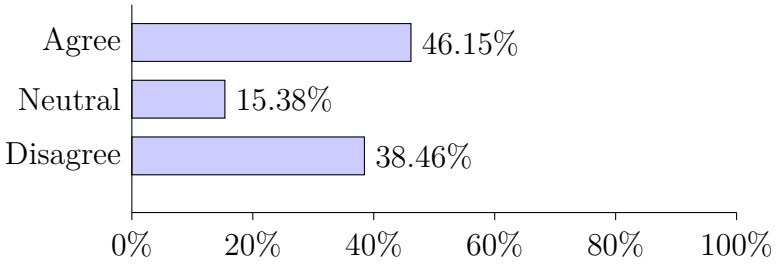
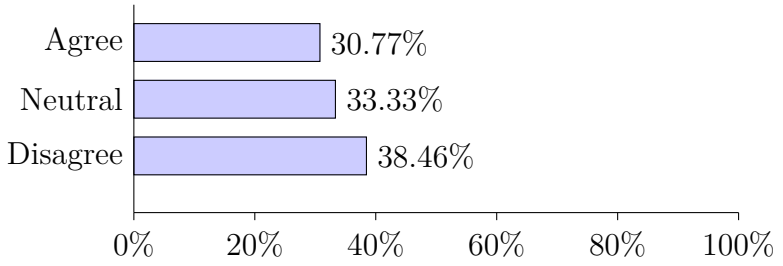
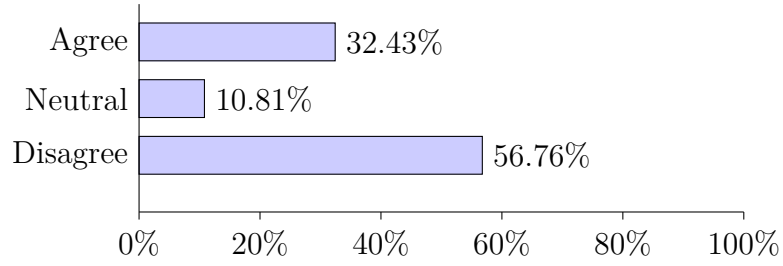



Figure 12. Perception of faculty participation regarding changes to the remedial math policy (Q6)

Also interesting to note is the level of neutrality that was observed in the response related to the level of authority. When faculty were asked to comment on the responsibility to accept or reject suggested solutions to problems related to curriculum, one-third of the faculty chose to be neutral. The result is significant, in comparison,




(a) Faculty can accept/reject changes to curriculum. (Q3)




(b) Faculty can implement curricular changes. (Q12)

Figure 13. Perception of faculty roles and responsibilities related to curriculum and instruction

when only 10% of responses were neutral related to faculty perspectives on serving as implementation agents of change.

Overall, the survey responses suggest that faculty felt as if they were not the authorities over the curriculum. There were also perceptions of external pressures found in other forms of data collected. The variety of external stakeholders and the influence that these stakeholders were perceived to have may have been contributors to the waning perception of faculty power and authority. While many of the respondents cited the same stakeholders (e.g., the USG and Complete College agenda supporters):

> *"You know, this Complete College America endorses this approach to learning support and there are certainly places around the country that have piloted, that have had, that have had success with this approach"*

faculty and committee members alike recognized other less obvious stakeholders as the following response indicates:

> *"But as far as organizations, I wanna tell you though the book publishers such as Pearson put a lot of money into this. They were very interested in the Completion Agenda. They have helped institutions write lab manuals."*

as well as this excerpt:

> *"Led by Governor Deal, the event would include members of the Performance Funding commission, college presidents and vice presidents, legislators, K-12 superintendents, members of boards of both Completion by Partnerships page 11 Systems, and other key leaders. The Launch will include national leaders such as Stan Jones (Complete College America), Jamie Merisotis (Lumina Foundation), David Spence (Southern Regional Education Board), Uri Treisman (Dana Center, University of Texas at Austin), and Dennis Jones (National Center for Higher Education Management Systems). The focus of this event would be on the overall completion agenda, the use of data and metrics, transforming remediation, performance funding, provision of guidance to campuses in development of completion plans, and announcement of the Completion Academy competition" (USG & TCSG, 2012).*

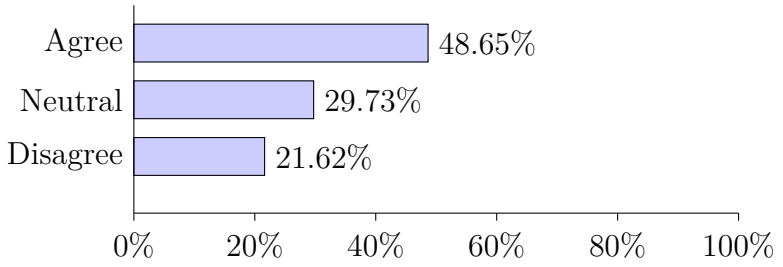
The completion agenda is so strong however and there are so many stakeholders, that some faculty feel as if they are no longer being listened to regarding quality control and management of the curriculum.

