POSSIBLE SELVES:
CONCEPTIONS AND CONVERSATIONS ABOUT CAREER SUCCESS
IN HIGHER EDUCATION

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ABSTRACT

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The impetus for the study came from Fletcher (2005) and Cleveland (2005) who found that in large corporations, the conceptions of success marginalize women, sometimes limiting their advancement. This study was to see if the same discrepancies may occur in higher education.

A literature review revealed that over time, the US has undergone several shifts in work values, starting with the Protestant work ethic, which continues to affect work values, but after several other shifts, the US is moving towards a work ethic that includes personal fulfillment, and predictions are that building relationships will become more important as attitudes and work values continue to change.

Possible selves research (e.g., Markus & Nurius, 1986) has found that adults build elaborated views of future selves, which includes possibilities they hope for, they expect, and they fear. People are motivated to bring about their hoped-for self and avoid the feared self. Over time, the hoped-for self, based on perceived constraints and life experiences, gives way to the expected self, based on abilities and circumstances that the
individual perceives as preventing the hoped-for self to occur. Possible selves are closely related to identity formation, as are conceptions of career success. A symbolic interactionist approach looks at how conceptions of career success for the individual and the university are co-created through talk.

In this study, 75 faculty members from different US colleges and universities completed an online questionnaire regarding their conceptions of career success, the universities’ conceptions of career success, fears about and constraints to career success, and conversations held about these conceptions. The purpose of the study was to see if there were differences in conceptions of career success between faculty and the university, and between male and female faculty, and more importantly, to see how these conceptions are discussed.

Faculty and universities agree that career success for faculty include combinations of research, teaching, and service. However, faculty also talk about career success as including balance between work and family, self-fulfillment, and building relationships with students and colleagues. No differences were found between male and female faculty. When faculty talked about career success, they reported good quality of the conversations and that they were useful in helping people clarify their own goals, or in understanding the university’s expectations. However, the conversations were few and relatively brief. Implications of the study include that universities may want to review what they reward and how they apply their rewards, as many faculty were either critical of or confused by decisions made at their universities. Universities may want to encourage talk about conceptions of career success.
Dedicated to
Lowell Gordon Hoover and Clarabelle Hoover
who defined success as living a simple life in which you can respect yourself
and others are enhanced by your acquaintance; and to their legacy,
the people who have learned to live this lesson:
  Daniel Lee Hoover
  Dianne Louise Hoover
  David Lyle Hoover
  Darin Lamont Hoover
  and to
  Dwayne Lowell Hoover
who did not know how many lives he had enhanced;
to our life partners and progeny:
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    Georgia, Helen, Alexis and Morgan
and to the extended family of Lowell and Clarabelle, who are many.
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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Abstract ...................................................................................................................... ii
Dedication .................................................................................................................... iv
Acknowledgements ........................................................................................................ v
Vita........................................................................................................................................ vi

List of Tables ................................................................................................................ viii

Chapters:

1. Introduction ............................................................................................................... 1
   Background for the Study.......................................................................................... 2
   Bringing Together Faculty and University Definitions of Success: ....................... 6
   Critical Theory and Organizational Communication........................................... 8
   Purpose of the study ................................................................................................. 10
   Why Should Colleges and Universities Consider Changing? ................................. 12
   Preview of Chapters ............................................................................................... 14

2. Review of Literature ................................................................................................. 15
   Introduction ............................................................................................................. 15
   Theoretical Basis for the Study: Symbolic Interactionist Theory .......................... 11
   Changing Work Values of Paid Labor in US History ........................................... 14
   The Protestant work ethic ...................................................................................... 19
   Character as a Value ............................................................................................... 24
   Rugged Individualism ............................................................................................ 34
   Rationality as a Work Value .................................................................................. 41
   Personality as a Work Value .................................................................................. 46
   Work as Self-Fulfillment ....................................................................................... 54
   Conceptualizing Private and Public Spheres......................................................... 60
   Emerging Conceptions of Career Success ............................................................. 64
   Possible Selves Theory and Conceptions of Career Success ............................... 67
   Possible Selves Theory ............................................................................................ 68
   Defining Possible Selves ......................................................................................... 69
LIST OF TABLES

Table

3.1 Categories of Conceptions of Success ............................................................... 105
3.2 Higher Level Categories ..................................................................................... 106
3.3 Mesosystemic subcategories for analysis of conversations .............................. 107
4.1 Demographic Characteristics of the Faculty Sample ........................................... 111
4.2 Institutional Characteristics of the Sample ......................................................... 112
4.3 Percentages of Career Success, Initial Conceptions Held by Female and Male College Faculty ................................................................. 114
4.4 University/College Conceptions of Faculty Career Success ............................. 122
4.5 Percentage of Reevaluations of Career Success Conceptions of Female and Male College Faculty ................................................................. 127
4.6 Reevaluations of Career Success, Initial Conceptions of Female and Male College Faculty ................................................................. 128
4.7 Perceived Constraints and Fears about Faculty Career Success ...................... 131
4.8 Percentage of Faculty Reporting Conversations about Career Success .................. 136
4.9 Features of Faculty Conversations about Conceptions of Success ........................ 138
4.10 Methods of Learning about University Conceptions of Career Success ................................................................. 144
4.11 Features of Conversations about Perceived University Conceptions of Faculty Career Success ................................................................. 145
4.12 Conversations about Faculty Constraints and Fears ......................................................... 150
4.13 Features of Conversations about Faculty Fears and Constraints Regarding Career Success ............................................................................ 152
4.14 Percentage of Higher Level Categories on Success Conceptions .............................. 162
CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this study is to examine higher education faculty’s conceptions of career success and conversations they have about career success. Several areas of organizational communication research converge to indicate a need for research on how faculty define success for themselves. These areas include career success definitions, theory and research on possible selves, and changing conceptions of the work ethic in the United States.

The history of work in the US shows that there are changing perceptions of men’s and women’s roles in the activities of production and reproduction. Shifts in the roles of men and women have led to changes in values, including the work ethic and family responsibilities. In some cases, the standards for assessing workers has not changed with shifts in work roles and values. Conceptions of career success and the ideal worker established by organizations have been shown to be predicated on a family structure that no longer exists (Fletcher, 2005a; Fletcher and Bailyn, 2005), or based on a linear career model based on men’s careers (Buzzanell & Goldzwig, 1991; Powell & Graves, 2003).
Some researchers have explored the gap between organizational definitions of the ideal worker and employees’ realities (Cleveland, 2005, Fletcher, 2005b), but this gap has not been explored in the context of higher education. One area of academic life where such a gap in conceptions, if one exists, would become apparent is in the faculty’s process of making sense of their and conversing about their conceptions of career success.

In this chapter, I briefly introduce the major areas of research that indicate a need for a study of faculty interpretations of conceptions of career success, and then preview the next two chapters. I introduce the work of Dr. Joyce Fletcher and her colleagues that led me to conceptions of career success as a topic of interest. I then introduce the areas of organizational communication research relevant to this study and explain how they relate to the proposed study. Last, I preview my research questions and the rest of the chapters.

Background for the Study

Dr. Joyce Fletcher earned her Ph.D. in 1996 from Boston University’s School of Management. Her dissertation was entitled Toward a Theory of Relational Practice: A Feminist Reconstruction of “Real” Work. Now a professor of management at the Center for Gender in Organizations, Simmons Graduate School of Management, she is also a senior research scholar at the Wellesley College Center for Women. Fletcher was a researcher on a large funded initiative from the Ford Foundation that included three large corporations, four researchers, and a willingness from the corporations to work closely with the research team to “identify the barriers in organizational structures and cultures that were keeping people from using existing work-family policies” (Rapoport, et al., 2002, p. xii). The study began in 1991. The other main researchers on the funded project
included Dr. Rhona Rapoport, director of the Institute of Family and Environmental Research (an NPO in London); Dr. Lotte Bailyn, a Professor of Management at MIT; and Dr. Bettye H. Pruitt, Ph. D. who is president of her own consulting and research company. Dr. Arlie Hochschild was a consultant for the project (Rapoport, 2002). This research team, sometimes joined by other researchers, developed a “dual agenda” for organizational change, which emphasizes the connection between equity and effectiveness they called Collaborative Interactive Action Research (CIAR). This approach explored “the underlying assumptions about gender, work, and success that impede both equity and effectiveness in the workplace” [italics in original] (Rapoport, 2002, p. xiv) and leads to changes in organizations that improve both equity and effectiveness. This research has lead to a number of publications in journals and books that cross the traditionally bifurcated spheres of work and family, organizational and individual conceptions of success, and gender and organizations.

Fletcher and her colleagues have adopted post-structural feminism (Foucault, 1980; Diamond and Quinby, 1988) as the theoretical basis for their research. From this perspective, gender is defined as the socialized expectations associated with masculinity and femininity, and not to be confused with sex, which is biological and refers to male and female. Fletcher and her colleagues are quick to clarify that they do not assume that men’s and women’s behaviors are consistent with masculine and feminine norms, but that the stereotyped expectations exist and can influence people’s expectations. The post-structuralist feminist perspective foregrounds structures such as gendered expectations of behavior and organizational policies and cultures as influential factors in human
behavior. The mission of their research agenda is to surface these structures and by challenging them, help to establish different structures that lead to both gender equity and personal and organizational effectiveness. The Dual Agenda frames the two goals of equity and effectiveness as interconnected and not mutually exclusive (Rapoport, et al., 2002; Fletcher, 2005b).

Much of the work of Fletcher and her colleagues have conducted has focused on how individuals work out the conflicting demands of family and work. They eschew the term “work-life balance” for several reasons. One aspect of “work-life balance” that they take issue with is the implication that work and life are mutually exclusive. Instead, they view work as very much a part of life. Some workers, argue Fletcher and her colleagues, gain a large part of their identity from the work they perform. Many workers gain personal satisfaction from their work. Most workers find work very much connected to their lives, allowing them to have a home, car, hobbies, to support a family; factors which make work central to life and not at odds with it. Fletcher and her colleagues also avoid the use of the term “balance” because of its implication that work and family remain separate but are given equal time and attention at different parts of the day. In some cases, decisions about “balance” carry gendered expectations that men will choose work over family and women will choose family over work when work and family conflict (Fletcher 2005, 2005b, Rapoport, et al., 2002).

In a critique of the concept of gender equity, Fletcher (2005) observed that the criteria for advancement in organizations is embedded with assumptions that preclude employees with outside responsibilities, such as caring for others, from advancing. Since
women often shoulder care responsibilities, these criteria could be seen as gender-biased. The criteria for assessing employees for advancement and salary increases included such ideals as commitment, competence, and time invested. These may appear to be objective criteria and qualities that most employers would value, but Fletcher examined the criteria to see how employees were assessed along these themes. In a study of a tech firm, Fletcher (2005b) found that commitment was evaluated on the employee’s willingness and ability to leave for out-of-town or overseas business trips on short notice. Competence was evaluated on innovation—one’s ability to contribute new ideas, but only employees with power were called upon for innovative ideas, so only males were given the opportunity to contribute to innovation. Women were more often in support positions, responsible for follow-up, implementation, and coordination of tasks that were not part of the criteria for advancement. In this organization, the researchers believed that time was managed poorly, as employees were often called upon to stay for all-night work sessions to meet a deadline. This work style created a communication environment in which managers did not want to hear about anything not due in the next 24 hours, so long-range planning was difficult. All three criteria, commitment, competence (defined as innovation) and time, worked against women with care responsibilities (Fletcher, 2005, 2005b). Cleveland (2005) also found that those with the power to establish employee performance measures are often affluent white males, with a particular set of life experiences that may bias their judgment about what constitutes career success.

These and other research reports regarding the history of the roles of men and women in relation to work (Jordan, Walker and Hartling, 2004; Kossek and Lambert,
2005; Bianchi, Casper, and King, 2005b), the changing work ethic (Cherrington, 1980), persistent gender stereotypes (Eagly and Steffen, 2000), career models (Buzzanell & Goldzwig, 1991; Powell & Graves, 2003), conceptions of success (Deison, 1994; Reich, 2001), and recent research regarding possible selves (Diekman and Goodfriend, 2006) converge to establish a need for this study.

