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University Cultural Scenes, Power, and the Identity of the Department of Music at Midwest State University
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University Cultural Scenes, Power, and the Identity of the Department of Music at Midwest State University

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This paper is an investigation and development of a locally "grounded" theory resulting from a case study done of a department of music at a state university. The full study was completed (2002) under the advisement and supervision of Dr. Gerald Olson, Professor in the School of Music and the School of Education at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. The setting, which will be known as "Midwest State", is a real place. This university is one of the seven state universities in Minnesota.

Background

The overall study, entitled, "Identity, Saga and Change: The Department of Music at Midwest State University", sought to answer questions of departmental identity and "saga", (meaning historical, storied, destiny-driven values) during a specific time frame (1993-2000) in which significant externally and internally driven changes were absorbed by Midwest State University and the Department of Music. To begin to appreciate these notions of identity, saga, and change, it is important to understand the setting of the study. That setting involved not only the physical and situational context of a state university, but also the attitudinal and professional circumstances of the participants involved. In order to understand this environment, I will briefly describe how I came to be interested in this project.

Researcher

The university and department of music I studied were my place of work for eleven years. I came to know the environment of this particular state university, perhaps no better or worse than any other professor at the institution. But having matriculated

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from a private liberal arts college and then a large land grant university, MSU seemed to be another, quite different kind of place.

There were a number of tangible reasons for this feeling. There was no departmental recruitment plan in effect when I arrived. University admissions had no complete records of student activities during high school (only of scholarship recipients) so that we could identify possible ensemble participants and contact them on campus. Almost all music students held jobs, either on or off campus. Students paid by the credit hour, not for a full-time or part-time load.   Students would often play or sing in an organization for a quarter or two, and then they might leave the department or even the university for a time, until they had earned enough money to continue a degree program. And yet, these same students seemed so appreciative of professors' efforts, so pleased for the interactions we had. My office, like many others, was a windowless 9 x 14 cement block cubicle. I shared a suite of offices with three fully tenured professors who taught little else except fundamentals for music classes, and one untenured, energetic and creative music education professor. With an orchestra to build, classes to teach (tenure to achieve!) and a family to raise, I did not spend much time pondering these and other feelings that being at Midwest gave me, but they were unmistakably there.

After being elected as Chair of the Department in 1996, and knowing that national re-accreditation was scheduled in the year 2000, the questions of identity and change became more important. I was also keenly interested in the well-being of the departmental faculty who had been adjusting and working through this period of change. After ten years, I had a better notion of the environment of this state university, and yet I had fundamental questions regarding the purposes and identity of a music department in a state university setting such as MSU. Additionally, I knew that my interpretation of working at this state university was only one perception, and I was keenly interested in how my fellow faculty viewed their sense of place, identity and purpose. Moreover, I was interested in how that departmental identity may have changed or developed over a

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period of years that had seen significant transformations in our own university setting. Let me return from the personal voice of faculty member and subsequent Chair to that of researcher, and give the reader an idea of the amount and nature of change during the period of this study.

Merger

Beginning in 1994, Midwest State University and the Department of Music began to experience policy changes initiated from outside the campus, but that would influence us directly. In 1993, the governor and the state legislature decided to merge the seven state universities (then known as Minnesota State Universities) with the technical and community colleges. The University of Minnesota and its branches would remain one entity, while all other institutions of higher education would become Minnesota State Colleges and Universities (MnSCU). The structural effect was that the chancellor and governing board of the system would now be responsible for thirty-eight institutions rather than seven, and serving 150,000 students rather than 47,000.

Credit Cap on Degrees

Within a short time of the merger occurring, a number of explicit, imposed policies (Barresi and Olson, 1992) were issued. Among the first was a policy mandating that no department could have a major requiring more than 128 credits.   Statistics had shown that students were staying in college five, six, even seven years before graduating, and many were not graduating at all. Private colleges were "guaranteeing" that sons or daughters entrusted to their care would finish in four years. As the economy livened up and "recession bargain hunting" at state universities diminished, MnSCU felt obliged to compete. In addition, as a new organization, MnSCU officials had a charge to "streamline" and "simplify" the myriad of degree programs offered by the seven state universities. What this meant for the Department of Music was a potential reduction of seven credits from our part of the music education degree.

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Semester Conversion

A second policy of MnSCU was to require all of its member institutions to convert, between 1997 and 1999, from a quarter to a semester format. At the time of the notification of this policy change, members of the faculty were unsure of the implications this would have on our department, but we were fairly certain that implementing it would take a considerable amount of time and energy. The faculty knew that courses would have to go through a campus-wide curriculum committee approval process, and that all two-quarter classes would now either have to be one semester or a full year.

NASM Re-accreditation

In addition to the changes being initiated at the state level, the Department of Music was approaching its decennial reaccredidation by NASM. While the process did not inherently involve change, the process of self-study and subsequent visitation by an NASM team was bound to create change and certainly implied a great deal of time, effort and attention to the particulars of remaining a fully accredited member. The process of self-study (internal review) was a six to twelve month progression, with a consultant visit scheduled before NASM evaluators arrived.

Internally Driven Change

Faculty

During the same period of time as these external events were taking place, a number of internal changes were occurring. The Department of Music was undergoing a significant transformation in its faculty. Between 1994 and 1999, as a result of retirements, six new faculty joined the department. This represented almost one third of the full-time music faculty. National searches were conducted for each position.

Administration

Additionally, during the period of 1993-2000, the university had no less than four presidents and three academic vice-presidents. Two of the presidents were interim

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positions.   And, in 1996, the College of Fine Arts and Humanities (to which the Department of Music belongs) named a new Dean.

The Complete Study and the Scope of this Paper

The purpose of the overall dissertation was to <u>understand the effects of externally and internally driven changes on a Department of Music faculty in a state university setting</u>. More specifically, the study <u>explored the effects of change as a result of mandates and policies from outside the university campus as well as inside its confines</u>. Further, I was interested in investigating the effects of these changes on the Department of Music faculty, their work lives, and their continuing search for a central, unifying identity of the department. Consequently, <u>the study investigated, through interviews, field notes, and answers to written questions, how one Department of Music faculty endeavored and struggled to find its identity, its "saga", through a period of what seemed to be uncommon change</u>.

This Paper

This particular paper investigates the possibility of a "grounded" theory that may have emerged from the study, specifically that Departments and Schools of Music derive their power and influence from the relative strength of the campus culture(s) to which they belong, and their own viability within those cultures.