The sentiment was not all encompassing however. Both faculty and committee members noted involvement and responsibility at several levels of the organization. Although most respondents were certain that the effort to change remedial math was motivated externally, the actual and appropriate level of their own involvement was more ambiguous. As one respondent stated:

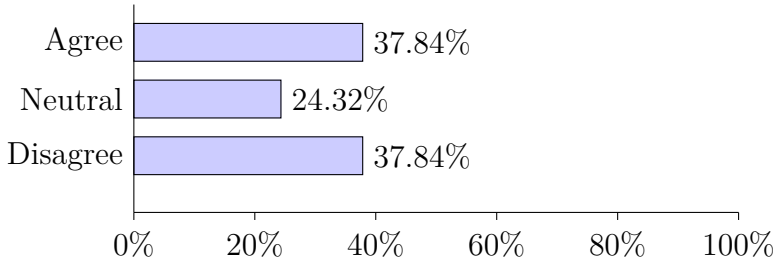
> *The changes were initiated by the system office in conjunction with complete college Georgia. However teams of mathematics faculty along with the regents advisory committee for mathematical subjects led the development and implementation of the changes. So, while not faculty initiated, the process was to a great extent faculty driven. Additionally, the development process took place outside of the college and at the system-wide level with math faculty from around the USG.*

This response is indicative of several conflicting perspectives that emerged from the study with regard to uncertainty around faculty roles and responsibility. While the guidelines that frame faculty authority and power suggest that faculty make the decisions that pertain to curriculum and instruction, the truth was that authority to make changes was being shared. In this case, external stakeholders were able to dictate what changes needed to be made and relied on faculty to implement these changes, often without consideration to the impact on current processes. As a result, faculty were inclined to manage the process for implementation, allowing them to feel as if they had not only participated but that the participation directly affected the outcomes of the decision. Interestingly, the outcomes of this decision-making approach resulted in dissatisfaction.

According to the survey, 38% of faculty were dissatisfied with the decision making process and less than 50% felt that the implementation was being done as expected in this case (see Figure 14). Further, the faculty felt that the decision was motivated




(a) Implementation of change in remediation is being done as expected. (Q13)




(b) Faculty are satisfied with the decision making and implementation process. (Q14)

Figure 14. Faculty agreement with the decision-making process regarding the remedial math curriculum

by external pressures to complete a degree with less emphasis on learning. As quality managers of higher education, the distinction is counterintuitive to the faculty mission. Overall these results provide insight toward what motivates faculty to choose to participate in the decision-making processes in higher education. To elaborate on these findings, an examination of the themes that emerged from the study is given in the next chapter.

# CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study was two-fold. First, we examined faculty's expectations of their role in making decisions about curriculum and instruction. Second, we explored how these expectations aligned with the decision-making process within a specific case: changes to the remedial math curriculum in the USG. To answer the research questions, members of a committee that the USG formed to advise on these curriculum changes were interviewed and math faculty who teach at USG institutions were surveyed. Overall, their responses, as well as information gained from documents on this subject, present a complex and nuanced relation between faculty decision-making, voice, and authority. A summary of the findings, organized by research question, is presented below. In addition to this summary, connections to the theories used to interpret the findings are presented, followed by the implications that these results have regarding issues in the management of faculty. Finally, the limitations that may have impacted the completeness of this study and concluding remarks are provided.

## Summation of the Findings and Theoretical Connections

**Faculty Expectations Regarding Decision-making about Curriculum and Instruction.** A review of the interview and survey responses revealed that the overwhelming majority of participants recognized that faculty are responsible for curriculum and instruction. Further, a majority of the respondents reported that faculty often have the opportunity to participate in the decision-making process formally. In fact, faculty reported that they were active in the process, with a majority of survey respondents

indicating that they participated at least once per semester. These results align well with the literature and, more specifically, the joint statement's definition of roles and responsibilities (Lombardi, 2013; AAUP et al., 1966:1990). While their expectations of responsibility were aligned with their actions, faculty still perceived that they had little authority over curriculum, at least in this case. Notably, their perspective differed from that of representative members of the USG committee, who agreed that faculty ultimately have control of the curriculum. Most faculty surveyed, however, believed that they could not make decisions or implement changes with autonomy.

Insight toward the difference in perspective may be found in the BOR Policy Manual (Vice Chancellor Nels Peterson, 2009, Sec 3.2.1 and Sec 3.2.4). This policy is important when considered in context with the results because it outlines the possession of power and authority by appointment. Both surveys and interview responses indicated that part-time teaching personnel were often assigned remedial math courses and that non-tenured faculty were largely responsible for the remainder of those courses. Meanwhile, although most of the survey respondents held full-time positions and taught remedial math courses often, roughly half of them were non-tenured and had lengths of employment of less than seven years. Therefore, because the policy specifically excludes part-time teaching personnel[6] from assuming the role of faculty within the governance structure and, because within this case, it is possible that very few remedial math faculty could have had several experiences impacting decisions related to their area of expertise, it is not surprising that faculty perspectives reflect a sense of low impact participation. Perhaps the results would have been different if more faculty with different levels of experience had participated in the surveys. Moreover, based on the policy, it is likely that if more part-time teaching personnel participated in the surveys, then

[6]Part-time teaching personnel are often referred to as "part-time faculty"

perspectives on faculty roles and responsibilities may have skewed the results towards less faculty control. Conversely, in states or at institutions where the faculty policy included part-time teaching personnel in the process, at least for this decision, their contributions might have been more meaningful.