As with other large organizations, the needs of employees in a university may differ from the needs of the organization as a whole. Different needs may lead to different views in a number of areas, including success. As Baskamp (2005) points out, often there is a conflict between the needs of the faculty for intellectual independence and freedom and the need of the institution for accountability. Because of this conflict, differences may exist between the institutional definition of career success and individual conceptions of career success.

Although research has been done regarding career success in higher education, the term “career success” in higher education is not defined. Examples of higher education career research include Nyquist, Hitchcock and Teherani (2000) who found that faculty women who perceived impediments to success were less satisfied with their jobs. Women reported access to less support for research, including research assistants and clerical help; women reported less mentoring, less likelihood of promotion, and difficulty in networking and building collaboration than men. As Nyquist et al.(2000) put it, “Women felt much more isolated than men, less welcomed, less supported, and more often denigrated by male colleagues” (p. 39). Even though these researchers identified several specific impediments to career success, they did not define “career success.”
Fletcher and her colleagues go beyond job satisfaction in talking about inequities in the workplace as they relate to how success is conceptualized in the organizations they studied. Cleveland (2005) and Fletcher & Bailyn (2005) both theorize that women are not advancing at the same rate as men with similar backgrounds because the evaluation systems adopted by organizations are based on biased assumptions that privilege a single-earner household with no care-giving responsibilities for the employee. Research on families, however, reveals that this is a rare arrangement. Success, in the single-earner household model, is typically defined by a few stakeholders in the organization, such as the CEO, board members, and investors (Cleveland, 2005). These stakeholders are most often affluent white males who may not consider the lived experiences of those different from themselves. “Different” in this case, includes women and men who are sharing both income-producing and family care responsibilities. The assessment measures, though, are expected to apply to all organization employees (Cleveland, 2005).

In summary, the work of Fletcher, Bailyn and their colleagues argues that men and women take different approaches to how they accomplish work. Male workers have been found to be more concerned with outcomes, while female workers in these studies have been concerned with outcomes and with building and preserving relationships. Female workers have been more likely to recognize and acknowledge that even when they are responsible for a task, they do not accomplish the work products alone, and female workers are more likely to be concerned with maintaining positive relationships with those they work with. Building relationships at work is seen by women as integral to
producing, while men have been found to be more likely to discount relational work (Fletcher, 1995a, 1995b; Bailyn, 2005; Cleveland, 2005).

The observations that Fletcher and Bailyn (2005) arrived at emerged from observations, round-table meetings, shadowing specific employees, and interviews with some workers. They identified a culture of inequitable expectations that were biased against those with care responsibilities outside of work. Yet Fletcher and Bailyn (2005) do not show how employees, individually or as a group, interpreted the culture and its impact on their intra-organizational mobility. Their research reveals how they, as consultants and researchers visiting this workplace, interpret the discrepancies in definitions of career success, but not how the employees make sense of the organization’s and their own conceptions of career success. Fletcher and her colleagues have focused their attention on large, for-profit corporations. Similar studies do not appear in the literature on faculty. However, academic cultures are not free of speculation regarding what behaviors are rewarded. John Van Maanen (1980) wrote in detail about the speculation that surrounded his own tenure and promotion process, concluding that the actual decision process has a “black box” effect around it, and faculty only have observations about final decisions on which to base their predictions of who will or will not be promoted.

**Critical Theory and Organizational Communication**

Critical research, such as feminist research, is designed to free communicative behaviors from illegitimate constraints and to respect the needs of individuals, society, and organizations (Deetz & Kirsten, 1983).
Sterk and Turner (1994) advocate

... that communication and gender scholars look at the world in different ways, ways that structure social order less in terms of absolute power (and the hierarchies that accompany analyses based on power differentials) and more in terms of interdependence and care. (p. 217)

Rosener (1977) also sees potential for expanding that which is perceived as acceptable and effective in the workplace to include diverse perspectives. The idea of reframing organizations to be entities which are more responsive to individuals is not new. In 1992, Stanley Deetz conceptualized the corporate environment in which the dualities are not polarized, and in which multiplicity is privileged. He does not see this as utopian, but as a possibility. Rather than manager (administration) and employee (faculty) being constructed as in contest, he envisions a corporate culture that fosters autonomy, keeping a focus on efficiency and profit, and less on "managerialism." In other words, the managers and owners and workers could all focus on outcomes, profits, rather than on control and domination within the organization. New entrants into the organization could maintain their identities, their difference, and still succeed. Responsiveness could become a goal of organizations. Further, Deetz & Kirsten (1983), define organizations as communicatively constructed. Therefore, the study of communication in organizations is an integral part of defining the organization itself, the roles of the members, and the tasks and functions of each person in the organization. Each person's perceptions of the organization help to shape and define the organization itself, as Taylor explains:

Since organizations are abstract objects, they cannot be directly sensed [sic]; neither seen, nor heard, nor touched, nor smelled, as such. They can only be inferred, on the basis of second-hand information, or indicators, that is, things that
we read and are told, and such artifactual evidence as buildings, letterheads, annual reports, charts, and the like. (Taylor, 1993, p. 246)

Taylor (1993) goes on to clarify that organizations exist, but that they exist because of imposed structure, expectations and perceptions, not because of some natural order.

One useful way of conceptualizing organizations for communication scholars is to use the term "organizing." This allows us to see the organization, not as a stagnate entity, but as "a precarious, ambiguous, uncertain process that is continually being made and unmade" (Mumby & Stohl, 1996, p. 63). Mumby and Stohl (1996) go on to explain the connection between communication and organizing: "Communication, then, is the substance of organizing in the sense that through discursive practices organization members engage in the construction of a complex and diverse system of meanings" (p. 63).

Purpose of the study

The purpose of this study is to find out how faculty members conceptualize career success for themselves. Through collecting conceptions of career success from faculty, I advance an understanding of how faculty create and recreate conceptions of career success through talk.

Conceptualizing career success in an organization, or for and by individuals, is accomplished through talk. According to Weick (1995) “talk is the means by which people coordinate action, make decisions, carry out decisions, evaluate processes, establish and build, and maintain relationships” (p. 41). Through talk, people define and redefine themselves and their environment. Colleges and universities are sets of
relationships that are ongoing and constantly changing (Blumer, 1965). As with other types of group life, the university is, according to Blumer (1965):

composed of acting people, meeting a continuous flow of divergent situations, stimulating one another in diverse ways, and aligning their acts to one another in different patterns, regularizing and sustaining some patterns for periods of time, abandoning others, and introducing new arrangements under the contingency of new events. (p. 166)

Weick (1995) and Blumer (1965) explain the role of talk in defining the self and in coordinating action, but how exchanges in a university environment help faculty to construct their definitions of success, and how they talk about the university’s definition has yet to be researched. Faculty’s definitions of career success are interrelated with how they view possibilities for themselves, both career goals, and fears about possibilities in the future. In this study, I look at definitions of career success held by faculty, their perceptions of the universities’ definition of career success, their possible selves, and how faculty talk about career success and possible selves.

One set of research questions asks about definitions of success held by faculty and by colleges and universities, and another about how faculty talk about career success. The next set asks about gender differences in conceptualizing career success and in talking about career success. The remaining research questions ask about fears and constraints perceived by faculty, and how fears and constraints are talked about by faculty.

This study is designed to contribute to the organizational communication literature by describing how some faculty define success for themselves and to how faculty perceive their colleges’ or universities’ conceptions. This adds to the
organizational communication literature because researchers to date have interpreted the organizational definitions, rather than asking those affected to interpret it for themselves. How employees make meaning of the organizational definitions has implications for self-identity, job commitment and job satisfaction (Nyquist, Hitchcock and Teherani, 2000).

Careers and career success are integral to the definition of the self (Weber, 1946/2002), and one’s self-worth. When we meet someone, one of the things we ask to find out about who they are is “What do you do?” Jobs and the organizations we work for help to define who we are (Powell & Graves, 2003). Career success appears to be related to one’s ability to meet individual career goals. Nyquist, Hitchcock and Teherani (2000) found that factors that contribute to feelings of achievement among faculty are organizational factors such as availability of resources and a role in decision-making; job-related factors such as autonomy, workload and salary; and personal factors such as role conflicts. Research on possible selves (Markus and Nurius, 1986; Frazier & Hooker, 2006) found that adults develop views of their possible futures that motivate current behavior. Buzzanell, Meisenbach, Remke, Liu, Bowers and Conn (2005) found that through talk, both what is and what is not said, people construct their view of themselves, their roles in the workplace, and what success means to them.

Why Should Colleges and Universities Consider Changing?

Since hiring faculty is a lengthy and time-consuming process, colleges and universities find retention more cost-effective than conducting searches. Colleges and universities will find providing a culture that meets the needs of faculty to their advantage. The hierarchies, reward systems, values and communication styles of
organizations are slow to change. Kanter (1989) describes the disadvantages of bureaucratic organizations as too rules-oriented, overly concerned with status, power, authority, restrictive, and regimented processes. She recommends, instead, an approach to organizations that is concerned with results, that rewards output, not processes, and that keeps creativity flowing by encouraging new work teams, new combinations of people to interact. Kanter (1989, 1997) points out that the competition for talent is great, and that organizations benefit from retaining employees. Kanter (1989) recommends that organizations become responsive to the needs of not only consumers, but of employees: "Derive power from access and involvement, rather than from full control or total ownership" (p. 354). Understanding the needs of faculty, and what motivates them to work, such as how they conceptualize success for themselves, aids in retention of faculty. Powell and Graves (1993) found that women are very dedicated to organizations that are supportive of their professional development needs. While women are more likely than men to quit a job when they receive little recognition or advancement in a given period of time, women are much more likely to stay with an organization that offers rewards and professional development opportunities. Men, on the other hand, are more likely to choose to leave or to stay based on other factors.

As the forces of change (technology, global competition, Internet education) continue to weigh on corporations, those prepared to incorporate flexibility and adaptation into their corporate structures are more prepared for contemporary challenges than those who force disgruntled employees to rebel (Kanter, 1997).
Rather than focus on hierarchy, tradition, or the source of innovation, advice has consistently pointed to radical change centered around values relating to customer service, employee satisfaction, and empowerment.

Preview of Chapters

In Chapter 2 I review the literature related to this study, including a history of the changing work ethic, work-family balance literature in communication, and possible selves, career theory and conceptions of success. I also summarize the tenets of symbolic interactionism as a perspective from which to view the process of faculty making meaning from their discourses of success. Chapter ends with a presentation of research questions. Chapter 3 describes the methods used in the study, and Chapter 4 presents the analyses of data, both quantitative and qualitative. Chapter 5 discusses the findings and offers suggestions for further research.
CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Introduction

This chapter reviews the scholarly literature that provides the theoretical basis and background for the study. Symbolic interactionist theory is introduced, followed by a brief history of work and perceptions of the work ethic. The discussion of history leads to a review of private and public spheres in the study of work, and to communication research on conflicting demands between work and family. Finally, the chapter presents the theory of possible selves and its relationship to career success and the role of talk is explained. The rationale for the specific research questions advanced closes the chapter.

Theoretical Basis for the Study: Symbolic Interactionist Theory

In Symbolic Interactionism: Perspective and Method, Herbert Blumer (1986), built upon the social theory of George Herbert Mead to describe social interaction as symbolic: “human interaction is mediated by the use of symbols, by interpretation, or by ascertaining the meaning of one another’s actions. This mediation is equivalent to inserting a process of interpretation between stimulus and response in the case of human
behavior” (p. 79). Symbolic interaction is a particularly useful perspective for understanding definitional differences because of its emphasis on the meaning that people attribute to objects (including people and concepts). In the following I summarize the basic premises of symbolic interactionism.

Blumer (1986) describes three basic premises of symbolic interactionism. The first is that “human beings act toward things on the basis of the meanings that things have for them” (p. 2). The meanings that individuals hold for roles, people, actions, and reactions are the focus of symbolic interactionism. The second premise is that meaning arises out of interaction with others (Blumer, 1986). Meaning is neither in objects or concepts, nor in people, but emerges through communication. The third premise is that meanings are social products, “formed in and through the defining activities of people as they interact” (p. 5). People respond to things through “a process of interpretation” (p. 5). As Blumer (1986) describes the process, “the actor selects, checks, suspends, regroups, and transforms the meanings in the light of the situation in which he is placed and the direction of his action” (p. 5).