A View of Organizational Culture through Burrell and Morgan's Sociological Paradigms

As much of the dissertation had to do with understanding individuals in a social/work setting, it seemed appropriate to investigate, as part of the background research process, seminal works regarding social/cultural constructs. One of the enduring theories in that arena is Burrell and Morgan's Typology of Sociological Paradigms, which appeared in their 1979 work, <u>Sociological Paradigms and Organizational Analysis</u>. To illuminate some key archetypes of organizational behavior, Burrell and Morgan proposed four key paradigms based on what they described as "mutually exclusive views

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of the world" (1979, viii). They believe that each paradigm "stands in its own right and generates its own distinctive analyses of social life" (1979, viii). The formation of these paradigms is based on two dualisms in the sociological dimension: subjective-objective, and regulation-radical change.

The Subjective-Objective Dimension

Some key terms Burrell and Morgan use are important in understanding the poles of each dimension. In the subjective/objective dimension, the 'subjectivist' would be inclined toward concepts of nominalism, revolving "around the assumption that the social world external to individual cognition is made up of nothing more than names, concepts and labels which are used to structure reality" (1979, 5). In other words, reality is a construction and, as a construction, it is highly individual. Everyone has his or her own reality or combinations of reality. Further, the subjectivist would be 'anti-positivist'. They would hold that "truth" is a construct and is highly individual. In terms of studying activities in the social sciences, an anti-positivist would "maintain that one can only 'understand' by occupying the frame of reference of the participant in action" (1979, 5).

Its antithesis, in the objective dimension, would hold that realism and positivism are concrete concepts. Realism claims that, "the social world…is a real world made up of hard, tangible and relatively immutable structures. …They exist as empirical entities" (1979, 4). A positivist in the social world seeks to explain and predict by "searching for regularities and causal relationships…based upon the traditional approaches which dominate the natural sciences" (1979, 5). Risking oversimplification, a positivist believes that there are truths to be found, and having found them, they largely remain true.

The Regulation-Radical Change Dimension

The regulation/radical change continuum, earlier identified by Burrell and Morgan as an order/conflict debate, also has terms that can be helpful. The order, or regulation view of society emphasizes stability, functional coordination and consensus,

while the conflict, or radical change view emphasizes <u>change</u>, <u>conflict</u>, and <u>disintegration</u> of the status quo.

Figure 1 (below) is a simple diagram representing how Burrell and Morgan combined the two dimensions as intersecting horizontal and vertical axes:

Figure 1. Burrell and Morgan's Typology of Sociological Paradigms Radical
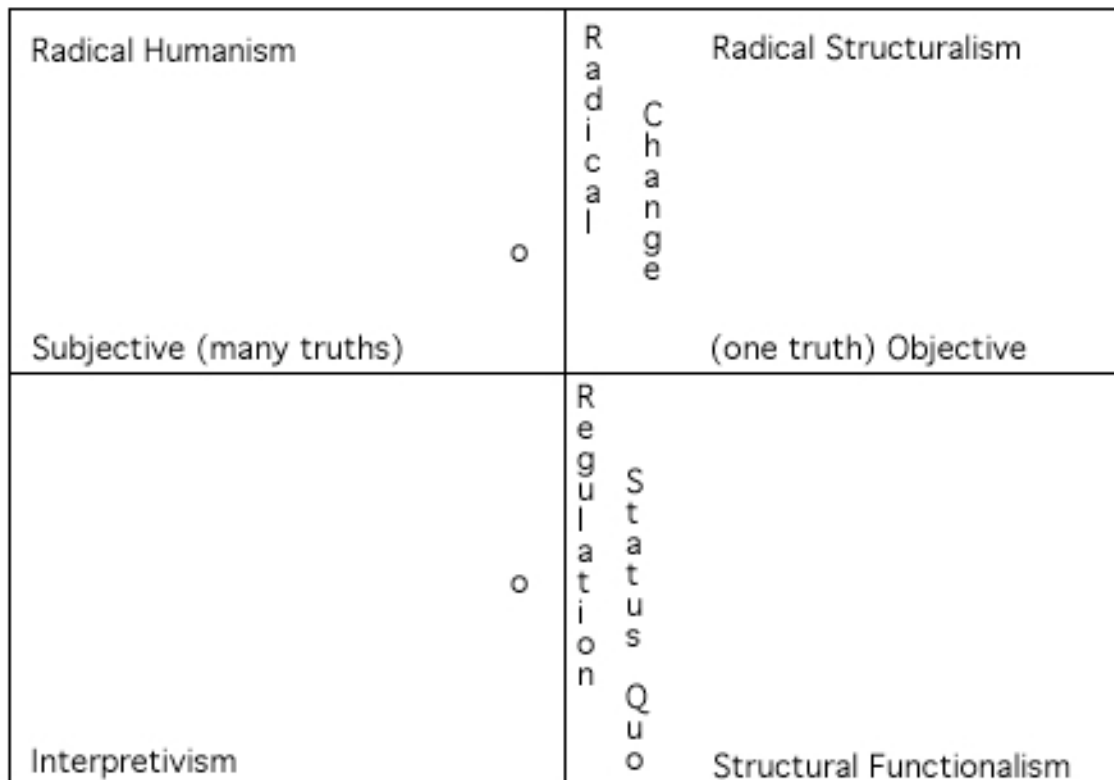
The Four Paradigms

In *Figure 1*, you will find two intersecting axes, one horizontal and one vertical. The horizontal axis represents a continuum symbolizing the subjective to the objective, right to left or perhaps, if you will, many truths on the left to one truth on the right. The vertical axis represents a continuum of desire for change, with the bottom representing regulatory or status quo, and the top representing the radical or high degree of change

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from the status quo. According to Burrell and Morgan, each quadrant of the typology

represents a distinct way of thinking about organizations and organizational culture. In

somewhat simplified terms, here is what each quadrant represents. It is important to note

that there are a number of 'places' an organization may 'exist' in this typology, crossing

boundaries, as well as many ways an individual may "frame" their own organizational

view.