**Faculty Perspectives Regarding their Voice and the Decision to Change the Remedial Math Curriculum.** While it was clear that faculty recognized their own responsibility for the curriculum, the inconsistencies related to whether or not their involvement resulted in meaningful influence was not as clear. According to interview and survey responses, faculty perspectives were less positive with regards to influence. While the majority of faculty indicated that they have access to the decision-making process, there was considerable disagreement regarding the ability to create and implement change. Further faculty felt that rather than participate in the decision to modify remedial math in the first place, faculty were instead asked to implement the change to remedial math curriculum and its instruction. Some characterized these changes and the guidelines for implementation to be directed by other decision-makers. Additionally, the majority of faculty responses indicated that they were not in agreement with the implementation of the decision. While meeting minutes and reports also supported faculty perspectives, the committee member perspectives were not aligned with the faculty responses. According to interview responses, the members of the committee felt that faculty were integral in most of the design and implementation process with initiating the change as the exception.

Compelling evidence emerged regarding the motivation to make this decision as well. While there was less agreement that improved learning was the motivation for changing remedial math, the overwhelming majority of faculty felt that completion

rates were a motivating factor. Not surprisingly, given their accepted role as quality assurance agents, faculty were not satisfied with the implementation or the lack of focus on quality. The sentiment was further amplified when identification of external stakeholders was given in both survey and interview responses. In almost every case, external stakeholders that were connected to this process through policy, meeting minutes, and responses were also connected to Complete College America, Complete College Georgia, and other known supporters of the completion agenda. None of the documents or responses reviewed regarding the decision to change remedial math were directly connected to an emphasis on improved performance in subsequent classes or the workplace due to improved understanding of the content covered in these courses.

**Power and Authority.** The pressures regarding performance and completion are real and the consequences of standing idle while the push to graduate more students without well defined strategies to at least maintain quality are concerning. In this case, academics were working quietly to adjust to the pressures to produce graduates faster without sacrificing learning. However, they perceive that quality is no longer the priority and thus faculty may be becoming apathetic. The design committee reportedly met very few times over the years, and were admittedly in place to approve a plan to improve completion rates that was heavily influenced by the completion agenda and several external stakeholders. The plan was to manage a significant part of the curriculum according to the designs put forth by these external stakeholders as indicated in this committee members response:

> *"The state needs a more educated work force. We need to increase the number of college graduates within the state, and I think to do that we're gonna*

> *have to, um ... I think being successful in what we're doing in learning support math is, is an important part of increasing that."*

and this excerpt from the minutes of one of the meetings:

> *"Through a recent grant from Complete College America, the University System of Georgia and the Technical College System of Georgia will also work together to transform remediation" (USG & TCSG, 2012)*

While the goal was likely related to quality in the curriculum and instruction, very little attention was given to its inclusion in the onset. Perhaps the completion agenda is simply so focused on completion that there is little room for quality or faculty have yet to determine what authority they have to participate and what power they have to influence the agenda. The research suggests that both conditions are likely. It seems that, purposely, the external stakeholders that guide the completion agenda are focusing on what their interests are and approaching these interests aggressively with respect to the boundaries of their own authority. Further, it seems as if states (or the USG in the case) are playing a passive role as mediator to assist faculty in aligning quality strategies with completion strategies. That said, faculty's reactive and characteristically methodical approach to participating in the decision-making process may be resulting in losses in power and authority that can't be recovered. It is possible that other stakeholders that have smaller membership and often quicker processes and deadlines may have grown impatient with faculty's reputation for being plodders.

**Organized Anarchy.** The uncertainty of roles and responsibilities is indicative of an organized anarchy, as described by Cohen et al. (1972). Specifically, the outcomes of the case is a consequence of the second and third properties of the theory. When

faculty as a unit attempt to make decisions, often ideas are offered by faculty members that may not have current, continuing or direct association with the problem. In this case study, the response rate illustrates the behaviors recognized in the theory. The rate showed that while there was a large response among permanent, tenured and non-tenured faculty, remedial math assignments are typically given to non-permanent or part-time teaching personnel who accounted for only 5% of the faculty who chose to respond. The implication is that those members of the teaching personnel that have direct connection to the problem, if one existed, were not only under-represented in this study, but may also have been omitted from the decision-making process in this case as a consequence of policy and structure.

The power and authority dynamic coupled with group behavior in higher education as discussed by Baldridge et al. (1977), Cohen and March (1986a), Chaffee (1987), and Hearn and McLendon (2012) is worth examining as well. Again, because policy and appointment create divisions between those who can assume authority and those who cannot, these researchers would not be surprised that there was uncertainty regarding the authority to affect decision making versus simply being involved in the process. All in all, according to organized anarchy, the difficulty with faculty authority observed in this case resulted from a lack of structured hierarchy. Because faculty are large units that create their own divisions by discipline and in some cases level of appointment, reactions to problems are not handled as a unit, but rather by increasingly small divisions of the faculty that have an interest in the matter. As a result, some faculty would choose to let others manage the decision if the social capital to do so had not been generated. This is, of course, assuming that the potential participants were allowed to participate according to policy.

**Professionalism.** It is important to understand what motivates people to excel in their roles. Within certain career sectors, some social theories provide insight toward member behaviors. As developed in Chapter 2, the theory of professionalism has been used to describe the behaviors of some occupational groups. Specifically, this theory has been explored in higher education to explain behaviors within academic organizations and suggests that the respect of peers, desire to stay in the profession indefinitely, and concern for students, represent some important motivating factors for faculty (Goode, 1957, 1960) and (Roberts & Donahue, 2000). These traits may be the reason that faculty, in this case, struggle with their roles. For example, faculty may feel that student learning is their primary motivation with regards to curriculum and instruction, in part due to the ownership of expertise (the disciplinary content) and the desire to demonstrate that expertise in the company of peers to maintain or increase respect. But, when decision-making is motivated by different goals, it is possible that faculty lose interest and choose to assist in the decision rather than lead because the values of the profession are not the focus.