Society or group life is made of people’s ongoing actions. Through actions, people form rituals, roles, and all of the relationships people enact with one another (Blumer, 1986). While other perspectives recognize that human interaction is a process, symbolic interactionism is unique in emphasizing that “social interaction is a process that forms human conduct instead of being merely a means or a setting for the expression or release of human conduct” (Blumer, 1986, p. 8, italics in original).
Objects take on meaning through a process of interaction. Objects can be physical, social, or abstract. Because meanings of objects are based on interpretations, the same object can have various meanings for different people. This meaning can be revised through interaction with others. When objects hold the same meanings for members of a society or group, the common meaning emerges through “a process of mutual indications” (Blumer, 1986, p. 11). Because meanings emerge and transform through ongoing interaction, human behavior also changes in relation to emerging interpretations of the objects (including concepts) in their worlds.

To interpret the behaviors of others, one must have a self-concept. The self-concept emerges through interaction with others, based in part on how others act towards one. Through adopting the roles of others, one comes to interpret oneself as others do. The implication of the existence of the self is that one can make indications to oneself, “indications that he uses to direct his action” (Blumer, 1986, p. 13). The same emphasis on interpretation applies to group action as well as individual action. People communicate with one another through symbols, and arrive at interpretations that lead to actions.

Symbolic interactionism acknowledges the process of interpreting and acting as the process that maintains social behavior. Blumer (1986) states “It is the social process in group life that creates and upholds the rules, not the rules that create and uphold group life” (p. 19). The individual and the individual’s interpretations remain significant in society or in an organization. After actions are repeated a number of times and become routinized, the continuation of the routines may appear to be automatic; however, the
routines continue only as long as individuals performing the actions of the routine continue to base their actions on a given set of meanings. The meanings that lead to actions “are formed, sustained, weakened, strengthened, or transformed, as the case may be, through a socially defining process. Both the functioning and the fate of institutions are set by this process of interpretation as it takes place among the diverse sets of participants” (Blumer, 1986, p. 20). Norms, values and social rules are continued or revised through interaction. Joint actions are predicated on actions that occurred before. Even when actors recognize that changes are needed, their revised behavior is based on prior actions.

Consistent with the premises of symbolic interactionist theory, it is plausible to believe that faculty’s current conceptions of career success have emerged from their past conceptions and interactions. Understanding career conceptions, then, partially calls for reviewing past conceptions of work success that faculty may implicitly be using in their current conceptions. In the next section, I describe how current definitions of success in the US have evolved over time.

**Changing Work Values of Paid Labor in US History**

The “work ethic,” as defined by Lipset (1990), usually refers to hard work as a moral imperative. The Protestant work ethic that prevailed in the Colonies is still often called “the work ethic.” However, a review of the prevalent work values throughout the history of paid labor in the US reveals that shifts in values regarding work parallel industrial shifts that contribute to changing views of the role of work. Each era of work values in the US follows philosophical shifts in why people work and what constitutes
success, which were both made popular by influential writers and thinkers. The brief review that follows includes six shifts in the prevalent work values. While work values are not mutually exclusive and the preceding values seem to continue on, particular trends are apparent in prevalent work values. The first work value is usually referred to as the Protestant work ethic, followed by character, which gave way to an entrepreneurial spirit coupled with rugged individualism, and the two were replaced by a value of rationality, and followed by personality. This review ends with speculation about a new work ethic currently emerging. Some authors, such as Robert Reich (2001), former US Secretary of Labor, argue that the US is currently experiencing another shift, and that the new work ethic will emphasize relationships and relationship development. An understanding of the shifts in work values contributes to an understanding of views of work and what “success” and “career success” mean to employees.

The Protestant work ethic

Although religious values appear to underpin prevalent work values, Bernstein (1988) argues that work values emerge functionally from the social milieu. The ascetic work ethic can be traced to the writings of Martin Luther [1483-1546] (Weber, 2002) and other early Protestant writers such as John Calvin, John Knox and Gisbert Voet spanning from 1505 to 1676. The interpretation of their work ethic as related to the US work ethic was studied in depth by Max Weber’s analysis The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism (2002). In his famous study, Weber explains that the view of work as a worthwhile end in itself originates with Protestantism, along with work as a distraction from sin, as a moral imperative, and as fulfillment of one’s calling. While earlier
religions, Weber (2002) argues, had warned against the accumulation of wealth, the Protestant ethic only warned against “the resting upon one’s possessions and the enjoyment of wealth” (p. 104). The Apostle Paul admonishes his listeners “if anyone will not work, let him not eat” (Weber, 2002, p. 106). This view of working and living was especially useful in an agrarian economy, because labor produced food rather than wages, and workers could see a relationship between effort and survival, and the Protestant work ethic worked very well for the people who worked.

Bernstein (1988) argues that Martin Luther’s admonitions to work for its own moral virtue had secular motivations. Bernstein (1988) described three factors that most likely contributed to Luther seeing poverty as dangerous to society and encouraging him to build motivations to work into his sermons and writings. Beginning in 1500, Europe experienced a rapid increase in population, drastic price inflation (about 400% in 120 years), and a high rate of unemployment. Preachers, writers, and businessmen relied on religious justification for many years to encourage diligence and hard work from laborers (Bernstein, 1988). Cokley and his colleagues explain that the work ethic has come to reflect “a value system that stresses the moral value of work, self-discipline, and individual responsibility in forming a way to improve one’s economic well-being” (Cokley, Komarraj, Pickett, Shen, Patel, Belur & Rosales, 2007, p. 76). Through this construction of work, fiscal success and moral virtue are inexorably intertwined. Unemployment is conflated with sin and poverty with vice. Delayed gratification signifies personal inner strength. Failure signifies moral rectitude.
In an agrarian or artisanal economy, the relationship between one’s effort and material comforts is direct and obvious (Bernstein, 1997; Cherrington, 1980). Work could be seen as having a “task-orientation” in the agrarian and artisanal economy, while industrial capitalism brought about a more “time-discipline” characteristic to paid work. Cott’s (1977) detailed exploration of the lives of women in the US between 1790 and 1820 reveal that in the agrarian economy, socializing, tending to family or household duties and the work that produces income were intermingled. Tasks were dictated by conditions, such as the weather and the season being right for planting, and crops being ready for harvest. In a time-oriented economy, passing the time of day at work lacked urgency, because only the clock indicated when to work and when to stop. In pre-industrial society, merchants would intermingle socializing and household duties with running their business (Cott, 1977).

The Industrial Revolution brought about changes in the means of production, and the agrarian lifestyle which had dominated both Europe and the US became less prevalent (Tarnowieski, 1973). In Great Britain, the Industrial Revolution, the transition from a primarily agrarian economy to a primarily factory production economy, began in about 1750. In the US, the stage was set for the Industrial Revolution in 1793 when Eli Whitney invented the cotton gin (Teeple, 2002), along with the importation of the first steam engine from Britain in 1820. Workers were hired to build railroads, and by 1830, 3,000 miles of railroads crossed the northeast, and raw materials and finished products could be moved more efficiently (Stearns, 1993).
With the shift to an economy based on mass production of goods, workers were hired for a wage and fewer and fewer were residing on self-sufficient farms where their labors were directly tied to their food production, assembly of clothes, and cooking and heating fuel in the form of firewood. Instead, individuals were separated from their labor and the labor was a commodity to be traded. In factories, workers were paid for their time, and they were not motivated by a direct relationship between productivity and their take-home pay. Factory owners attempted to tie the labor to productivity to motivate workers through stock-option plans, profit-sharing and workers’ cooperatives, with little success. One plan that saw some success was piece-rates. “Piece-rates” are wages based on the number of pieces, or items, produced. As a motivator for workers, this inducement was limited to a small number of items that can be produced by one person, and counted at the end of the day. Among the incentive plans that industrialists experimented with, piece-rates, beginning about 1850, was the most successful and long-lived (Bernstein, 1997; Cherrington, 1980). As a motivator for workers, piece-rates allowed some autonomy for the workers, and directly rewarded production, and so was effective because workers could see what they produced and were less focused on the time that had passed (Cherrington, 1980).

High unemployment rates added to economic problems in Great Britain, other parts of Europe and the US. Displaced farmers and other workers immigrated to the US by the boatload, and almshouses appeared in Europe and the US. Not everyone had skills needed in the new economy, and many were left jobless and with no land for producing food or other goods (Bernstein, 1997). Religious leaders tried to encourage a work ethic
by preaching that idleness is the devil’s workshop, and that hard work is virtuous, but the admonitions fell on deaf ears (Bernstein, 1997). The wide gap between the classes became wider, and workers were not especially motivated by the Protestant work ethic. Although many preachers extolled the virtues of hard work, most of the paid labor force were men and the largest populations of church attendees were women and children (Cott, 1977). In an agrarian economy, each person could see the benefits of his or her labor, and were motivated because productivity and efficiency would directly benefit the worker. With hourly wages and only the corporate owner benefitting from efficiency, hard work does not appear advantageous to the laborer. Huber (1971) describes a preference among laborers for festival days and Mondays off, which brought up concern among factory owners regarding productivity. Festival days included ‘Lection Day, the last Wednesday in May when the representatives to the General Court were selected. Beginning in 1631 and stretching until banned in 1831, ‘Lection Day festivals with games, drinking, dancing and food, ran until the following Monday (Faler, 1974). A new ethic was needed that would be more palatable in the new economy.

Being poor was as horrifying as prison to some and the unemployed found ways around having to appeal to the Overseers, employees of the Board of Trustees, hired to make such decisions, for help. Dependent on the capitalist system, the shoemakers were subject to the vicissitudes of the economy. From 1837-44 the US saw a depression. The people of the manufacturing towns in New England helped each other by offering food to the hungry or loaning out a fishing boat to an unemployed friend. The shoemakers owned little, not even a cow or pig, and when incomes fell, people had nothing to fall back on.
The meager salaries did not allow for savings. Up and down the New England towns, volunteer-run cooperative stores were started. In this way, workers could keep prices low and working together, could keep their families fed. Workers had a life expectancy about twenty years shorter than farmers, and looked forward to working until they died because there was no retirement plan or personal savings for the later years.

The values and lack of self-discipline of the eighteenth century carried over to the nineteenth. Schools had trouble enforcing discipline, as the children learned none at home. School Boards decided that parents’ rights ended at the schoolhouse door, and so parents were to have no say in how children were disciplined in the school, and truant officers would seek children who did not attend.

*Character as a Value*

After the US won its independence from England in 1783, a strong industrial base emerged (Bernstein, 1997). Lynn, Philadelphia and New York were cites of growth and prosperity--for a few. In 1780, seven American corporations existed, but in just twenty years, the total grew to 335 (Bernstein, 1997). The early corporations included shoemakers in Lynn, Massachusetts, shipbuilders, the Bank of North America, and textiles such as wool and linen (Bernstein, 1997). Although industrial growth was the hallmark of the period, only a few benefited. Laborers saw that upward mobility and the potential for wealth was limited to a privileged few. Wage workers were offered some improvements in health, safety, and leisure, which did little to mollify workers. Wage workers continued to push for unionization, seeking job security and control they did not have individually (Bernstein, 1997). In 1830, Lynn, Massachusetts saw its first trade
union, and its first strike five years later. The Great Strike in Lynn occurred in 1860 when 20,000 cordwainers and shoemakers went on strike for better wages and working conditions, but had the effect of workers losing their independence as steam power and mechanization was put in place (Bernstein, 1997; Dawley & Faler, 1976; Faler, 1974). From 1830 to 1860, Philadelphia saw 61 labor strikes. Worker unrest was rampant in New York and Pittsburgh as well. A middle, or management class, emerged. Managers maintained control over workers (Bernstein, 1997). Trade with China opened up, and the French Revolution offered opportunities for those in the shipping industry to accumulate wealth.