> Structural Functionalism (lower right): A person who has this
> organizational frame of reference "seeks to discover data about
> organizations in order that an elite, usually managers, can exercise
> control" (Parker, 2000: 61). The culture of this organization is "the
> pattern of basic assumptions which a given group has invented, discovered
> or developed in learning to cope with its problems of external adaptation
> and internal integration, which have worked well enough to be considered
> valid, and therefore to be taught to new members as the correct way to
> perceive, think and feel in relation to those problems (Schein, 1983: 14).
> Parker says, "The sharing of meanings, of 'deep assumptions', is
> suggested to be what culture fundamentally is and the implication is that
> these depths can be managed from above, if their underlying structure is
> understood" (2000: 61). At its most extreme, a structural functionalist
> believes that there is one truth or set of truths that allows their
> organization to work, and that leadership in that organization is about
> finding that set of truths, protecting them, managing them and passing
> them on as unchanging gems of social order.
> Radical Structuralism (upper right): Think of late Marxism, and one might
> be fairly close to this view of organizations. It shares with structural
> functionalism "a positivist (one truth) assumption that organizations are
> real things that can be studied using appropriate methods" (Parker, 2000,
> 68). As with most other notions of Marxist theory, all relates to the
> economic domination of the few with the subordination of the many.
> "Ideas and meanings are seen as subordinate to the determinations of the
> economic base. …Organizational contingencies—technology, size,
> structure, culture and so on—are all somehow functional for the system of
> capitalism…" (Parker: 68). So a radical structuralist would believe that
> there is also one truth or set of truths to discover and the only way to bring
> the organization to that truth is through radical, revolutionary change of
> the economic system that supports a capitalist status quo.

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Interpretivism (lower left): This quadrant of the typology suggests that organizational culture or meaning is "socially constructed" by people (Conrad: 1993, 20). The interpretive paradigm of organizational culture "stresses the local nature of cultural processes and, in reducing the object of enquiry to actor level phenomena, its epistemology cautions against any conception of a system, however open or negotiated" (Parker, 2000: 70). Actor level phenomena means that one would study the language, symbols and actions of each individual in the organization, trying to understand what "sets of common typifications" exist (Parker: 70). These shared meanings and beliefs are "continually in process, in organization-making" (Smircich, 1985: 66). An individual approaching an interpretive framework believes there are many individual truths in an organization's culture and identity, and that change in that framework happens in largely individual processes.

Radical Humanism (upper left): This paradigm "Conceptualizes organizational culture as a contested relation between meanings—the distinctive understandings of a particular social group which may conflict with those of other social groups" (Parker: 75). Burrell and Morgan suggest that, in some ways, radical humanism is an anti-organization theory—"a theory which is inherently critical of dominant accounts of scientific knowledge and social arrangements" (Parker: 75). Radical humanism stresses many cultures within organizations, "with organizational myths providing rich resources for members to recognize and partially resolve contradictions" (Parker: 75). Radical humanism, therefore, looks for meaning of individual and shared beliefs of members; that there is inherent conflict and struggle between those who exert control and those who do not. At its furthest point, a radical humanist would want no organizational control whatsoever (anarchy) and would seek to have semblances of it radically dismantled.

Summary

If indeed there are vastly different constructs of how individuals view the social world, what of those views actually "becoming" distinct culture types at American Universities? A brief look at the work of Berquist (1992) gives another, more specific paradigm of social constructs within the work environment of higher education.

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Berquist's <u>Four Cultures of the Academy</u>

William Berquist, in his book, *The Four Cultures of the Academy* (1992),
suggests that there are distinct cultures operating simultaneously within our colleges and
universities. He writes:

> Four different, yet interrelated, cultures are now to be found in American
> higher education. They have a profound impact on the ways in which
> campus leaders view their current work in the academy, as well as on the
> ways in which faculty members, administrators, and students perceive the
> potential for personal career advancement and institutional change (xiii).

The four cultures to which Berquist refers are the **collegial culture**, the
managerial culture, the **developmental culture**, and the **negotiating culture**. Each of
these, Berquist writes, has distinct evolutionary histories, viewpoints and values.   The
following is a brief description of each of the cultures Berquist has identified.

The Collegial Culture

With its historical roots in the British university tradition, the collegial culture is
characterized by long-established liberal arts educational concepts. Students in the
collegial culture are involved in all aspects of the university environment, including
residential living and extra-curricular activities. Faculty members, for their part, engage
with students in most aspects of collegiate life. In the curriculum, the university
emphasis is on "complexity of thought and the educational process. Faculty are
suspicious of any curriculum that is too practical, concrete, or contemporary" (1992, 20-
21).

The collegial culture relies heavily on the disciplines represented by the faculty to
find meaning for its existence. The collegial culture "values faculty research and
scholarship and the quasi-political governance processes of the faculty" (1992, 4).

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Berquist refers the reader to a radio and television show of the 1930s and 40s (Halls of Ivy) that portrays the images and myths of the collegial culture:

> It is always autumn at Ivy College. The leaves have turned a bright red and yellow. We are ambling down a tree-lined street that winds graciously between old, well-preserved colonial homes. At the end of the street, we arrive at President Hall's handsome (though not ostentatious) home. President Hall's well-mannered son is raking leaves in front of the home. You say hello to him and knock on the door. President Hall's maid (an eccentric but lovable lady in her late fifties) answers the door and invites you into Dr. Hall's living room. A cheery fire always seems to be lit (and in need of minimal tending). You sit by the fire and are offered an inviting cup of tea (or hot cider—something non-alcoholic, of course). President Hall enters the room. He wears an elegant, though slightly worn, cardigan sweater and carries with him a copy of Shakespeare sonnets, which are familiar friends. A mixture of Marcus Welby and Mortimer Adler, President hall engages us in conversation about literature, modern values, and the intellectual growth of students at Ivy College (1992, 27-28).

This culture values the independence of the individual faculty member. In turn, in Millet's words, "Every faculty member expects that the system of organization and operation in a college or university will recognize the importance of the role of the faculty member and provide him with a status of dignity and consideration" (1962). Since the faculty member is placed at the center of the collegial culture, the member "will assume that institutional change takes place primarily through—and power resides in— the quasi-political, committee-based, faculty-controlled governance processes of a college or university" (Berquist, 1992, 45-46). Even though this culture is one that still exists, to some degree, on all college and university campuses, Berquist points out, "For all its strengths—specifically, its encouragement of deliberation and open communication—the collegial culture suffers from a lack of organization and coherence" (1992, 93).