Other concepts within the theory of professionalism that may explain some of the faculty responses to this study include: complete agreement of roles and responsibilities across the profession, the apprenticeship structure and the power dynamic (Goode, 1957, p.194). The data showed that both faculty and committee members agreed with the roles and responsibility of faculty, but disagreement was found regarding the concept in practice. Further, within a defined unit, mathematics faculty in this case, the theory suggests that the faculty's inability to act because more experienced faculty didn't encourage action or participated minimally is not unexpected. In this case, the teaching personnel associated with remedial math were often less experienced, non-tenured faculty or lectures and part-time instructors who, according to the theory,

would be looking to gain respect, acceptance into the profession and a sense of identity. While part-time teaching personnel were restricted by policy, perhaps the faculty members who could participate actively in the decision-making around curriculum changes didn't do so because the decision or solution itself wasn't initiated by senior, respected members of the profession. Rather, the resolution was perceived as a request from outsiders. Worse still, if faculty perceived that experienced faculty responses were ignored or overlooked in favor of an outside proposed solution, then those faculty may have expressed apathy and discouraged involvement at all. One way that senior faculty might do this is to exhibit symptoms of initiative fatigue like disconnecting from the process altogether claiming lack of experience regarding the problem as it is presented, or lowering the priority level of the decision due to lack of decision-making ownership. Once the focus of the problem was determined by the faculty not to align with the values of the profession, distant attention to the problem would be given at all levels. Perceptions of both possibilities align with the theory.

## Research and Policy Implications

The findings lend themselves to several research and policy implications. The results of this study offer a few important implications to policies that govern the management of higher education. First, with regards to improving faculty participation in decision-making, an important BOR policy could be considered. Vice Chancellor Nels Peterson (2009, Sec 3.2.1) clearly distinguishes adjunct faculty from having the authority over the curriculum and instruction as typically defined by the joint statement (AAUP et al., 1966:1990). A review of this policy to include adjunct personnel as faculty members would formally provide, part-time and non-permanent instructors, the authority to

initiate and provide meaningful insight to decisions like the one in this case, where their direct connection to and understanding of the subject matter is likely useful. The language associated with such inclusion should be considered carefully however. Faculty who are not permanent are less likely to remain at the institution and thus may not be able to provide insight toward reasons for existing circumstances that are being considered for change. Further, consistency in the reasoning behind decisions that often result in organizational stability are also at risk. While the latter may also result in an increase in new ideas and a diversity in thought with regards to decision-making, the dangers of initiative fatigue may also increase.

A less rigid policy implication would be the continued increase in the intentional inclusion of contingent faculty in institutional governance policies. While many institutions have already informally included adjunct faculty in these types of decisions, the trend has not reached every institution as of yet (Mallon, 2004). The results of this policy change would be similar to the policy change discussed previously, however, more flexibility would exist for both the adjunct personnel and the permanent faculty regarding participation in the process. Rather than a one-sized fits all policy across the entire university system, each institution could decide when contingent faculty participation in decision-making would be appropriate. Who and how this decision would be made would be challenging in this case.

A third policy implication that arises in this study is the consideration to formally adopt the joint statement as a policy regarding shared governance. Because Georgia is a Right-to-Work state, the complete adoption with regards to authority and power would not be without issues. Although many of the principles of the statement are generally followed in practice, the implication that the structure outlined by the statement is

absolute could make the management of higher education difficult, particularly in times of economic crisis like those experienced in Georgia dating back to 2007. However, the absolute implementation of the statement would have impacted the results of this study had it been in place. The perception that an encroachment on roles and responsibilities from external stakeholders, especially with regards to completion instead of learning, would have been less likely, according to the statement (AAUP et al., 1966:1990).

## Limitations of the Study

There are several limitations to the study that may limit generalizability of the findings. First, although the minimum number of participants needed to complete the study was achieved, the sample size is small and does not reflect the diversity of the teaching personnel concerned with the remedial math curriculum. Second, this case, although informative, does not extend beyond other disciplines or institutional contexts. It would be interesting to know if findings would be replicated in other similar cases where faculty authority may be threatened by the actions of outside stakeholders, perhaps in private institutions or in other fields of study. Relatedly, this case only represents one state system. Undoubtedly, other state systems are also encountering pressures to improve completion rates and other social conditions through federal, local and state mandates: however, those systems maybe responding to these outside pressures in very different ways. It would be important to understand the contexts that drive how these responses are developed and implemented at every level of the decision-making process, both internal and external. Finally, the results maybe limited by the methodology that included a condensed survey and interview protocol, as well as a sample that only included administrators and faculty at institutions where

remedial math courses were being taught. It is likely that the results may have differed if all members of the committee who made the decision regarding changes to the remedial math curriculum had also participated in this study, including external stakeholders and members of the academic core from other USG institutions that did not teach remedial math courses. Although their perspectives were beyond the scope of this study, their perspectives are very important to understanding how faculty power and authority are shaped in american higher education.