In the pre-industrial economy, the means of production was directly related to effort, and each person could see tangible fruits of their labor. In the pre-industrial colonies, a strong work ethic prevailed (Bernstein, 1997), but during the Industrial Revolution, Benjamin Franklin and other leaders noticed a shift in the perception of the value of work (Rose, 1985). Franklin published treatises on the virtue of character, promoting a secular view of the individual as honorable if one exhibits industry and frugality. Franklin published *Poor Richard’s Almanac* annually from 1732-1758 and often brought up the virtues of industry and frugality (Cherrington, 1980). Franklin used the name Richard Saunders to create a married man who was often nagged by his wife, starting a long tradition of American folk humor (Isaacson, 2003). Franklin also took advantage of the opportunity to promote character as a virtue through his newspaper, the *Pennsylvania Gazetteer*, published twice weekly (Isaacson, 2003). Franklin was both an example to the Enlightenment of the self-made man and one of the most widely read
success writers (Huber, 1971). Isaacson (2003) found that *The Way to Wealth*, which explained “character” was printed in 145 editions and seven languages in forty years. In *The Way to Wealth* and Franklin’s *Autobiography*, Franklin explains how to develop character. Character is chiefly formed through industry and frugality, which he considered cardinal virtues (Huber, 1971). Franklin adds to these “temperance, silence, order, resolution, sincerity, justice, moderation, cleanliness, tranquility, chastity, and humility” (Huber, 1971, p. 17; Mapp, 2003). Franklin carefully lays out a plan for a young man to develop these virtues in which each virtue takes precedence for a week with four rotations per year. Through constant practice, the virtues become part of one’s identity (Huber, 1971; Isaacs, 2003). While these virtues were not at odds with asceticism, Franklin’s purposes in promoting character as a work ethic were secular. Isaacson (2003) pointed out that these are secular virtues, and self-serving. Franklin believed, according to Huber (1971), that it was easier to be generous and virtuous with full pockets. His view of poverty as both a temptation to the soul and evidence of lack of will made his writings very useful to industrialists of the late eighteenth century (Bernstein, 1997; Huber, 1971). Besides enjoying his jibes at elitism, the public valued Franklin’s opinions and wisdom. His detailed plan for developing individual attributes that aided in interpersonal business success fit well with the new sensibilities developing in Philadelphia and throughout the US. With greater development of industrial centers and a broader public sphere than an agrarian lifestyle allowed, people were moving away from being identified only as their role in their family, and were being seen as individuals. The cultural milieu was ripe for the concept of “character” to become
acceptable (Bernstein, 1997). Personal character as a cultural value developed and working hard came to be associated with one’s identity, part of what defines individuals. (Huber, 1971). People began taking pride in their work again, but this time for the secular motivation of work’s contribution to “building character” (Cherrington, 1980). Once again, laborers could see a personal advantage to hard work.

Consistent with Huber (1971) and Cherrington (1980), Faler (1974) corroborated the need for a work ethic such as character when he found that from about 1783 to the turn of the nineteenth century, most of the business owners worked in small shops with local patrons who did not keep them busy. They chatted away mornings with hot punch, porter, brandy, and eating cheese and bread and chatting away the mornings. A few noticed that these habits decreased productivity and chose restraint instead. In manufacturing, a few drinks in the afternoon were common. Time did not seem pressing since their businesses did not demand that they be constantly productive. Drinking was a common engagement, and any excuse would do. All enjoyed liquor, including clergy, men, women and children (Faler, 1974). Some who were exporting products did not engage in the morning conversations, and began to accumulate wealth. The manufacturers of Lynn, beginning to practice frugality and temperance, realized that these virtues were needed from their workers as well. According to Faler (1974), around 1828, the attitude toward the poor changed. The poor represented the lazy, the intemperant, the morally bereft. Aid to the poor was changed from credits that the poor used in local stores to necessities that the Overseers at the Alms House handed out at their own discretion. To add to the humiliation of being poor, physicians refused to serve
anyone whose head of household was poor and a drunkard. Bodies not claimed from the
morgue within 24 hours were donated for medical research. This practice aided science
while not affecting the citizens who did not want family members’ bodies opened up for
research.

The Industrial Revolution brought changes in not only how work was performed,
but who performed it, and for what reasons. In the agrarian economy, women worked at
home, helping with the production of food, clothes and fuel to meet daily needs (Huber,
1971; Bernstein, 1997). Women would spin wool or cotton, weave cloth and sew clothes
(Cott, 1977). As some factories began, women could take their cotton or wool to the
neighborhood mill to be carded. Small neighborhood factories along rivers could also
grind flour and saw wood, so that some of the more time-consuming and laborious work
was made easier by technological advances. Because the population was fairly widely
distributed and transportation of goods was difficult and time-consuming, the small
factories mainly complemented home production (Dublin, 1979). Women and children
were hired through a “putting-out” system to make clothes, in which the factory owners
would assign particular items to each home, provide the cloth, and pay for the completed
items. The money earned by women and children added to the household income, while
still allowing women to work at home. A widespread character ethic was needed to
continually reinforce the labor force.

Changes in the way work was produced, movement away from an agrarian
economy, and belief in equality of opportunity affected change in perceptions of
individualism. In the preindustrial economy, individualism was suffused with a deference
to authority that was missing from the individualism of the mid-1800’s. Dawley and Faler (1976) describe the shifts in perceptions of values:

At one time industry had meant hard work; now it was redefined as devotion to a methodical work routine. Frugality was once consistent with charity; now it became associated with a definition of poverty as crime and a new stringency in poor relief. Temperance once meant moderation in drinking habits and prudent sexuality; now it was redefined as total abstinence and prudish sexuality. Thus, the new values were the result of the reassertion of traditional attitudes in new surroundings and represent both the effort of preindustrial America to keep itself going along traditional lines and the failure of that effort. (p. 467).

In 1813, the first fully integrated textile factory began operating in Waltham, MA. The beginning of industrialization coincided with a large influx of Irish immigrants, movement of Northerners toward the west, and movement of the young to urban centers. Changes in the distribution of population meant more workers were available for factories. The main work that women did in the home, carding and weaving, was being done cheaply in factories. For the first time, young women could work outside the home for wages (Dublin, 1979). Throughout the nineteenth century, domestic service remained the largest occupation for women, followed by teaching and sewing. But the trend for women to work in industry was firmly established, and many young women moved to urban areas in the East, such as Lowell, MA and worked and lived with other women, renting housing from their employers and socializing with other women (Dublin, 1979).

Stearns (1993) frames the Industrial Revolution in the US as between 1850 and 1900. Although he credits the US with creating the cotton gin much earlier, most of the industrial innovations came from Europe. The British had developed railroad technology, and the US was behind Britain in transportation development. Only a year after the first British locomotive arrived, locomotives were being manufactured in the US. Local lines
in the Northeast were soon followed by 3,000 miles of tracks by 1840. Trains were soon followed by canals to help in the transportation of raw materials and goods. At first, workers were few and wages were high to induce workers away from their farms. Women began to work in factories, planning to save a “nest egg” and then return to their farms. In the 1830’s conditions worsened, followed by strikes. Immigration from Ireland in the 1840’s led to a surplus of workers, and conditions worsened in the urban areas. Defense industries grew during the Civil War, and when the war ended, the US began its long tradition of selling arms to other countries (Stearns, 1993).

In the 1870’s Andrew Carnegie reduced the cost of steel production through a new process. Mining increased the use of steam engines for manufacturing and transportation. The number and size of factories increased. By 1900 over 1,000 US companies employed between 500 and 1000 workers, and 450 companies employed over 1000 workers (Stearn, 1993). Investment banks helped companies continue to expand, but US banks did not have as much capital as British banks, so US companies remained in international debt until World War I. Britain’s Industrial Revolution overtook large quantities of farmland, unlike the US, where food production continued. The US increased large production farms through use of tractors and farming equipment. While Britain became dependent on imports for food, she was able to export technology (Stearns, 1993).

The US exported management practices based on time and motion studies and control of workers. The efficient use of workers was predicated by early worker shortages. Electrical and manufacturing innovations helped propel industrialization.
Manufacturing led to specific industrial needs, which inspired innovations in dyes, chemical fertilizers, and explosives. The Revolution which had begun in Britain and included much of Europe also took over the US.

While the US public continued to espouse free enterprise, big business grew and the government aided industrial expansion through land grants and protective tariffs. Beginning in the 1870’s and continuing through the 1890’s, a depression, starting with several US banks failing, spread across the US and Europe. Manufacturing was outstripping demand, and wages fell as demand for goods fell. The US was exporting relatively cheap food, mass produced, and European peasants had trouble selling their goods. The depression led to stricter laws regarding imports and a search for new markets abroad, increasing imperialism (Stearns, 1993).

An oft-ignored demographic in labor history is minority labor, especially minority women. Boris and Kleinberg (2003) found that African-American women comprised one-fourth of female labor in 1900, and one half of the female agricultural labor. Mexican, Japanese, Russian, Chinese and Native American women were most of the grape-pickers (Boris and Kleinberg, 2003).

The Industrial Revolution continued into the nineteenth century, leading to urbanization and changes in views of work and leisure. More factories sprang up, and workers moved to urban areas to be close to the factories for jobs, and because they no longer required a tract of land large enough to produce food and clothing to meet their family’s needs (Cherrington, 1980). The labor class worked longer hours with little reprieve, and with little to show for their efforts. Federal intervention led to Labor Laws,
and work days were shortened from fourteen hours to ten, and children under ten were free from factory labor (Cherrington, 1980). Even though these changes were legislated from outside the labor class, within 20 years workers felt they had earned the right to more leisure time, and fair treatment from an employer became a reason to work for that company (Rose, 1985). The character ethic can be credited for continuing to make businesses successful.

The Fair Labor Laws, designed to protect children from overwork, reduced the income of many families. After the Fair Labor Laws were in place, men began to push for a Family Wage. With a Family Wage, one man could work and earn enough to support his family, and his wife could stay home. In the 1820’s and 1830’s, the family wage was intended to allow wives to stay home; children were not added until the 1890’s. Some saw the labor of children as detrimental to their education, and therefore the future of the workforce, and families resented having to send their children to work to just earn a subsistence for the family (May, 1982). The push for a family wage was intended to increase earnings enough that one wage-earner could support a family and be prepared for periods of hardship. Most salaries would only support one person. The push for a family wage emerged from the lower class, since middle- and upper-class families were predominantly reliant on one salary. The dominant ideology held that poverty was a result of an individual failing. If one were indigent or unemployed, one lacked moral character (May, 1982). The second premise of the family wage was that men should be the wage earner. The predominant ideology of the day valued women as part of the private sphere, as part of being a “virtuous woman” (May, 1982, p. 403). In building an
argument for a family wage, trade unionists lobbied to redefine adult women as “dependents” in the US census, which had the effect of devaluing domestic labor (Folbre, 1991). By 1930, Alfred Marshall cautioned against raising women’s wages in *Principles of Economics, 8th ed.* because they may be tempted away from household duties (Folbre, 1991).

May (1982) explains that the “family wage” implied that a breadwinner should be able to earn enough to support his family. If that were to happen, wives could be free of the responsibility of earning an income, and could focus on domestic duties. The assumption was that men were to be the breadwinners, which increased wives’ dependency on the husband. Also, single women, whether they had children or not, received lower wages and could not independently earn enough to take care of their families (Kessler-Harris & Sacks, 1987). The emphasis on the family, rather than the worker, helped the movement for a family wage gain momentum (May, 1982). The prevalent view was that if married women worked, their labor in the workforce came at a high price for the family. “Working mothers’ neglect of the duties of nurturing and properly socializing their children was viewed as detrimental to the future of the human race, a social problem that could be addressed by adequate male wages” (May, 1982, p. 404). Women and men had different minimum wages. While the family wage was the ideology, the reality for workers was much different. Families may have had only one recorded wage-earner, or lived in poverty, or received charity, conditions which indicate the male head of household was not receiving a living wage (May, 1982). The family
wage existed only in certain fields, such as skilled trades, and due to economic shifts, disappeared and re-appeared over time.