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The Managerial Culture

Berquist traces the origins of this culture to two types of American collegiate institutions: the Catholic college and the American junior or community college. In both cases, the culture grew out of the elementary and secondary schools already in place. The Catholic college "was an extension of the established…schools that were being run by various teaching orders of priests and nuns…" (Berquist, 1992, 57). The junior and community colleges were outgrowths of their local communities and schools, with faculty members "trained as teachers rather than as scholars or researcher, and administrators …just as likely to have received their advanced degrees in higher education as in a specific academic discipline" (1992, 58). In these institutions, course offerings were designed "where the desired competencies of students could be specified" (1992, 58). In other words, the focus was far more on vocational preparation. Berquist says the influence of this culture has gained an enormous amount of strength over the years. "This culture, in turn, has become increasingly influential in this country and has generally become almost as prominent as the collegial culture" (1992, 58). How the managerial culture finds meaning is familiar to all those in academic life during an age of increased demands for what is being called accountability. Berquist defines the managerial culture in structural terms:

> A culture that finds meaning primarily in the organization, implementation, and evaluation of work that is directed toward specified goals and purposes; that values fiscal responsibility and effective supervisory skills; that holds untested assumptions about the capacity of the institution to define and measure its goals and objectives clearly; and that conceives of the institution's enterprise as the inculcation of specific knowledge, skills, and attitudes in students so that they might become successful and responsible citizens (1992, 5).

As colleges and, particularly, universities grew, the collegial culture was simply not able to handle the complexity of what Kerr explains as the emergence of the

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multipurpose, multi-constituency, multi-level university: what he defined as the "multiversity" (1963). Berquist elaborates on the characteristics of this enterprise:

> The multiversity depended on exceptional managerial skills. Budgets were more complex…with increased administrative support services…. Statewide coordination of educational enterprises encouraged the creation of a new generation of educational managers who were versed in the technical language of large-scale institutions. No longer retreaded faculty members…these were professional managers of the educational enterprise, who had developed their own language, rituals, and values (1992, 67).

The effect of the managerial culture's growing influence on college and university campuses has been strong. The new demands by the public for increased accountability, particularly during times of declining resources and retrenchment, required the kind of planning and organization that the collegial culture just couldn't manage. However, Berquist writes that the campus protest era of the 60s and 70s was not just about Vietnam:

> Students deplored the indifference of vast educational systems to their unique needs. They complained of complicity between big business, big government, and big university; they demanded a renewed focus on teaching and a new emphasis on social values and reform. These protests provided fertile ground for the growth of two other cultures: the developmental and the negotiating (1992, 67).

The Developmental Culture

The juxtaposition of the collegial and managerial cultures in colleges and universities provided a rich environment for the development of a culture of compromise, one that recognized the benefits and drawbacks of each of the preceding systems. Generally cultivated by faculty, they "advocated a more deliberate mode of planning and development that retains faculty authority and a democratic spirit, while avoiding the political infighting of the collegial culture" (Berquist, 1992, 4). Berquist further defines the developmental culture:

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(Developmental culture) finds meaning primarily in the creation of programs and activities furthering the personal and professional growth of all members of the collegiate community; that values personal openness and service to others, as well as institutional research and curricular planning. (This culture) conceives of the institution's enterprise as the encouragement of potential for cognitive, affective, and behavioral maturation among all students, faculty, administrators and staff (1992, 5).

While Berquist's definition of this more recently developed culture may evoke a response of "Well, isn't that what we all want?", he points out that associates within this culture are not always viewed favorably:

Members of this third culture tend to be relatively naïve about the political process of a college or university and often are viewed by managerially oriented faculty and administrators as too idealistic and ill equipped to implement a carefully conceived program (1992, 93-94).

The notion of a well-conceived developmental culture is sometimes myth, sometimes reality. But its fundamental concept is that "one can take the best from the managerial culture (namely, its procedures), and the collegiate culture (namely, its values), and blend them together…" (1992, 101). Its values reside in such notions as faculty development, curriculum development, and long-range institutional planning, and find their focus in three different characteristics of higher education: (1 teaching and learning, (2 personal and organizational dynamics, and 3) institutional dynamics. The members of such a culture "believe that they can always discover a point of compatibility between personal and organizational well-being" (1992, 101).

The Negotiating Culture

As the managerial culture grew in American colleges and universities, so did its symbiont, the negotiating culture. Berquist explains, "The fourth culture emerged in response to the inability of the managerial culture to meet the personal and financial needs of faculty and staff" (1992, 129). Just as the junior and community colleges were

the genealogical source of the managerial culture, they were also the roots of the

negotiating culture. As elementary and secondary school faculties began to unionize,

faculties of the junior and community colleges under the same management became

interested. Berquist defines this emerging, negotiating culture as:

> A culture that finds meaning primarily in the establishment of equitable
> and egalitarian policies and procedures for the distribution of resources
> and benefits in the institution; that values confrontation and fair bargaining
> among constituencies (primarily management and faculty or staff) with
> vested interests that are inherently in opposition. The negotiating culture
> conceives of the institution's enterprise as either the undesirable
> promulgation of existing (and often repressive) social attitudes and
> structures or the establishment of new and more liberating social attitudes
> and structures (1992, 5-6).

The reasons for the emergence of the negotiating culture in colleges and

universities went beyond just a response to the managerial model. Simply the growth and

subsequent complexity of many institutions provided a need for a responding structure

that believed it has the interests of "workers" at heart. Johnstone (1981) identified the

process as the bureaucratization of colleges and universities. Ladd and Lipset (1973)

agreed, particularly with respect to public universities:

> Accompanying the rapid growth of higher education in the postwar era has
> been the development in the predominant public sector of gigantic multi-
> campus universities, with central administrations often directly responsible
> to state authorities. Inherently, such developments led to
> bureaucratization and reduced the sense of collegiality between faculty
> and administrators. Professors found that important decisions were being
> made off campus.

Berquist recognizes the current position of the negotiating culture, writing that it

"seems to be firmly established in American colleges and universities—especially the

public ones. It serves not only as worthy adversary to those in the managerial culture, but

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also as an alternative source of influence and power for those faculty members who feel disenfranchised by the established collegial culture" (1992, 136).

Cultural Frames and Identities within the Typology

So, is there a connection between Burrell and Morgan's *Typology of Sociological Paradigms* and the identification of four university cultures by Berquist?   Perhaps an overlay of the cultures into four quadrants (representing the dimensions of Burrell and Morgan [*figure 3])* can add some understanding as to how cultures in the university setting may view the social world. In the figure, I have placed a culture inside a quadrant representing a "possible" predisposition for a Burrell and Morgan paradigm. Judging from participants' responses to questions, this overlay has a good deal of 'local' validity. I would invite the to make comparisons to their own situation for discovery situational validity.

Figure 2: Potential Links of Cultures and Frames within the Subjective/Objective and Regulation/Radical Change Dimensions of Burrell and Morgan.