## Conclusion

In sum, this study and its findings may assist managing stakeholders in what may be a significantly changing industry. Specifically, the results provide insight on what motivates faculty to consider the profession, as well as how these members of this industry will participate in the further success of higher education. Moreover, the results suggest that the American higher education system maybe in a critical period, where it may be evolving into a more hierarchical governance structure (Cohen et al., 1972; Kezar, 2013). If so, developing an understanding of whether or not faculty feel as if they are a part of the transition or are opponents of the transition may also help in insuring that academic integrity and faculty commitment don't become significant and unmanageable issues. Further, strategies could be developed to not only communicate the role that faculty would have in such a structure, but also their value in responding to the needs and desires of both internal and external stakeholders as relates to curriculum quality, student learning, and degree completion.

## REFERENCES

AAUP, ACE, AGB. (1966:1990). *Statement on government of colleges and universities.*

AAUP, T. (2013, October). *Tennessee aaup.* Retrieved April 2014, from http://www.aaup-tnconf.org/

Altbach, P. G., Gumport, P. J., Berdahl, R. O. (Eds.). (2011). *American higher education in the twenty-first century: Social, politcal and economic challenges* (3rd ed.). The Johns Hopkins University Press.

Aper, J. (2010, Fall). Quality in higher education: Systems and lifeworlds in collision. *International Eduction*, 55-67.

Baldridge, J. V., Curtis, D. V., Ecker, G. P., Riley, G. L. (1977). Alternative models of governance in higher education. In J. V. Baldridge G. L. Riley (Eds.), *Governing academic organizations* (p. 2-25). Berkley, CA: McCutchan.

Birnbaum, R. (1988). *How colleges work: The cybernetics of academic organization and leadership.* San Francisco, CA:Jossey-Bass.

Birnbaum, R. (2004, Fall). The end of shared governance. *New Directions for Higher Education*, *127*, 5-22.

Bland, C. J., Center, B. A., Finstad, D. A., Risbey, K. R., Staples, J. (2006, January/February). The impact of appointment type on the productivity and committment of full-time faculty in research and doctoral institutions. *Journal of Higher Education*, *77*(1), 89-125.

Campbell, T. I. D., Slaughter, S. (1999, May/June). Faculty and administrators' attitudes toward potential conflicts of interests, commitment and equity in university-industry relationships. *The Journal of Higher Education*, *70*(3), 309-352.

CCA. (2009, July). *Complete College America.* Retrieved April 24, 2014, from http://completecollege.org/

CCA. (2011, September). *Time is the enemy* (Report). Washington, D.C. 20005: Author.

Chaffee, E. E. (1987). Organizational concepts underlying governance and administration. In M. W. Peterson L. A. Mets (Eds.), *Key resources on higher education governance, management, and leadership: a guide to the literature* (p. 21-27). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Cohen, M. D., March, J. G. (1986a). Leadership in and organized anarchy. In *Leadership and ambiguity: The american college president* (p. 195-229). Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Cohen, M. D., March, J. G. (1986b). The process of choice. In *Leadership and ambiguity: The american college president* (p. 81-92). Cambridge, MA: Harvard Business School Press.

Cohen, M. D., March, J. G., Olsen, J. P. (1972, Mar). A garbage can model of organizational choice. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, *17*(1), 25.

Ewell, P. (2009, November). *Assessment, acountability, and improvement: Revisiting the tension* (Occasional Paper No. 1). Champaign, Il: National Institute for Learning Outcomes Assessment.

Goode, W. J. (1957, April). Community within a community: The professions. *American Sociaological Review*, *22*(2), 194-200.

Goode, W. J. (1960, December). Encroachment, charlatanism, and the emergin profession: Psychology, sociology, and medicine. *American Sociological Review*, *25*, 902-914.

Hammond, T. H. (2004). Herding cats in university hierarchies: Formal structure and policy choice in american research universities. In R. Ehrenberg (Ed.), *Governing academia* (pp. 91–138). Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

Hearn, J. C., McLendon, M. K. (2012, March). Governance research: Form adolescence toward maturity. In M. N. Bastedo (Ed.), *The organization of higher education: Managing colleges for a new era* (p. 45-85). Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press.

Hearn, J. C., Milan, M. (2012, May). *Here today, gone tomorrow?: The increasingly contingent faculty workforce* (Report: Emerging Developments in Faculty Career Contexts). IHE, Athens, GA: TIAA-CREF Institute.

Henkel, M. (2000). *Academic identities and policy change in higher education* (1st ed.) (No. 46). London: Jessica Kingsley.

Humphreys, D., Davenport, A. (2005, Fall). *What really matters in college: How students view and value liberal education.* Retrieved 1/16/14, from http://www.aacu .org/liberaleducation/le-sufa05/le-sufa05leap.cfm

Hurt, E. (2012, Spring). The marketization of higher education. *College Literature*, *39*(2), 121-132.

Jones, S. (2012, September). *Interview at the brookings institute* [Interview]. Microsoft.

Jones, S. (2014, April). *Stan jones before the house committee on education and the workforce* [Testimony]. YouTube.

Kerr, C. (2001). *The uses of the university* (5th ed.) (No. 11). Boston, MA: Harvard Univeersity Press.

Kezar, A. J. (2013). Departmental cultures and non-tenure-track faculty: Willingess, capacity, and opportunity to perform at four-year institutions. *Journal of Higher Education*, *84*(2), 153-190.

Koch, J. V., Fisher, J. L. (1998). Higher education and total quality management. *Total Quality Management*, *9*(8), 659-668.

Kuh, G. (2001, January). *Assessing what really matters to student learning* (report). Bloomington, Indiana: National Survey of Student Engagement.