Samuel Gompers, the first president of the American Federation of Labor (AFL), starting in 1886, took only one year off until 1924, when he died. Gompers had great faith in American capitalism as good for everyone, and opposed revolution and socialism. He did believe in fighting for, and even striking for, specific changes such as an eight-hour day, better working conditions, a Bureau of Labor Statistics, and a cabinet post for a Secretary of Labor (Skolosky, 1932/1971). The AFL was dedicated to crafts people, and fought for shorter hours and better wages, seeking ways to help crafts people keep their jobs. The AFL opposed immigration, limited union membership, limited apprenticeships, and controlled output so that all craftspeople could produce about the same amount. Skolosky (1932) pointed out that the emphasis on craftspeople prevented the union from fully including all workers. As new industries emerged, the laborers were not craftspeople and had no place in the AFL. Skolosky (1932/1971) described the connection between industrialism and rugged individualism:

The basic assumption of the capitalist craft union is that labor differs from capital only occupationally and that the personalities of either group are interchangeable. Therefore, within the craft union, rugged individualism is strict doctrine, for each man sees himself as a Charles Schwab or a Henry Ford. Hope burns eternal in the laborer’s breast that he may become a boss. (p. 13-14)

Because each laborer imagined himself a boss, he dared not be too vehement about the union, and remained relatively weak. Two exceptions, however, are: Wilson supported the federation during the war, and Franklin Roosevelt appeared to during recovery (Skolosky, 1932/1971).
Rugged Individualism

With the Industrial Revolution well under way, the drive westward began, and to the value of character was added a spirit of rugged individualism (Tarnowieski, 1973). Along with the growth of industry and the push westward, two other factors affected the economy—greater class delineation, and the entrepreneurial spirit. The Protestant work ethic and the character value both placed the family at the center of moral values. People worked to support their dependents, and their character was defined by how they treated others. The Industrial Revolution, by the mid-1800’s, was expanding opportunities for all: women were more independent because they could earn a wage; capitalism carried the promise of wealth for any entrepreneurial man; and opportunities for exploration and settlement in the new Frontier attracted the adventurous. A new ethic was called for, one that Dawley and Faler (1976) describe as locating “the virtues of self-control, self-denial, and self-improvement at the center of the moral universe” (p. 466). Previous ethics had valued personal subordination to others, and some traditionalists resisted the new individualism as more fitting to industrialists than to laborers (Dawley & Faler, 1976).

According to Dawley and Faler (1976), some of the factory owners in their study of the Lynn, MA shoe production industry shared the values of the new individualism with some of their laborers. Self-denial, self-discipline and self-improvement were virtues that factory owners could adopt for themselves, and value in their employees, except that they had very different ideas about the relationship between the factory
owners and their wealth. Faler (1974) provides further argument for the appropriateness of Lynn for a look at the values in the pre-industrial US because it was home to The Society for Industry, Frugality and Temperance, beginning in 1826. The Society’s charter members included several of the shoe factory owners, one of whom was also a banker, and one of whom was also the postmaster. Other members included the town’s first lawyer, and representatives from all of the faiths, which were very strong in Lynn due to a very successful revival movement which began in 1790 and lasted about thirty years. The Society soon grew and included most of the shoe factory owners in Lynn.

According to Faler (1974), the history of shoe making in Lynn began around 1750. At first, a few journeymen made the shoes from start to finish. A couple may have had apprentices, but mostly individuals assembled the shoes completely by hand. With the Revolution, though, English imports were expelled from the country. After ratification of the Constitution, tariffs on shoe imports increased their costs, and improvements in transportation around the same time increased sales of shoes from Lynn. More and more residents left farming and engaged in the shoe-making industry. To speed the process, cordwainers (shoemakers) requested assistance from their wives and children to sew the upper leather portions, and the journeymen focused on assembling the final products. Structures were built to accommodate more workers. Faler (1974) found that while the shoemaking industry was expanding in Lynn, male wage earners could work in Essex building ships. Therefore, women employed their knowledge of sewing in the shoe industry. From about 1790 to 1860, Lynn itself operated like a large but decentralized factory. Women sewed the uppers and returned them to the shoemakers or to the bosses;
leather dealers, binders (those who sewed the uppers), and shoe makers (those who attached uppers to soles and completed fittings). The shoemakers usually owned their own tools but received the leather and other supplies from the manufacturers. While most of the binders worked from their homes, the shoemakers had small shops. The putting-out system required immense coordination. Faler (1974) found that the requirements of this system forged “the values that made up the new industrial morality (p. 374). As with other manufacturers throughout the US, they worked hard, were self-reliant, self-disciplined, resourceful and shrewd (Faler, 1974). By the 1860s when the first factory with machinery was built, Lynn was already well-known for its manufacturing of shoes (Faler, 1974). Dawley and Faler (1976) provide an extensive analysis of how the new individualism, beginning around 1830, affected the working class in the Lynn, Massachusetts shoe manufacturing industry. Lynn was chosen for the analysis for several reasons. One was that the shoe industry, the second largest industry in the US at the time (textiles was the largest) was centered in Lynn. Secondly, the shoe industry was entirely US-based, with all of the raw materials produced in the US. Third, the shoe industry had a class-system even among the laborers, with the cutters being the most highly-skilled and highly paid, with other laborers. Fourth, the laborers had among them both traditionalists, who were accepting of current conditions and were satisfied as long as their weekly rum-ration and Saturday nights and Monday mornings off continued. Workers would refuse to work unless they received a half pint of liquor per day as part of their wages (Faler, 1974). Finally, the Lynn shoe industry was chosen because the individualist laborers, considered rebels at the time, forged unions and labor class
activism approaches that had far-reaching effects for the labor-class throughout the US. Their criticisms of industrial capitalism forged the ideas that continued to be used by the National Labor Union, the Eight-Hour Movement, and the Knights of Labor after the Civil War. With a mixture of workers and attitudes, Lynn was a microcosm of the larger country. One group of the Lynn shoe laborers, the “rebels” (Faler, 1974) were educated, self-disciplined, and interested in affecting change. They did not see the factory-owners control of manufacturing capital as giving them any special status, because the raw materials, without the labor to transform them into shoes, had no value, and the rebels characterized the owner who did not actually perform labor in the factory as parasitic (Dawley & Faler, 1976) or “plundering drones” (Faler, 1974). The rebels started cooperative stores and their own lending library. They saw the factory owners as controlling, and felt that lack of education made them more subject to external control. They also eschewed alcohol, as it also controlled the individual. The rebels started the Good Samaritan Temperance Society, which did not judge the drinkers, but tried to help them overcome their addiction. Another group of workers, the traditionalists, held to eighteenth century values and beliefs. They did not value self-discipline, nor did they discipline their children. They continued to drink and dance, and did not believe others had the right to control their behavior. A third group of workers was the loyalists. They went along with the manufacturers in such issues as temperance, self-discipline, education reform, and treating the poor harshly. Even though they were paid laborers, many were close relatives of the factory owners. These differences helped to limit views
of the common problems of the shoemakers, so a well-developed class consciousness did not emerge.

The rebels learned from the temperance movement how to organize and motivate the shoemakers. In 1860, even the loyalists had lost patience with the manufacturers. The rebel shoemakers were successful in organizing a strike of shoe industry workers that included 20,000 binders and shoemakers (Faler, 1974).

In 1832 the Lynn Society for the Promotion of Industry, Frugality and Temperance dropped “industry” and “frugality” from its name, convinced that “temperance” would take care of the other two. The Breeds, Nathan and Isaiah, were manufacturers and real estate owners. They exerted control of drinking by hiring and renting to only teetotalers, and forebade alcohol on their premises. By 1843 changes had occurred throughout the country in attitudes toward work, alcohol, and leisure. The idea of rugged individualism included being prepared (not under the influence) for what may occur, and in working hard to establish a unique self, and a business that is integrated into the community.

Historian Howard Zinn (1999) found that after the Civil War, freed slaves in the South began to take advantage of newly acquired rights. Freedmen voted, ran for public office, enrolled their children in public schools, and availed themselves of public services. President Lincoln required that southern states accept new constitutional amendments before rejoining the Union. However, after Lincoln’s assassination, new President Andrew Johnson did not enforce acceptance of the Constitutional Amendments, and southern states could more easily rejoin the Union. Although Johnson and the Senate
clashed, many of the rights granted to freedman were rescinded or ignored. Although there were black senators elected in every Southern state, the Black Reconstruction was short-lived. The last black left congress in 1901. Zinn (1999) reports racism both from blacks towards whites, and whites toward blacks. While union troops remained in the South, laws protecting freedman were followed, but violence against blacks was rampant.

The Presidential election of 1877 ended by tipping the scales against freedmen. Hayes and Tilden were close with electoral votes from three states to be counted. Hayes promised to remove the Union troops from the southern states if the count went his way; Hayes won the electoral vote even though Tilden won the popular vote. Laws were passed that prohibited blacks from owning land, voting, and holding some jobs.

Minority workers took the concept of rugged individualism to heart and began their own businesses, often small businesses in their own communities. Levenstein (2004) studied the entrepreneurial patterns of white and black men and women in 1910. She found that black entrepreneurialism was greater in 1910 than in 1990. Levenstein argued that the exclusive practices of the marketplace in 1910 forced blacks to either start a business or to work for themselves. Waldinger, Aldrich and Ward (1990) found that ethnic groups are often inclined to start businesses as an alternative to employment. Immigrants and minority groups who are blocked from wage-earning may find that the long hours of business ownership offer the best return on their investment. In addition, minorities are often living in a community with similar people, so they have a local base of support in which to start their businesses. While the numbers of business owners were consistent among black and white business owners in 1910, there were three important
differences. Although overall, men owned more businesses than women, black women owned more businesses than white women, and more than black men. A large proportion of black business owners were in agriculture (74%), and a large number of self-employed women were in domestic service (Levenstein, 1994). Previous unemployment in an individual’s history indicated that the individual would be less likely to start a business. African-American entrepreneurs were more likely to start a business if they lived in an African-American community. This trend supports the idea that minority businesses are often reliant on local customers, so the chances of the business surviving was best if situated in the minority’s community (Levenstein, 1994).

*Rationality as a Work Value*

By the turn of the twentieth century, a new rationality began to influence culture and work, especially in larger manufacturing industries. Judgments in this era relied on rational explanations, and means of production were seen as rational solutions to the need for production of goods. “Taylorism” led to control and authoritarianism, with management attempting to eke the most out of each hour of each person’s labor (Bernstein, 1997). Frederick Winslow Taylor believed that the way to maximize productivity was to remove discretion from the laborers. Taylor, and the industrialists who implemented his methods, believed that given discretion, workers would slow productivity. Taylor circumvented that possibility by placing control and discretion in the hands of management (Yankelovich & Immerwahr, 1984). Scientific management was highly efficient in manufacturing, and industries who employed Taylor’s methods prospered. According to Yankelovich and Immerwahr (1984), what workers lacked in
autonomy in the workplace, they made up for in buying power. The ability to purchase consumer goods offered the laborer tangible rewards that they could flaunt, and a feeling of accomplishment. The accomplishment of production was not dependent on a work ethic among the laborers, and in fact, did not expect the workers to embrace the work ethic. Workers need to only come to work and keep pace with the line (Yankelovich & Immerwahr, 1984). Taylorism provided the rational means to give management control of the workers through controlling the mechanisms of the production line. Rugged individualism had given way to rationality as a work value.

One of the influences on how people view work is the compensation they receive from it. In 1914, the Ford Motor Company announced a wage of five dollars per day. Henry Ford wanted a stable work force, and he decided that by paying workers twice the rate of his competitors, he could increase stability (May, 1982). The living wage carried with it the advantage to the company of suppressing unionizing efforts. Ford also encouraged the men to purchase homes, and retained a lawyer to help employees secure loans for homes. He encouraged the traditional family by refusing to hire married women unless their husbands could not work, and staffing a Sociological Department of male investigators who made sure that men lived in a home that met their standards of cleanliness, and demonstrated thrift. Otherwise, the workers did not qualify for the Five Dollar Day. The practices of the Ford Motor Company had implications for social control. The requirements for the Five Dollar Day were that the men were married to women who stayed at home. While the Five Dollar Day was ostensibly initiated to

42
increase Ford’s position in the market, the practices associated with it increased the control Ford maintained over workers and their families.

An increase in class distinction led to a new value for women, that of being a “lady.” This new image overshadowed the “housewife” as the ideal for women, and emphasized women’s “qualities of personal nurturance and their civilizing influence on husbands and children” (Folbre, 1991).