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Comparisons Along the Horizontal Axis
Objective Dimension, Quadrants 2 and 4
One can make a strong suggestion that someone, or a group who views their social/work world in a more concrete fashion, as a realist and in an empirical manner (Burrell and Morgan), may lean toward a managerial or negotiating culture identification (Berquist).
Subjective Dimension, Quadrants 1 and 3
Conversely, a person who views the social/work world in a more subjective way, believing truth is personal, multidimensional, and perhaps even evaporable, may be inclined toward identification with the developmental or collegial cultures.
Comparisons Along the Vertical Axis
Regulation Dimension, Quadrants 3 and 4
Additional distinctions can be made through interpreting organizational predispositions along the regulation/change axis. Collegial and managerial environs, in which the traditions, symbols and internal politics of a university are strong, or with an established hierarchy of structural policies and managerial control, may be more inclined toward the regulation dimension. Those "regulations" may or may not be spelled out, but the expectation of "how we do things around here", would be strong and not conducive to change. Groups or persons who identify strongly with these notions might be inclined toward the collegial (quadrant 3) or managerial (quadrant 4) cultures.
Radical Change Dimension, Quadrants 1 and 2
Equally, a view of radical change, advocating organizational upheaval, would view the power structures of the status quo as unfair and limiting. This would be indicative of the developmental (quadrant 1) and the negotiating cultures (quadrant 2).

 These Cultures at Midwest State University

Each of Berquist's cultures seemed to be present at Midwest State University.   A careful analysis of the data, including university records, participants' responses, as well as analysis of structural considerations at MSU led me to make the following observations:

1. All four cultures exist at Midwest State University.
2. There is more than one managerial culture exerting power at MSU.
3. The Department of Music exists in a variety of those cultures, with the exception of the managerial.
4. The four cultures have varying degrees of influence and power.

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5. The Department of Music feels it does not have the influence and power it desires within its cultural boundaries.

Premise One: The Four Cultures at Midwest State

Affirmed in Chapter Two of the study, each culture is in evidence at MSU. Here are some of the identifiers of each culture:

Managerial: State government, MnSCU (administrative organization of all state universities, technical and community colleges), and MSU administration.

Negotiating: Faculty and staff unions, a formal contract, and individuals who bring grievances and/or lawsuits.

Collegial: Academic life, ceremonial events, informal meetings, conversations and relationships, faculty forums.

Developmental: professional development reports and funds, assessment and accreditation activities, mission statement committee, strategic planning committee.

Premise Two: There is more than one managerial culture exerting power at MSU

In fact, it seems that there are three distinct managerial bodies, or cultures, at work. One, the state government, passes legislation that supports and controls policymaking within the university structure. The decision to merge and create MnSCU, for example, was a legislative decision. MnSCU itself, with over 300 employees in fifty-four departments and areas, and situated in the state capital, is a second managerial culture. This was the body that instituted policies such as the credit cap on degree programs and continues to decide on funding formulas for the member institutions. The third is the administration at Midwest State, who has the specific responsibility of the academic and financial operations of the university.

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Premise Three: The Department of Music exists in a variety of those cultures, with the exception of the managerial

The Department of Music in the Collegial Culture

The Department of Music faculty gave strong indications of belonging to a unit that takes great pride in a sense of academic freedom, respect for one another and service to the university, which, are some of the best traditions of the collegial culture. When asked about definitions of the department, faculty member Susan used the terms cooperative, respect and dedicated. She said, "I'm amazed at how much respect department members have for each other. There's almost none of the this-person-doesn't-talk-to-this-person attitude. That to my mind, from what I've seen and what I've been in, is unusual." And when asked why she used the term 'dedicated', she replied:

> *Oh, I could start off with simply…the number of hours above and beyond, actually if I just took above and beyond teaching, that many members of our faculty have done, even just this fall. It's an incredible number. There's nothing except pride and dedication that makes that happen. The rewards are purely internal and I'd say that takes a lot of dedication and that (term) comes to mind very quickly.* (Focus Group Interview dated November 9, 2000)

A scene described in Chapter Four of the full study (185) regarding the grand opening of the 29 million dollar Learning Resources Center also provided insight into the department's existence in the collegial culture. Participants related that the department had provided the formal ceremonial music for the event, as well as social music throughout the day, but without a word of thanks from the university administration. There was also evidence that the expectation the department had of the university administration was in the collegial realm; that is, wanting and expecting personal thanks from the president of the university.

While it seems that a spirit of collegiality and a collegial environment exists within the Department of Music, there is little evidence of departmental faculty seeking

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and finding that environment in significant ways outside departmental boundaries. As seems the case in many multi-universities, there is insularity and isolation that precludes the kind of collegial environment Burton Clark (1992) found in studying three private colleges. Only one music department faculty member serves as an advisor to a non-music student organization. Most Department of Music faculty I spoke with rarely, if ever, attend university events outside those produced by the department. Additionally, some faculty noted that belonging to a broader collegial culture outside the department was not an easy task. I asked Shelly about the collegial culture in her experience (seven years) at Midwest:

> Shelly: *It took a while to get beyond the people you meet in your committee work and stuff and figure out who these small cultures are. Who's a group? For some reason in Midwest City the groups have not been quick to bring me in. I've never been anyplace where it took so long to figure that piece of it out.*
>
> Bruce: *You've been working very hard.*
>
> Shelly: *Yeah, but I mean normally I'll meet people at work and I'll figure out who I can call to go to a movie with or who should I invite over for dinner and I couldn't…I just couldn't figure out if there was a group and if they were people that I could ask to do things. I just didn't understand—I couldn't read the culture and, for me, that's very unusual* (Interview dated June 29, 2001).

It is not only music faculty who may work in a collegial environment 'locally' but are not particularly involved in broader university culture. At the December, 2001 commencement ceremonies, the faculty association president, in an address to the audience and graduates, allowed that not only was she speaking for the first time at the ceremony, but that this was the first commencement she had attended in over fifteen years on campus. Indeed, as spoke these revealing words, fewer than sixty of the university's six hundred faculty were in the commencement audience to hear them.

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The Department of Music in the Developmental Culture

As was stated earlier, the developmental culture is a 'culture of compromise' attempting to blend the best parts of the managerial and collegial cultures, and, in Berquist's words, to "advocate a more deliberate mode of planning and development that retains faculty authority and a democratic spirit, while avoiding the political infighting of the collegial culture" (1992, 4). Establishment of the structures of this culture are apparent at Midwest State, including the formalization of significant faculty governance procedures and the formation of ad hoc groups for strategic planning or developing mission statements. Additionally, personal and professional growth, a fundamental tenet of the developmental culture, is a part of the MSU contract, allowing funds for each faculty member and requiring professional development plans to be submitted (IFO Contract, 1999-2001).