Kuh, G., Ewell, P. (2010). The state of learning outcomes assessment in the united states. *Higher Education Management and Policy*, *22*(1), 9-28.

Lombardi, J. V. (2013). *How univeristies work* (J. H. U. Press, Ed.). John Hopkins University Press.

Lumina. (2011, January). *The degree qualifications profile* (report). Lumina Foundation of Education.

Mallon, W. (2004, Fall). Disjoined governance in university centers and institutes. *Restructuring Shared Governance in Higher Education*(127), 61-74.

Merriam, S. B. (2009). *Qualitative research: A guide to design and implementation* (2nd ed.; Wiley, Ed.). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Obama, B. (2009, July). *Excerpts of President Barack Obama's speech on the American graduation initiative.* White House Release.

Olson, G. A. (2009, July). *Exactly what is 'shared governance'.* Retrieved March 31, 2014, from https://chronicle.com/article/Exactly-What-Is-Shared/47065/

Peterson, M. W. (2000, December). The tyranny of success: The research-practice tension. *New Directions for Higher Education*, *2000*(110), 21-34.

Pfeffer, J. (1981). Understanding the role of power in decision making. In J. Pfeffer (Ed.), *Power in organizations* (p. 1-33). Boston: Pitman.

Pfeffer, J., Salancik, G. R. (1978). *The external control of organizations: a resource dependence perspective.* New York: Harper and Row.

Porter, S. R., Toutkoushian, R. K. (2005). Insitutional research productivity and the connection to average student quality and overall reputation. *Economics of Education Review*(25), 605-617.

Association for the Study of Higher Education. (2008, September). Faculty appointments. *ASHE Higher Education Report*, *34*(3), 55-72.

Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia. (2003, April). *Meeting minutes: Committee on learning support and developmental studies.* USG Webpage.

Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia. (2005, April). *Meeting minutes: Committee on learning support and developmental studies.* USG Webpage.

Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia. (2007, October). *Meeting minutes: Committee on learning support and developmental studies.* USG Webpage.

Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia. (2012, February). *Meeting minutes: Academic planning.* USG Webpage.

University System of Georgia Task Force on Transforming Remediation. (2013, July). *The university system of georgia mathematics task force: Report and recommendation* (Final Report). 270 Washington Street, S.W., Atlanta, GA 30334, U.S.A.: University System of Georgia.

Vice Chancellor Nels Peterson, S. o. t. B. (2009, September). Board of regents policy manual [Computer software manual]. USG Webpage. Atlanta, GA.

Roberts, K. A., Donahue, K. A. (2000, October). Professing professionalism: Bureaucratization and deprofessionalization in the academy. *Sociological Focus*, *33*(4), 365-.

Schneider, C. G. (2012, Winter). President's message - where completion goes awry: The metrics for "success" mask mounting problems with quality. *Liberal Education*, *98*(1). Retrieved 2012, from https://www.aacu.org/liberaleducation/le-wi12/president.cfm

Spelling, M. (2006). *A test of leadership: Charting the future of u.s. higher education* (report). Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Education.

Stewart, J., Oliver, W., Stewart, G. (2013, December). Revitalizing an undergraduate physics program: A case study of the university of arkansas. *American Journal of Physics*, *81*(12), 943-950.

Toutkoushian, R., Bellas, M. L. (2003, March/April). The effects of part-time employment and gender on faculty earnings and satisfaction. *Journal of Higher Education*, *74*(2), 172-195.

Toutkoushian, R., Porter, S. R., Danielson, C., Hollis, P. (2002, June). Using publication counts to measure an institution's research productivity [Report]. In EDRS (Ed.), (p. 39). Toronto, Ontario, Canada.

Toutkoushian, R. K., Bellas, M. L., Moore, J. V. (2007, September). The interaction effects of gender, race, and marital status on faculty salaries. *The Journal of Higher Education*, *78*(5).

USG, TCSG. (2012, December). *Complete College Georgia: Georgia's higher education completion plan 2012* (Plan). Atlanta, GA: University System of Georgia and Technical College System of Georgia. University System of Georgia.

# APPENDIX A

## Recruitment Materials

Email of Recruitment
Faculty Perspectives on Faculty Influence in Higher Ed
SURVEY PARTICIPANTS

Dear Sir/Madam:

My name is Jarrett Terry and I am a doctoral student under the direction of Dr. Robert Toutkoushian in the Institute of Higher Education at The University of Georgia. I invite you to participate in a research study entitled, "Examining Faculty Voice in a Contemporary Decision-Making Context: Examining Perceptions of Influence on Changes to Curriculum and Instruction" This study seeks to gain insight toward the perceptions and expectations that faculty have regarding their role as quality assurance agents in higher education. Specifically, the process to change the way remedial math is designed and delivered to under-prepared students in Georgia is examined.

Your participation will involve a brief 20-question survey. The survey should take less than 15 minutes. Your involvement in the study is voluntary, and you may choose not to participate or to stop at any time. The survey is anonymous and there is no intention to identify you as a participant. Only Dr. Toutkoushian and I will have access to the data obtained from your participation, the survey will be secured by password protection, and data will be destroyed after a two-year period.

The findings from this project may provide information on the management of higher education in general, and more specifically the management, role and responsibilities of faculty. Therefore, the results of the research study may be published, and published results will be presented in a summary form.