Class distinction also affected black workers. While German and Irish immigrants were ascending the economic ladders, black workers found themselves not only unable to ascend, but barely able to find work. Job discrimination was not new; in the North even before the Civil War, black workers were pushed out of skilled trades by the European immigrants, and even the semi-skilled trade jobs were filled by white Europeans (Bernstein, 1997). In 1847, while steel, iron and tool industries were expanding, less than one-half of one percent of Black workers could find work in Philadelphia. Many black people were politically active, and won the vote in 1870 (Bernstein, 1997). But the vote did not help as much as they had hoped. Discrimination continued in many Northern cities, such as Newark, New York, Springfield, Ohio and Springfield, Illinois. Some of the discrimination faced by black people was codified through “Jim Crow Laws.” In 1883, The Supreme Court ruled on an interpretation of the equality laws which said that black and white patrons of white-owned businesses did not have to hire black workers and that patrons to restaurants and theaters could seat and serve the races separately. In 1896, the Supreme Court (Plessy v. Ferguson) ruled that Separate but Equal services were sufficient, and blacks were separated from whites in railroad transportation. The law
was interpreted broadly, and separate facilities and services of all types were established. By 1895, 80 percent of adult blacks in Philadelphia, for example, were employed in domestic service or as laborers. The National association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) was formed in 1909 to help push for better schools, salaries and working conditions for black workers (Shannon, 1994). Little improvement occurred early in the century, with immigrants from Europe receiving better jobs, better working conditions, and better opportunities for economic advancement (Bernstein, 1997). Schools remained separate (and unequal) until 1954 when the Supreme Court reversed its interpretation and integration began (Shannon, 1994). Ninety years had passed since slavery ended, and the Supreme Court finally began taking action that helped move toward equality in *Brown v. The Board of Education*, when the Court finally overturned the “Separate but Equal” decision (Zinn, 1999). Inequality in the schools had contributed to the future of African-Americans because the black students received a very poor education (Shannon, 1994).

Even with the unequal opportunities offered to racial minorities, black women have outstripped white men and women in their percentage of employment since 1900 (Figart, Mutari & Power, 2002). Black women have been forced to clean for white people since 1900. Figart et al. (2002) found that until about 1940, black women were employed as much as 20% more than white people, male or female. Many of the black women who were employed used their money to support their families. Black men were blocked from higher paying jobs, so women found work necessary to maintain their families.
Two cities that gained a reputation for better opportunities for black workers were Pittsburgh and Cleveland. In these cities, blacks were hired in factories, so even though the area appeared favorable, blacks remained in unskilled jobs. During World War I, more blacks were hired to fill positions left open by soldiers (Bernstein, 1997). The period from 1915 to 1940, the Great Migration, saw many blacks leaving the South for Northern cities. In Cleveland there were black lawyers and other professionals, but these were few. Even the AFL, an organization ostensibly begun to help laborers, excluded blacks. In 1905, the long-time leader of the AFL mentioned in a speech in Minneapolis that the caucasian workers would not let others, he specifically mentioned blacks and Asian workers, take “their” jobs. Because the black workers were not protected by the union, when the unions held strikes, blacks would report to work, thereby being labeled “strikebreakers” (Bernstein, 1997).

In 1936 Walter Reuther started the CIO. The AFL had emphasized skilled trades, and the CIO organized semi-skilled and unskilled laborers. The CIO, as an organization, welcomed black members, but over the objections of some white members. Also, because of discrimination in hiring, there were still few black workers. By 1940 though, the longshoremen’s union had a black membership of 30% (Bernstein, 1997). During World War II black employment in defense industries increased. Due to threats of a march on Washington D.C., Roosevelt ordered that a nondiscrimination clause be added to defense contracts (Bernstein, 1997). Roosevelt also established the Committee on Fair Employment Practices, charged with seeing that the defense industry was carrying out the
order. While there was some improvement in hiring and promotion, the overall employment outlook for blacks was not similar to white workers.

Labor unions continued to push for higher wages and better conditions for workers. With workers wanting shorter hours, and little regulation of capitalism, managers and especially owners wanted to maximize the labor they had; the stage was set for Taylorism. Frederick Taylor revolutionized working lives with time and motion studies, in which he recommended ways to work to maximize efficiency (Bernstein, 1997; Russ-Eft and Preskill, 2001). Economic growth surged—for a few. Andrew Carnegie and John D. Rockefeller were exemplars of the potential of the entrepreneurial spirit (Bernstein, 1997). They understood capitalism and embraced its principles, that when left to the market, it will, as Rose (1985) explains, “produce the greatest good for the greatest number of persons” (p. 32). In the corporations of industrialists such as Carnegie and Rockefeller, implementation of Taylor’s methods led to workers producing very well. They did not want to be perceived as obscene in their wealth, and their character ethic was framed by P.T. Barnum as a “stewardship of wealth.” Besides being very good at capitalism, Carnegie and Rockefeller were philanthropists, and their generosity made their appropriation of labor tenable (Cherrington, 1980). Work was not valued for its own sake, but for the accumulation of wealth. Emphasis was on opportunity, competition, even aggressiveness in pursuit of wealth. Ideas regarding hard work as a virtue for its own sake, and honesty as a hallmark of character had faded (Bernstein, 1997). Rationality and top-down control pervaded work, especially manufacturing. Workers continued to press for better conditions and higher wages.
From 1860 to 1920, the population of the US tripled, but production of manufactured goods increased by twelve or fourteen times, producing more than the market could bear (Bernstein, 1997). The efficiency of manufacturing methods allowed many items to be produced that could be offered at an affordable price to workers. The economy shifted to one of surplus, and people did not feel compelled to be self-sufficient, so farming was less common. Many took advantage of the availability of goods, and accumulated things as an indicator of wealth and status. Salesmanship became important as a way to sell culture or cultural artifacts to those who did not need it. Workers could use the money they earned to buy things such as clothes or cars to make them stand out as individuals from their co-workers. The “work ethic” was related more to the market power one commanded, not to the personal satisfaction of work itself (Rose, 1985). Young & Young (2002) found that in 1932, 40 million Americans were at poverty level. With less demand for goods, factory work decreased. The only jobs were clerical or domestic, so women began working outside the home in greater numbers to support their families. However, 75% of women believed that if their husbands worked, they should not, to leave jobs for men with families (Young & Young, 2003). For racial minorities, the situation was worse. During the depression, Black skilled laborers lost wages faster than white men (Young & Young, 2003). The National Recovery Administration (NRA) was established to provide aid, but since the aid was based on past wages, Blacks received less aid. An example, according to Young and Young (2003), was the sharecroppers in the South where Blacks earned as much as 70% less than white
sharecroppers in need of aid. Many blacks had to leave their land. The disparity between aid for Whites and for Blacks was so great that the NRA was referred to as “Negro Run-Around” and “Negroes Rarely Allowed” (Young & Young, 2003).

The stock market crash of 1929 led to re-evaluation of values and labor--work again was redefined. Now work was difficult, and labor did not produce as much wealth as it once did. According to Young and Young (2003) from 1929 to 1932, the consumer price index dropped nearly 20%. Individuals had been purchasing everything but housing with cash, and were very reliable about paying their debts. The Depression saw increases in credit, including cars and department store purchases (Young & Young, 2003). With World War II, though, came opportunities, and another shift in the view of work and its relationship to the individual. Work was seen as patriotic, and a duty. More government programs brought more evaluation and control to the workplace.

People were still perceived as individuals, but character as a value gave way to personality, partly attributable to the popularity of Dale Carnegie’s How to Win Friends and Influence People, first published in 1939 (Bernstein, 1997). Dale Carnegie seemed to have learned from the public relations efforts around his father’s era, and emphasized appearances over substance. Carnegie’s book laid out ways to get people to like you, to think like you want them to, and to change them without offending them. B. C. Forbes contributed to personality as a work ethic when he emphasized the role of pleasing others in getting ahead (Bernstein, 1997). Cherrington (1980) described the personality ethic as a challenge to the traditional work ethic because it did not extol the virtues of hard work, but pointed to being likable as the road to wealth. The personality ethic was about
appearances and being liked. The advantage of hard work was called into question by those who bought into Carnegie’s way of thinking, and since eight million copies of his book were sold by 1971, his followers were many (Cherrington, 1980). Who one knew came to outweigh both what one knew and what one did. The way to wealth and power was through other people by making friends and impressing the boss. The purpose of wealth was for oneself, rather than the benefit of society as Franklin would have his readers believe (Bernstein, 1997; Cherrington, 1980). In 1938 the Fair Labor Standards Act outlawed most remaining child labor. Those persons aged over 15 though could still work.

During the 1938 recession, 10 million were unemployed in the US. Two million of those seeking employment were between the ages of 15 and 24, and a large percentage of those were African-American (Young & Young, 2003). However, the education of youth increased, and 85% of children between five and seventeen were in school by 1939. Higher education increased as well: in 1930 one million students were enrolled in college; by 1939, 1.5 million were enrolled (Young & Young, 2003). Yet, due to the economic depression and lack of funds, some schools were forced to close. Between 1930 and 1934 the number of teachers employed in elementary and secondary schools dropped by 25,000. By the late 1930’s, spending again increased and children returned to school (Young & Young, 2003). After high school, not everyone wanted college, and there were few jobs, so 250,000 youths traveled the US, mostly riding the rails. The Civilian Conservation Corps employed 250,000 male workers between the ages of 15 and 24. The youths were paid $30 per month, which was usually sent to their families, but to
stretch the work as much as they could, the government only allowed a youth to work for nine months (Young & Young, 2003). The stated goal was to keep men off relief rolls, but the unstated goal was to keep the young men from competing for scarce jobs so the men with families could continue to work (Young & Young, 2003).

While Dale Carnegie was making the personality ethic stronger, Black intellectuals were presenting another ethic—integrative cultural diversity. According to Banner-Haley (1994), the Afro-American historian Rayford W. Logan edited a volume of essays published by the University of North Carolina Press at Chapel Hill in 1944, *What the Negro Wants*. Although Logan followed the publisher’s request to offer a variety of essays, and he included conservatives, liberals and radicals, what the Negro wanted was clear from all perspectives: an end to segregation and an appreciation for the contributions of Afro-Americans (Banner-Haley, 1994). Logan’s book emerged from a culture in which Jim Crow laws persisted in the South, and throughout the country, African-Americans could not marry, purchase homes, serve in the armed forces nor on fire departments.

Around the 1940’s, technology made the job of keeping the house clean easier. Although standards of cleanliness increased, the time it took to complete housework became less. Women had spare time. They had already been involved in politics (abolition, temperance, suffrage) but had not joined the workforce in large numbers. Levitan and Johnson (1983) found that before World War II, only 25% of women who were of working age were engaged in paid labor. During WWII, to replace the 12 million men who enlisted, 36% of women of working age were employed in paid labor. “Rosie
the Riveter” was an image used by the US government to show that women could be employed in the war effort and still be physically attractive. Rosie also showed that to work was to help with the war effort, so working in defense industries was patriotic. Although Jackson (1992) implies that women left the workplace following the war, Levitan and Jackson (1983) found by giving attention to workplace statistics, that 32% of women of working age were engaged in paid labor two years after V-E Day. A new trend that emerged during the war was the paid employment of married, middle-class women over the age of 35. Birth rates decreased, life expectancy increased, and women had more years when they were not rearing infants (Ferber, O’Farrell, & Allen, 1991).

After WWII, the US experienced steady growth in population, and in industry, specifically in the west and south. With new industrial growth, internal migration occurred, and many African-Americans moved from the south to urban regions all over the country (Pelling, 1960). Many technological and transportation changes occurred, leading to shifts in employment. While airlines increased, trains decreased. Petroleum and natural gas industries expanded, coal lost employees. Blue-collar jobs gave way to an increase in white-collar jobs as electronics and chemical industries increased (Pelling, 1960).

In August of 1945, the second world war ended. Defense contracts were cancelled immediately, and the industry had no market for its products. Some families suffered lessening of income as women left jobs to make room for returning soldiers. Prices increased and Truman encouraged industries to increase wages. From 1945 until 1947, the National Wage Stabilization Board replaced the War Labor Board. The National
Wage Stabilization Board was assembled to act on voluntary wage increases for which industries sought price increases. The United Auto Workers struck against General Motors for more money in November of 1945, In February of 1946, the union workers finally returned to work to 18.5 cents more per hour. To cover the cost, even though the President’s fact-finding board had ruled it unnecessary, Ford raised its prices, and the pattern was set for other strike settlements. The electrical and meatpacking workers were striking at the same time. Although the workers won an increase in wages, their gains were erased in June when price control legislation expired with no new legislation replacing the price-controls. By the time Truman and Congress agreed on new legislation, prices had increased as much as 25% in two weeks in some cases. The cost of living increased by 6% in one month. By the end of the year, Truman was backing off from so much control, and only legislated rent, rice and sugar prices. It appeared that strikes would continue (Pelling, 1960).