Departmentally, the signs of a 'developmental culture' are apparent. Faculty members are heavily involved in the committee work of the department, and their notions of 'inclusiveness' in teaching promote a developmental manner of thinking. The departmental governance activities that occur promote an openness that might not exist in a purely collegial culture. And the spirit of a developmental culture includes teaching. As trumpet/horn professor Matthew said, "I think, by and large, we really try. Really try to make something of the students and help them, it seems to me. We are trying to be inclusive with all the students and work for everybody" (Scholarship Focus Interview, November, 2000).

Additionally, the Self-Study portion of the NASM reaccredidation points toward a strong identification with the developmental culture. In interview after interview, participants thought that the Self-Study was the most productive part of the process. Harold commented that the long meeting to discuss departmental goals during the Self-Study was "one of the most fruitful times that we have had in the last eighteen years. It

really wasn't the NASM visitation that was the most fruitful. It was the preparation, the process before it" (Interview, March 6, 2001).

The Department of Music in the Negotiating Culture

Interestingly, there is little evidence of the department having an overt sense of 'belonging' in the negotiating culture. Although each member of the faculty 'belongs' in a legal manner; that is, represented by the faculty association in collective bargaining, identification with that campus culture is almost entirely missing from the conversations of the participants. For example, participants did not discuss the possible 'extra duty days' necessary in providing music for the Learning Resources Center grand opening, but only of wanting to be thanked. *Only once in my five years as Chair did a faculty member bring a member of the faculty association into a meeting to represent them. They did not ask for 'extra standard pay' for evening concerts or recitals they attend, nor did they say, "It's not in my contract".* This is not to say that faculty members are not aware or concerned about their contractual rights. *As Chair, for example, I did not ask a faculty member to teach an overload without pay, nor did a faculty member expect to receive the departmental budget without a faculty vote.* In other words, the negotiating culture is more a part of the background fabric of departmental process, seldom mentioned, but clearly understood.

Premise Four: The University Cultures Have Varying Degrees of Influence and Power

Resources

Let us delineate, for a moment, the types of resources that exist within the structure of a university setting. First, there are personnel: faculty, staff, and students. Second, there is the resource of time and how it affects curricula. How many days will the university meet? What will be the load of professors? How many classes will be required in a major or minor degree program, and how often will those classes meet? What will be the general education curriculum for every student? The third resource is

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facilities. What type of building will a department inhabit, and what are the relative

strengths and weaknesses of what is inside the building? In the case of the Department of

Music, that would involve labs, practice facilities, classrooms, studios and offices,

performance areas, and storage. Finally, the fourth resource would be budget; that is,

what amount of money is available for the operations of the department, including

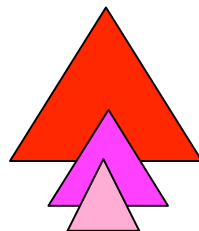equipment, all departmental activities, and scholarships for students?

Let us now consider the relative power of each of the cultures to affect the

allocation and accumulation of resources within a university, and in particular, MSU.

Layers of Managerial Power

At the source, a large part of Midwest State University's means are regulated and

controlled by the governor and the state legislature. They allocate a certain amount for

the funding of higher education in the state, as well as any bonding for facilities. In

recent times, state funding covered thirty-eight percent of the cost per student (MnSCU

Fiscal Report, July 2000). Tuition covers much of the balance of student costs. The

amount of that tuition is recommended by each university, but is ultimately approved not

by the local university administration, but by MnSCU. Therefore, in terms of gaining

and allocating resources, the relative power structure of the underlined managerial culture might

look something like this:

Figure 3: Resource Power in the Managerial Culture

Governor and Legislature   Allocation of funds and
bonding

MnSCU
Per student allocation and tuition
control
MSU Tuition recommendations and
college allocations

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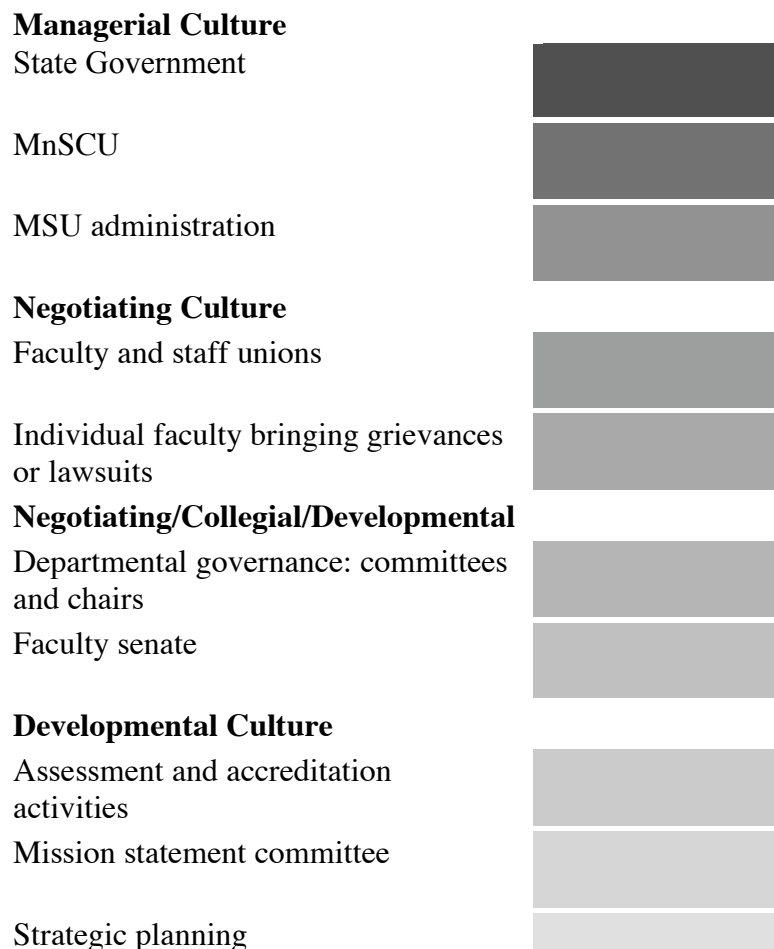**Resource Power in the other campus cultures**

The next question might be: Do any of the other campus cultures have power over resources? In some ways, the <u>negotiating culture</u> does. Through collective bargaining, it has great influence over how the allocations by the governor, legislature, and MnSCU are distributed. For example, in the fall of 2001, the state of Minnesota endured a two-week strike by members of a workers union over wages and benefits, which caused the walk-out of thousands throughout the state, including over two hundred secretaries, custodians, and other support staff on MSU's campus. As in many cases, the state had one idea of what the allocation would be to these workers, the workers' union another. In the end, the allocation changed very little, perhaps by two percent, but the negotiating culture had flexed what muscle it had.