If you have any questions about this research project, please feel free to call me at 678-466-4439 or email at branez2@uga.edu, or contact my faculty sponsor, Dr. Robert Toutkoushian, at rtoutkou@uga.edu or 706-542-0577. Questions or concerns about your rights as a research participant should be directed to The Chairperson,

University of Georgia Institutional Review Board, 629 Boyd GSRC, Athens, Georgia 30602; telephone (706) 542-3199; email address irb@uga.edu.

Thank you for your consideration!
Sincerely,
Mr. Jarrett L. Terry
Doctoral Student
University of Georgia
Institute of Higher Education

Email of Recruitment
Faculty Perspectives on Faculty Influence in Higher Ed
INTERVIEWEES

Dear: Colleague

My name is Jarrett Terry and I am a doctoral student under the direction of Dr. Robert Toutkoushian in the Institute of Higher Education at The University of Georgia. I invite you to participate in a research study entitled, ?Examining Faculty Voice in a Contemporary Decision-Making Context: Examining Perceptions of Influence on Changes to Curriculum and Instruction? This study seeks to gain insight toward the perceptions and expectations that faculty have regarding their role as quality assurance agents in higher education. Specifically, the process to change the way remedial math is designed and delivered to under-prepared students in Georgia is examined.

Your participation will involve an in-person interview and follow up questions via email. The interview should take about an hour, and the follow up emails should not take more than an hour to respond to in total. The total time commitment should be less than 3 hours including set-up. Your involvement in the study is voluntary, and you may choose not to participate or to stop at any time. If you decide to withdraw from the study, the information that can be identified as yours will be kept as part of the study and may continue to be analyzed, unless you make a written request to remove, return, or destroy the information.

Only Dr. Toutkoushian and I will have access to the data obtained from your participation, electronic and paper data will be secured, and data will be destroyed after a two-year period. The results of the research study may be published, and published results will be presented in a summary form. If your name or identifying information is used, it will only be used with your permission.

The findings from this project may provide information on the management of higher education in general, and more specifically the management, role and responsibilities of faculty. If you have any questions about this research project, please feel free to call me at 678-466-4439 or email at branez2@uga.edu, or contact my faculty sponsor, Dr. Robert Toutkoushian, at rtoutkou@uga.edu or 706-542-0577. Questions or concerns about your rights as a research participant should be directed to The Chairperson, University of Georgia Institutional Review Board, 629 Boyd GSRC, Athens, Georgia 30602; telephone (706) 542-3199; email address irb@uga.edu.

Thank you for your consideration!
Sincerely,
Mr. Jarrett L. Terry
Doctoral Student
University of Georgia
Institute of Higher Education

Letter of Consent
Faculty Perspectives on Faculty Influence in Higher Ed
INTERVIEW

Date: 4/30/15

Dear: Colleague

My name is Jarrett Terry and I am a doctoral student under the direction of Dr. Robert Toutkoushian in the Institute of Higher Education at The University of Georgia. I invite you to participate in a research study entitled, "Examining Faculty Voice in a Contemporary Decision-Making Context: Examining Perceptions of Influence on Changes to Curriculum and Instruction" This study seeks to gain insight toward the perceptions and expectations that faculty have regarding their role as quality assurance agents in higher education. Specifically, the process to change the way remedial math is designed and delivered to under-prepared students in the state is examined.

Your participation will involve an in-person, recorded interview and possible follow-up email(s) requesting clarifications of the transcription if necessary. If you would like to participate, but prefer not to be recorded, please indicate this below by signing your name on the appropriate line. The interview should take about an hour, and the follow up email should not take more than an hour to respond to in total. Regarding the communication via email(s), internet communications are insecure and there is a limit to the confidentiality that can be guaranteed due to the technology itself. However, once the researcher receives these emailed responses, standard confidentiality procedures will be employed. The total time commitment should be less than 3 hours including set-up.

Your participation in this study will have no impact on your employment status. Your involvement in the study is voluntary, and you may choose not to participate or to stop at any time. If you decide to withdraw from the study, the information that can be identified as yours will be kept as part of the study and may continue to be analyzed, unless you make a written request to remove, return, or destroy the information.

The responses and transcriptions of the interview audio files will be analyzed by Jarrett Terry and reviewed by Dr. Robert Toutkoushian. Survey responses, transcriptions, and original audio data files will be stored for one year following the collection of said data. Jarrett Terry will have the only access to the password and thus control access to the data. Dr. Robert Toutkoushian will have frequent access to the data as well but will not have access to the password. The results of the research study may be published, and published results will be presented in a summary form. If your name or identifying information is used, it will only be used within compliance of this consent agreement.

There are no direct benefits, including incentives, available for anyone participating in this study. However, the findings from this project may provide information on the management of higher education in general, and more specifically the management, role and responsibilities of faculty. There are some minimal risks or discomforts associated with this research. If any interviewee reveals information or actions

associated with the committee's work that may be unethical or questionable in any way, or expresses disagreement with actions of the committee or any of its members, then inadvertent release of that information in the public could contain risk both for the interviewee and/or others associated with the project. To minimize these risks and/or discomforts, data collected from interviews will be kept confidential and used only for the purpose intended. This letter of consent will be requested and reviewed at the time of the interview and will include the consent to use any identifiable quotes in future publications as well.

If you have any questions about this research project, please feel free to call me at 678-466-4439 or email at branez2@uga.edu, or contact my faculty sponsor, Dr. Robert Toutkoushian, at rtoutkou@uga.edu or 706-542-0577. Questions or concerns about your rights as a research participant should be directed to The Chairperson, University of Georgia Institutional Review Board, 629 Boyd GSRC, Athens, Georgia 30602; telephone (706) 542-3199; email address irb@uga.edu.