Although defense spending declined after WWII, it increased again in three years with the beginning of the Korean War (Pelling, 1960). Many families, though, had suffered a loss when women lost their incomes after World War II.

Throughout the late forties, both labor and industry sought public opinion. By the end of the decade, the public blamed unions for the increase in prices, and public opinion turned against organized labor. The unions also had some widely-publicized internal strife, such as factions within unions, corruption, and Communist groups in the unions. Although the unions had accomplished wage increases, safer working conditions in coal
mines, and health benefits for workers were still perceived negatively by the population (Pelling, 1960).

Congress passed the Taft-Hartley Act in 1947, overriding Truman’s veto. The Taft-Hartley Act changed the role of the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) to a judiciary function in unfair labor practices brought by its general counsel. In other areas, the NLRB could be more involved. Officers of unions had to swear annually that they were not part of the Communist Party, or any group intending to overthrow the government. Union leaders were required to submit their by-laws, constitution and financial statements of their organization to the Department of Labor before the NLRB would be involved in dispute resolution. Individuals were given more freedoms to refuse to join the union, and only have dues withdrawn from wages with the employee’s permission. Employees could not strike against the federal government and the President could issue a return-to-work order in cases of public endangerment.

The Taft-Hartley Act severely curtailed union membership and undermined labor unions’ effectiveness. By the end of the 1950’s, the labor movement had 18 million members; one-fourth of the total civilian labor force of 70 million. Only 50 million laborers were eligible to be union members at that time (Pelling, 1960).

The personality ethic, or the idea that one can get ahead by willing oneself to be successful and imagining success and through smiles and charm alone gave way to a different conception of success. Norman Vincent Peale’s Power of Positive Thinking and other similar works enjoyed popularity through the 40’s and 50’s with the underlying assumption that success meant accumulation of material wealth (Huber, 1971). Those
who achieve accumulation of great wealth remain a minority, despite the long-standing image of the US as the land of opportunity and upward mobility. For most people, the drive for material wealth leads to materialism, and accumulation of commercial products, and increased debt. In the 1960’s, although accumulation of wealth may still have been desirable, the idea of success came to include the nonmaterial aspirations of meaningful work. Workers sought autonomy, challenge, and a balance between work and family (Bernstein, 1997).

Work as Self-Fulfillment

During the 1960’s and 70’s, though, women joined the workforce in larger numbers. Levitan and Jackson (1983) found that several changes led to this trend. One change was that women experienced paid labor during WWII, and did not want to return to fulltime housekeeping. The nature of housekeeping itself changed because of technological changes, requiring less time to clean or prepare meals. Another technological change gave women more control over the number and timing of births. By the 1970’s, Levitan and Jackson (1983) reported that birth rates per family dropped from 2.3 to 1.9, partly due to changes in views of the family, and partly due to greater control by women offered by birth-control pills. Women appeared unhappy with the life that had been assumed or expected to be their role. Betty Friedan, in The Feminine Mystique (1963), explained the frustration women felt with being at home. Hearing about the challenges of work from their husbands was not enough. Many of the women who were homemakers in the 1970’s had been college students in the 1960’s. The Pill had liberated them from a constant need to take care of infants. They were politically aware,
involved in social change, and educated. The workforce, though, was not ready to accommodate women. Women had to figure out how to fit in. By the late 1970’s, advice books for women were common. Women were given such varying advice as to fit in and “talk like a man” and “act like a lady” (Jackson, 1992; Tong, 1998).

In response to speculation that America was suffering from lack of a work ethic, several researchers have studied workers’ attitudes and beliefs about work values and their perception of others’ work ethic. In 1971, Cherrington (1980) and his colleagues at the American Management Association (AMACOM) surveyed 3,053 workers from manufacturing companies. After ensuring that the selection pool included participants from manufacturing, management and clerical workers, the respondents were randomly selected. By ranking work values, participants indicated that intrinsic rewards (pride in workmanship, feeling worthwhile, recognition and respect, and serving others) ranked slightly higher than extrinsic rewards (salary, fringe benefits, and promotions). Bernstein (1997) agrees that workers value autonomy, professional development, and personal fulfillment at work. In past eras, workers may have thought that personal needs be met outside of work, perceiving work for only its instrumental purpose as a necessary way to provide for life, such as meeting basic needs and providing the monetary resources to seek fulfillment through leisure (Bernstein, 1997).

After the second World War, people were discouraged about relying on one job or company for their lives, so some workers began to seek more from work. Yankelovich and Immerwahr (1984) surveyed American workers, comparing college graduates and workers with no college education. College graduates were more likely to hold high-
discretion jobs and to report that they perceived work to be intrinsically rewarding. College graduates were also more likely to describe their jobs as challenging, purposeful, and offering a sense of accomplishment. The college graduates reported a strong sense of the work ethic among 63% of the respondents, and only 47% of the non-college educated respondents reported adherence to the traditional work ethic, that work is intrinsically valuable. Yankelovich and Immerwahr (1984) found that in addition to the traditional Protestant work ethic, in the post-war era, people saw work as a means of self-fulfillment. Some workers appeared not to trust that hard work brings material rewards, and so they seek self-improvement and a sense of purpose from their work.

Yankelovich, Skelly and White (1981) also studied Motorola and their workers’ core relationship to work. They found that the predominant views of workers at that time to be mutually reinforcing. While 50% of the workforce said that their parents worked to survive, only 38% of the workers surveyed said they worked to survive. The same study revealed that only 5% of the workforce perceived their parents as working for self-development, but 17% of those surveyed reported working for self-development. Yankelovich and Immerwahr (1984) reported that an extensive study by the Public Agenda foundation in Puget Sound reported similar trends, and that the value of work for self-development was spreading not only across the US but also in other industrialized nations.

Yankelovich and Immerwahr (1984) found four factors to be interrelated and mutually supporting: 1) the upgrading of jobs (defined as workers having discretion over how their work is performed; 2) the educational level of the workforce (college education
is likely to allow workers to be in more autonomous jobs); 3) the focus on expressive values (work as a means of self-development); 4) and the Protestant work ethic (work is intrinsically rewarding). The degree to which management of a company can motivate workers to be productive depends on their ability to manage these four factors (Yankelovich & Immerwahr, 1984).

Yankelovich and Immerwahr (1984) found that when the rewards and incentives did not match with workers’ reasons to work, the employees did not feel motivated. Because one single set of motivating factors no longer applied to all workers, managers were challenged to match incentives with workers’ needs. For those working to survive, they needed to feel secure in the job, and have enough income; people working to increase their standard of living needed high pay, a relationship between pay and performance, opportunities for career for advancement, and a fair system of awarding advancement; those who worked for self-development needed a job that allowed them to develop potentials and abilities, an interesting job with creativity and the responsibility to make important decisions (Yankelovich & Immerwahr, 1984). The Public Agenda research found that based on these needs and rewards, only 49% of workers are matched, and 49% are mismatched.

Another variable in perceptions of work is class. In a study of 122 men and 167 women college students, 96 of whom were black, Cokley, Komarraju, Pickett, Shen, Patel, Belur and Rosales (2007) found that Black students did not adhere to the Protestant work ethic to the same degree that white students did. Using the Protestant ethics Scale (PES) developed by Mirels and Garrett and Multigroup Ethnic Identity Measure (MEIM)
developed by Phinney, Cokley et al. (2007) compared the work ethic and ethnic identity of the students in their survey. Cokley et al. (2007) found that White students rated higher on the PES, indicating that they perceived that hard work will bring rewards such as economic mobility. The Black students rated lower on the PES and higher on the MEIM. After applying statistical correlations to rule out social class as an explanation for the differences in PES, Cokley et al. (2007) sought alternative explanations for the differences in PES scores between Black and White students. Because Black students’ scores were higher on the MEIM, Cokley et al. (2007) concluded that ethnic identity was more salient for Black than for White students, so Black students would be likely to weigh the experiences of others of their ethnicity in the formation of their values. In the experiences of Black students, including their knowledge of others of their same ethnicity, hard work did not yield economic mobility. Even if Black students had achieved middle class status rather than being born to into the middle class, they attributed economic mobility to a number of factors. However, white students in the study perceived that they could control their income through achievements in education, securing a well-paying job, and continuing to accumulate wealth (Cokley, et al., 2007). Banner-Haley (1994) found that African-Americans are still pursuing the ethic described in 1944, and integrative cultural diversity. Although advances have been made through Affirmative Action and integration laws, the integrative cultural diversity espoused in What a Negro Wants has not been achieved. Ebony polled African-Americans in 1985 regarding their thoughts on the 21st century and found that African-Americans were hopeful that in the next century, their children would have better lives (less racism) than
they had in 1985 (Banner-Haley, 1994). Black independent filmmakers and entertainers continue to offer support to their communities and to present challenges to the status quo through their work. Although racial integration has occurred legally, African-Americans continue to struggle to have their experiences represented to the public. The films of Black director Spike Lee, for example, bring to life issues of race and class, but Lee struggles to have his work seen. *Boyz in the Hood* depicts a south central Los Angeles in which middle class African-Americans struggle with gang warfare and prolific drugs. When the film was shown in Los Angeles, violence occurred at the theater, and the press focused on the violence rather than the theme of the film, so the film was distributed amongst widespread negativity (Banner-Haley, 1994). The theme of an integrative cultural diversity, which has been at the core of the African-American work ethic, has yet to be realized.

The relationship between work and other aspects of a worker’s life, such as family, have changed due to shifts in the way work is accomplished. In the age of globalization and technological innovation, work can be accomplished from different locations, such as from home or from the bleachers of a baseball game. As with the agrarian and artisanal economy of pre-industrial society, the divisions between work and home life are blurred. Work can be fit around other responsibilities, providing for more flexibility in how work and family demands are met. The once bifurcated public-private spheres are merging.

With the meaning of work, the definition and conception of career success also shifts. In the Colonial period, self-sufficiency based on hard work was considered
successful. The Protestant work ethic remains the basis for “the work ethic” as it is usually referred to, but as a motivator for work, other values became predominant over time. When paid labor was becoming more common than the agrarian lifestyle, one’s character was the predominant marker of successful person. Character was demonstrated through frugality and industry. Character gave way to rationality, and efficiency and managerial control over laborers was the marker of success for emerging middle class. Laborers exerted their limited control through strikes and peer-enforced work rates. Rationality gave way to the personality ethic, and appearances of getting along and being likable were markers of success. One way to demonstrate personality was to stand out by the things one owned, demonstrating both buying power and taste for expensive things. Owning material indicators of success was equated with success itself, and work was the way to accumulate things. After personality came self-fulfillment as a motivation for work. Autonomy, professional development and personal fulfillment were the motivations for work. The current trend may be towards a relational ethic (Reisch, 2006). The connections one has to others, how one treats co-workers and customers, and the connection to family outside of work is becoming the predominant value.

*Conceptualizing Private and Public Spheres in Work Conceptions*

Work is a universal social organizing concept. Every known society recognizes work, and the division of labor begins with sexual division of labor in both agrarian and industrial economies. Gurtler (2005) describes work’s relationship to nature: “Working to acquire sustenance expresses human society’s ties to nature; it forms the umbilical cord,
so to speak, through which human cultures are connected with nature insofar as they use its resources to produce and reproduce themselves” (p. 120).

Values and attitudes about the nature of work, the role of the family in society and appropriate behavior for men and women has led to a distinction between public and private spheres. As Folbre (1991) notes the distinction this way, “Most political economists reinforced this distinction between the moral (or private) and the economic (and public) world, neatly assigning women and the family to one, and men and the market to the other.”