What of the <u>developmental</u> and <u>collegial</u> cultures? It would be easy to say that they have no power to affect resource allocations but, in fact, it seems they do, at least in small ways. Their power is simply indirect, rather than direct. For example, if the symbolism of a strong university is important (collegial culture), and a hockey team that is nationally ranked, for example, represents that symbolism, then the athletic department has some influence over resource allocation. Similarly, if the MnSCU or university managerial culture, in consultation with constituencies in the developmental culture, decide it is critical to the campus to form an 'excellence in teaching center', resources for that part of a developmental culture may flow.   It is important to note, however, that these two cultures, the collegial and developmental, have little, if any, direct control over resource allocations. They are dependent on one or more of the managerial cultures for physical and financial resources.   As a result, it seems that within the university, <u>departments that find their existence primarily in the collegial and developmental cultures are almost entirely dependent on the managerial culture for physical and financial resources.</u>
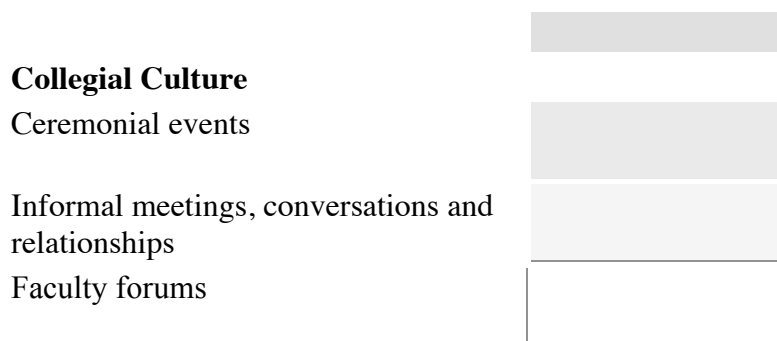
Cultural Power at MSU

How might we visualize a notion of relative power of the four cultures at MSU? It seems that the managerial cultures I have described exert, by far, the most direct control over the resources that manage this university. Other cultures, represented by faculty and staff interests, have far lesser degrees of control.   On the following page is one view of the relative strength of the cultures at MSU, based on group and individual interviews of faculty and university officials, and written responses to researcher questions.

Figure 4: A Perception of the Relative Strengths of University Related Cultures

Managerial Culture
State Government

MnSCU

MSU administration

Negotiating Culture
Faculty and staff unions

Individual faculty bringing grievances or lawsuits

Negotiating/Collegial/Developmental
Departmental governance: committees and chairs

Faculty senate

Developmental Culture
Assessment and accreditation activities

Mission statement committee

Strategic planning

Wood, B. (2004). University cultural scenes, power, and the identity of the Department of Music at Midwest State University. *Action, Criticism, and Theory for Music Education. Vol.3*, #3 (December 2004). http://act.maydaygroup.org/articles/Wood3_3.pdf

Collegial Culture

Ceremonial events

Informal meetings, conversations and relationships

Faculty forums

Key: Most Power= | Darkest | Least Power= | Lightest |

Premise Five: The Department of Music feels it does not have the influence and power it desires within its cultural boundaries.

In Chapter Four of the full study, participants shared a number of what I termed "perceptions of departmental self". In those conversations, one of the strongest themes to emerge was a sense of departmental productivity while being unappreciated and under-supported. Samuel made an interesting analogy, saying "I kind of feel like we're the kid in the class that's always making some commotion to get attention and we're not getting any attention" (Focus Group Interview, Nov 10, 2000). He pointed out how productive the department is, in terms of an increase in the number of concerts per year, master classes, publicity, but that the attention from the campus and community just isn't there. Vaughan pointed out that the department has "hopes and dreams", and was being asked to develop a strategic plan, on the one hand, while facing the loss of faculty on the other. Susan put it bluntly in her comment, "Jerked around" (Focus Group Interview, Nov 10, 2000).

Most telling, though, about the lack of any agreement of mission between the managerial culture and the Department of Music, was Richard's comment. Richard, professor emeritus, taught at MSU from the late 60s through the mid 90s, and served as department chair on three occasions. He put it bluntly, saying, "Don't wait for the

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administration to help you. Find people on campus that will help you with individual

initiatives of your making. Don't tell the Dean, Vice-President or President about them

because I don't think they care" (written statement from December 29, 2001).

Reflection

  Even though I had worked at MSU for ten years and had experienced, first hand,

the lack of managerial commitment to the arts and the Department of Music, this was still

shocking to hear, especially from someone as energetic and committed as Richard. And

yet, in a Departmental meeting in November of 2001, to discuss budget reductions, the

Dean of the College of Fine Arts and Humanities, Eric Rolen, was asked that very

question by a faculty member. "Does the upper administration of the university care

about this department?" The Dean's answer: "I do what I can, but no, I don't think they

do" (Departmental meeting, November 14, 2001).

  The feeling of helplessness of the department to influence the managerial culture

is pervasive in participants' comments. A clear theme emerged regarding the fiscal

resources available to the department. Department of Music faculty members believe

strongly that the operating budget just isn't allowing the faculty to be able to do the kinds

of activities they want to do. And while Patricia (VP for University Knowledge) is quite

clear in her agreement that the entire university is under-funded, she pointed out that the

Department of Music leads the university in gaining outside funding. The sense among

the faculty, then, is one of producing enormous effort, with limited administrative

support, and with less than desirable campus and community results.

Outside the Managerial Culture

  If one thinks about the participants' responses in terms of a cultural/power

perspective, an image, or potential theory, appears that has both clarity and ambiguity.

The Department of Music does not exist in the managerial culture. And it does not really

exist in the negotiating culture; only individual members within the department do, as

faculty under contract. In other words, there is no contractual stipulation that there will

be or should be a department of music, or art, or chemistry. Therefore, the only two
cultures in which the department can exert any influence in the fundamental issues of
support and recognition are the collegial and developmental. And, as was suggested
earlier, these cultures have very limited power in the academy, particularly that of MSU.
The feelings and perceptions of many Department of Music faculty members that there is
a lack of recognition, control, power, or influence with the managerial culture explains
their feelings of frustration and fear. As Elizabeth said, "I think we are not only afraid of
being unappreciated…I also think we are afraid of the repercussions of being
unappreciated" (Focus Group Interview dated November 11, 2000).