By signing the attached consent form, you are agreeing to participate in the above described research project and acknowledge that you are beyond 18 years of age.

Thank you for your consideration! Please keep this letter for your records. Sincerely,

Mr. Jarrett L. Terry
Doctoral Student
University of Georgia
Institute of Higher Education

PARTICIPANT'S SIGNATURE DATE

_____ _____

While I would like to participate in the interview and related study, I would not like to have any part of this interview recorded.

PARTICIPANT'S SIGNATURE DATE

_____ _____

While I would like to participate in the interview and related study, I would not like to have any quotes used in any publications regarding this study.

PARTICIPANT'S SIGNATURE DATE

_____ _____

INTERVIEWER'S SIGNATURE DATE

_____ _____

Letter of Consent
Faculty Perspectives on Faculty Influence in Higher Ed
SURVEY

Date:

Dear Sir/Madam:

My name is Jarrett Terry and I am a doctoral student under the direction of Dr. Robert Toutkoushian in the Institute of Higher Education at The University of Georgia. I invite you to participate in a research study entitled, "Examining Faculty Voice in a Contemporary Decision-Making Context: Examining Perceptions of Influence on Changes to Curriculum and Instruction" This study seeks to gain insight toward the perceptions and expectations that faculty have regarding their role as quality assurance agents in higher education. Specifically, the process to change the way remedial math is designed and delivered to under-prepared students in Georgia is examined.

Your participation will involve a brief 20-question survey. The survey should take less than 15 minutes. Your involvement in the study is voluntary, and you may choose not to participate or to stop at any time. The survey is confidential and there is no intention to identify you as a participant. That said, internet communications are insecure and there is a limit to the confidentiality that can be guaranteed due to the technology itself. However, once the researcher receives the materials, standard confidentiality procedures will be employed.

Only Dr. Toutkoushian and I will have access to the data obtained from your participation, the survey will be secured by password protection, and data will be destroyed after a two-year period. There are no direct benefits available for anyone participating in this study. However, the findings from this project may provide information on the management of higher education in general, and more specifically the management, role and responsibilities of faculty. Therefore, the results of the research study may be published, and published results will be presented in a summary form.

If you have any questions about this research project, please feel free to call me at 678-466-4439 or email at branez2@uga.edu, or contact my faculty sponsor, Dr. Robert Toutkoushian, at rtoutkou@uga.edu or 706-542-0577. Questions or concerns about your rights as a research participant should be directed to The Chairperson, University of Georgia Institutional Review Board, 629 Boyd GSRC, Athens, Georgia 30602; telephone (706) 542-3199; email address irb@uga.edu.

By selecting agree, you are agreeing to participate in the above described research project and acknowledge that you are beyond 18 years of age. By selecting disagree, you are electing to end the survey at this time.

Thank you for your consideration!

Sincerely,

Mr. Jarrett L. Terry
Doctoral Student
University of Georgia
Institute of Higher Education

# APPENDIX B

## Interview Questions

1. Who do you believe is responsible for quality control in higher education?

2. In the discourse toward improving higher education, how is the voice of the academic unit delivered? What is the mechanism, who and how?

3. To what extent does the focus on college completion affect the quality of higher education?

4. How does your perspective on college completion compare to other stakeholders (state, institutional administration, students, the general public)?

5. How important is remedial math to college completion in Georgia?

6. To what extent will the transformation of remediation impact the quality of Georgia's higher education system?

7. How is the voice of Georgia's academic unit delivered in the discourse toward improving remedial math?

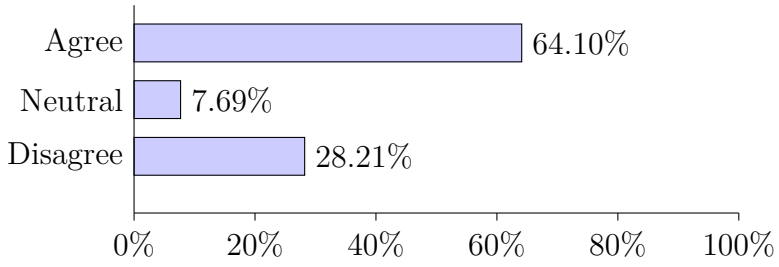
8. To what extent have you contributed to the decision making process regarding changes that impact completion?

9. To what extent did your institution's faculty participate in making the decisions resulting in the transformation of remedial math?

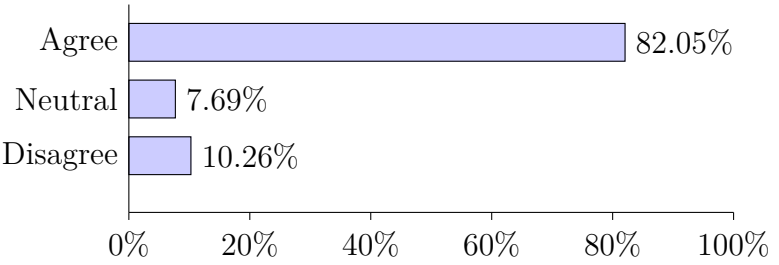
10. What organizational groups within higher education had influence on the decision to change remedial math, and to what extent?

# APPENDIX C

## Additional Figures




(a) Faculty evaluate curriculum and instruction. (Q4)




(b) Changes to curriculum are regularly and formally discussed. (Q5)

Figure 15. Additional survey responses