A Grounded Theory of Culture and Power at Midwest State

        It seems, as has been mentioned, that the Department of Music, precluded
structurally from ever belonging to the culture in which most of the power exists
(managerial), finds itself frustrated, apprehensive and somewhat off balance. The
department exists in both the developmental and collegial cultures, partly because that is
where the natural inclinations of the department lie, but also because the department is
constantly seeking opportunities to increase support and recognition for its activities.
There is no doubt that the saga of the Department of Music includes a long struggle for
recognition and support. The Department of Music has not and does not stand out as a
strong symbol for the university, one that the local administration might describe to
others as a 'unique' and special part of the university. The participants believe, rather,
that the feeling on campus is that the Department of Music is "another department",
without the singularity and attention Department of Music faculty want and believe is
necessary. Without that attention, particularly from the local managerial culture, the
faculty participants are fearful of the health, comprehensiveness and even survival of the
department. The Department of Music, therefore, is both searching for a refinement of
identity, and concerned with developing a way to have its present identity noticed,
accepted, and enhanced. In order to do that, the department exists opportunistically in

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both the collegial and developmental cultures, hopeful that, as administrations come and go, it may find ways to elevate its status and consequently the level and quality of its activities. A representation of this multiple culture existence might look like the figure 5 below

I have used a set of different sized pyramids, in agreement with the previous power color scheme, to suggest the relative power of each culture at MSU. The Department of Music, according to the analysis of participant responses, seems to exist in a combination primarily of the collegial and developmental cultures.   I included it as a parallelogram to reflect both a sense of little power (not a triangle with its historical and inherent geometric power) and in order to allow it to bend ever so slightly into the negotiating culture, even though that type of existence seems to happen infrequently.

Summary

The notion that separate cultures exist within the university setting sparked this researcher's interest, particularly in how those cultures view the social world in which they exist. The Department of Music at Midwest State University, mostly because of the inherent structure of higher educational settings, could not belong where the "real" power exists. And yet, it seems as though many departments and schools of music which also "only" belong in the collegial and developmental cultures have a much stronger voice in their own affairs and the affairs of their college and university. At Midwest State, the perception (and most likely a reality) of powerlessness has identifiable causes, namely: (1 the negotiating culture–and unions within it–absorb both the remaining power not assumed by the managerial culture, and (2 with the public and often acrimonious adversarial relationship between negotiating and managerial cultures, the more subjective and less structural views of the collegial and developmental cultures simply are not heard and accommodated.   Perhaps the battles along Burrell and Morgan's (1979) axis of change and status quo, over many years, have eroded both the traditional collegial environment and the more contemporary notions of a democratic and more responsive

educational environment. In any event, with a relatively weak collegial and developmental culture base, the Department of Music at Midwest State is searching for ways to strengthen its value on campus and in the community, feeling as though the work they are engaged in is valuable, but unvalued, ready to do more for the university but wanting the university's recognition and increased support.

Figure 5: Berquist's Four Cultures reflected at Midwest State University
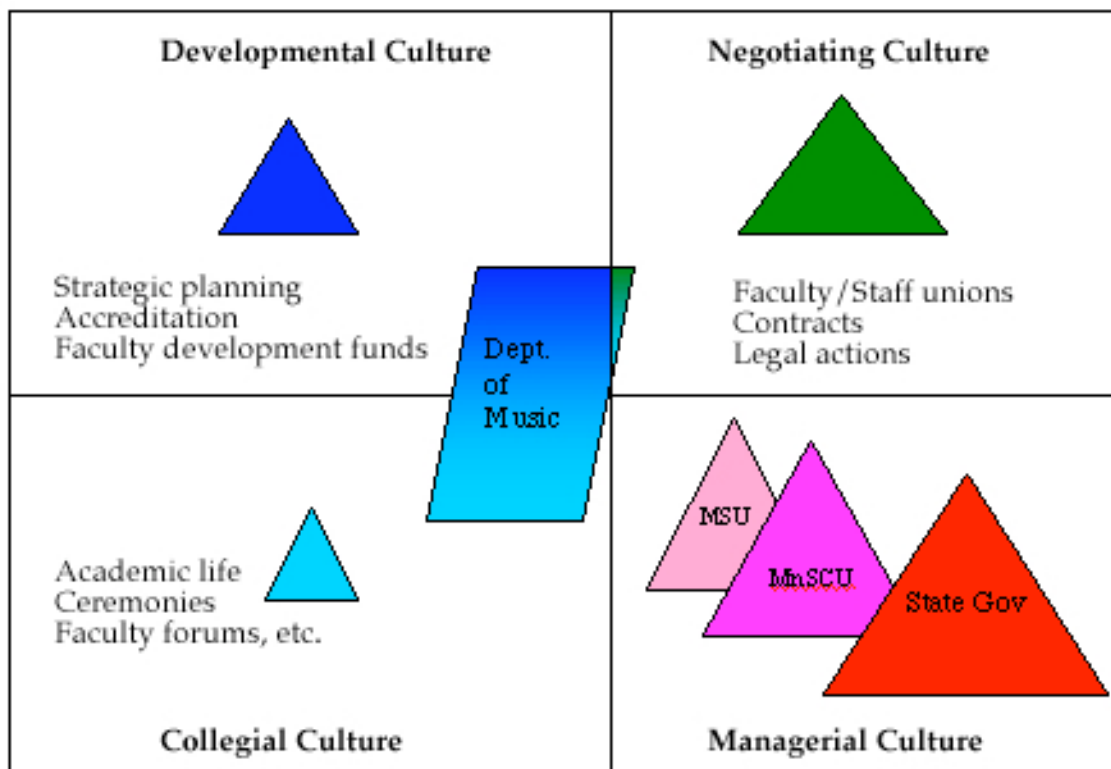
I would invite the reader to ponder these questions regarding culture and power at other institutions:

- Are there separate and identifiable "cultures" at your institution? What are they, and what values attitudes and beliefs do they exhibit?

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- Does your department or school exist within one or more of those cultures?
- What do you know or sense about the relative power of the cultures at your institution?
- What is the relative strength of your school or department within those cultures?

Perhaps it is possible for schools and departments of music, viewing themselves through these cultural overlays, to approach and answer their own questions and notions of identity and influence, power, survival and success.

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