While work values continue to shift, traditional work values based on competition, instrumentality, authority (rules), rationality (fairness), and individualism still influence policies and decisions (Cleveland, 2005; Bailyn, 2005; Jackson, 1992). These values are apparent in expectations for workers and how they are evaluated. Workers are judged by how they compare with the prevailing image of “the ideal employee,” so organizational views of success are defined by how closely one compares to this ideal. Assumptions about the roles of men and women, such as women should stay home and provide moral education for children (Cott, 1977) and men should earn enough to take care of their family (Folbre, 1991; May, 1982), still have an effect. Women still earn less than men, and unpaid labor such as household chores and childrearing has been stereotypically associated with women (Hochschild, 1990). This division of labor has led to the development of two different spheres, the public and private, with assumptions about what is required to excel in each being associated with stereotypically gendered characteristics (Fletcher, 2004, 2005a).
Women have made progress in affecting the workplace. Although more women work outside the home, and many have highly responsible positions, child care and housework still are perceived as the purview of women, and this contradiction has led to much debate about the role of women in the workplace (Fletcher, 2004). Since the early 1990’s, issues such as child care and flexibility have been a concern for employers. Work-family balance issues are still predominantly seen as women’s issues. However, men are benefiting from flexibility as well, and having employees who are more satisfied with the arrangements helps productivity (Fletcher, 2004, 2005a).

According to Hochschild, (1989), women still bear most of the responsibility for the care of children and for housework. In dual-earner households in which both parents work full time, women continue to work when they arrive home, averaging fifteen hours more each week than their husbands. Faculty women are no exception, yet research from Gunter and Stambach (2003) demonstrates that female science faculty publish as much as their male counterparts, including women with young children. Gunter and Stambach (2003) found that female science faculty make up for the inequality resulting from greater responsibility at home by sacrificing time for themselves. Some of the female science faculty interviewed in their study revealed that they did not exercise, engage in leisure reading, and often turned down social invitations due to lack of time. Peterson (2003) found that female employees in medium and small companies across the US experienced more stress both at work and at home than did the men in the study. Burke (2002) found that females who had earned MBAs between 1970 and 1994 were more likely than male MBAs to experience high levels of stress at work, even though men and women reported
equal levels of job satisfaction. Male faculty in the Gunter and Stambach (2003) study admitted that they observed inequity due to women’s family demands, and added that they knew of women more talented than themselves who did not receive promotions due to the time requirements from their families.

Definitions of success differ among various groups of workers. One way to group workers is by sex. When Peterson (2004) asked men and women about their values at work in an online survey, women rated the importance of family and home significantly higher than did men, and men showed little awareness of this difference in values. In his study of full-time employees in companies of fewer than 1,000 employees, Peterson (2003) found that men and women defined success differently and that their definitions were rooted in varying assumptions about work. Although the study did not report the occupations of the workers, Harris Interactive, Inc., who administered the survey, controlled for demographics to ensure a representative sample. The mean age of respondents was 41 years. About 25% were single, 55% were married, 12% were divorced. The remaining participants were co-habitating, widowed or did not disclose. White participants comprised 79% of the participants, 10% were black, 5% were Hispanic, 2.5% were Asian, and the remaining participants reported themselves as “other.” Participants had been with their employers a mean range of 5-9 years. Education varied; 46% reported holding a college degree, and 37.5% a high school diploma. About half were salaried and half were hourly, all full-time. The mean household income was $75,000. In all of these areas, there were no standard deviations between males and females.
For the 515 women in the study, work called for collaboration with other people. To be successful, income was a consideration, but more emphasis was placed on communicating and relating with others. Women, who valued collaboration and relationships higher, accurately assessed that men valued pay, power, status and authority more highly than did women. A successful company was one that established strong relationships and fostered balance between work and family. For the 608 males in the study, success was based on “profit, market share, status and influence” (Peterson, 2003, p. 118). Males assumed that the company existed to achieve results and to gain fortune. Women’s and men’s values only varied slightly, though. Peterson’s (2004) findings confirmed that women want to earn incomes that allow them to maintain a comfortable standard of living, and that men also want to be able to be comfortable with co-workers in their corporate culture. The differences in values are often exaggerated in the literature, perpetuating gender stereotypes.

Defining success, and understanding how people create definitions of success for themselves is a rich opportunity for further research. Individuals within an organization may not agree on definitions of success, and may value varying aspects of organizational life.

**Emerging Conceptions of Career Success**

**Work-Family Integration**

The shift in women in the paid workforce has taken a toll on families. While women have worked for centuries, they are now working outside the home in greater numbers and with more demanding jobs. Fewer wives are home full-time, and this shift
has placed a burden on families. Dual-career couples in which both partners have demanding jobs outside the home are more common. Men have taken on more of the responsibilities of the home and family (Hochschild, 1990), but the conflicts produced by the two very demanding roles of work and family persist.

Higgins, Duxbury and Lee (1994) define work-family conflict as occurring when “an individual has to perform multiple roles that require time, energy and commitment” (p. 144). The two different roles of parenting and working can interfere with one another in either direction—work requirements that keep one from family time, or family demands that interfere with work. A third type of interference is when the demands of the two roles leave one too tired to be effective at both (Higgins, et al., 1994) The demands of dual-career families have implications for both employees and employers

While Higgins, et al. (1994) discussed the stresses of role conflict, they found that the threat of job loss and job insecurities had negative effects on the family. The negative effects of job insecurity were evident for both men and women in “marital satisfaction, general family functioning, family role clarity, and the number of problems the family was experiencing” (p. 142). Higgins et al. (1994) further found that mothers spent significantly less time at work and more time with children up to twelve years of age than did fathers. Mothers also spent less time in leisure activities daily than did fathers. Fathers and mothers spent about equal time with children aged thirteen to eighteen. Mothers also experienced greater role overload than did fathers of children under thirteen. Burke (2002) found that for both men and women, measures of satisfaction with both work and home were positively correlated with organizational values supporting
work and family balance. Women and men in Burke’s (2002) study reported less job stress, greater happiness in all domains, and a higher sense of well-being in organizations that supported balance. Work-family balance support from the organization did not affect the hours worked for either men or women. Burke’s (2002) study of professional and managerial men and women revealed that very few companies had programs that supported work and family balance. In a recent view of the literature, Kirby, Golden, Medved, Jorgenson and Buzzanell (2003) used a discourse perspective to show that emerging research can help move the discourse from an emphasis on problems to an emphasis on empowerment. In another review Golden, Kirby and Jorgenson (2006) summarized current family and organizational literature to show existing and potential interrelationships. Kirby et al. (2003) point out that demographic, technological and social changes have influenced the way wage work and family work are completed; work can impact family and family responsibilities can impact work, and the literature on these influences is extensive. While the research crosses disciplines such as psychology, sociology and organizational behavior, the emphasis has been on outcomes. Kirby et al. (2003) have challenged the accepted terms “family,” “work” and “organizations” by challenging the discourses that produce them, and instead, focusing on processes.

Golden et al. (2006) recommend an integrative approach to new research in work-family issues that does not reinforce a dichotomy between work and family but sees the two structures as mutually influential. Areas such as work values, cross-cultural communication and intercultural communication can be drawn upon for a more integrative approach to work-family research (Golden, et al., 2006).
Possible Selves Theory and Conceptions of Career Success

Robert B. Reich, former Secretary of the Department of Labor, explains the premises of possible selves theory in different terms in *The Future of Success* (2001). In his book, Reich discloses his personal struggles with work-family balance, and discusses his regrets in losing himself in his job so completely that his sons barely knew him. He describes three “conversations” that he speculates all workers in the current economy have with ourselves. The first conversation, according to Reich (2001), is one of “breathless enthusiasm” at the possibilities that a world economy with the electronic information superway interconnecting people and ideas throughout the world can offer, much like what Markus and Nurius (1986) refer to as the ideal self, taking advantage of opportunities and living up to one’s potential. Reich’s (2001) second conversation is similar to Markus and Nurius’ (1986) feared self. In this conversation with the self, Reich (2001) predicts that we fear “the dangers of unfettered capitalism, the power or greed of global corporations and unfettered capitalism, the power or greed of global corporations and international finance . . .” (p. 248). This is the feared self that keeps professionals working long hours, saving money while they have a job, and looking over their shoulders, wary to keep a competitive edge and to protect what they have, fearing competition, dislocation, and an unstable economy. In Reich’s (2001) third conversation, a private conversation with the self discusses balance, personal failings, and ignores the market economy and social forces that have led to the difficulties in achieving balance between work and family and building relationships. This third conversation is similar to Markus and Nurius’ (1986) notion of the expected self, the one that occurs between the
ideal and the feared self. That Reich (2001) arrived at a similar triumvirate (albeit in different terms) is demonstrative of the applicability of Markus and Nurius’ (1986) conceptions of possible selves theory to conceptions of success in the current economy, as individuals work out for themselves what career success means and how it is enacted in their daily lives.

**Possible Selves Theory**

Some time ago Markus and Nurius (1986) introduced a concept and theory of self-development called “possible selves.” This concept is based on the idea of the future self as a motivator for behavior. According to the construct, what people hope to become, expect to become, and fear becoming influences and motivates current behavior (Markus and Nurius, 1986, 1987; Hock, Deshler, Schumaker, 2006; Packard and Conway, 2006). Possible selves are separate from conceptions of the current self but are integrally related to the current self by how the possibilities are formed and by their influence over current behavior (Markus & Nurius, 1986). Possible selves research has been used in such areas as career theory, sex differences, adolescent development, adult development, development of the imagination, social construction of the self, motivation, self-regulation, and therapy with adults who had experienced a crisis (e.g., Anthis, 2006; Chalk, Meara & Day, 1994; Cross & Madsen, 1997; Frazier & Hooker, 2006; Hock, Deshler & Schumaker, 2006; Hoyle & Sherrill, 2006; Kerpelman, 2006; Knox, 2006; Markus & Nurius, 1986, 1987; Markus & Oyserman, 1989; Marshall, Young, & Domene, 2006; Oyserman, Bybee, Terry, & Hart-Johnson, 2004; Segal, 2006; Segal, DeMeis, Wood & Smith, 20001; Strahan & Wilson, 2006). In this section, I review literature
regarding possible selves by first defining the construct of possible selves, and research regarding how possible selves relates to career theory and sex differences.

**Defining Possible Selves**

Building on the symbolic interactionist work of Mead (1934) and Gergen (1967, 1972), Markus and Nurius (1986) first described the concept of possible selves as formed through interaction with others, comparisons with others, and fears about what one could become. Markus and Nurius (1986) conceived of the possible self as built from the connection between taking on roles that conform to the expectations of others, adjusting one’s behavior based on responses from others, and imagining potential roles. Prior to Markus and Nurius’ (1986) work, the connection between the self and the perception of future selves remained spurious. The possible selves construct helps illuminate that connection. Although Gergen (1967) and other researchers (e.g., Cantor & Kihlstrom, 1983; Epstein, 1973; Greenwald, 1980; Kelly, 1955; McGuire, 1984; Mead, 1934; Rosenberg, 1979; Tesser & Campbell, 1984; Turner, 1968) describe the self-concept as complex and dynamic, research regarding the self has been predominantly based on a one-time description of the self. In other words, researchers typically ask individuals how they view themselves at a particular time. Markus and Nurius (1986, 1987) argue that this approach sheds no light on the dynamic nature of the self, and the connection between the self-concept and motivation of behavior. The construct of possible selves offers insight into how one sees oneself now and in the future. Markus and Nurius (1986) postulate that the future self motivates behavior. In short, what one hopes for, what one expects, and what one fears influences one’s present self-concept.
Possible selves include generalized states such as happy or depressed, as well as traits, such as competent or incompetent, and specific roles such as parent or teacher. Their relevance is in their ability to motivate behavior, according to Markus and Nurius (1986): “Possible selves provide the specific self-relevant form, meaning, organization, and direction to these dynamics. As such they provide the essential link between the self-concept and motivation” (p. 954). Fears of negative possible selves are connected to memories of events that negatively affect self-esteem (Markus and Nurius, 1986), such as being excluded from social events in elementary school, or being singled out for humiliation by a teacher.

Possible selves are more than abstractions. One’s conceptions of possible selves, according to Markus and Nurius (1986) “can be viewed as the cognitive manifestations of enduring goals, aspirations, motives, fears and threats” (p. 954). These conceptions are personalized, specific, individually relevant possibilities that relate to behavior. For example, a fear about being denied tenure is not a vague concern, but can be seen as a real possibility with consequences for the faculty member’s daily life. This fear can motivate the faculty to research for publication, join committees, and attend conferences (Markus and Nurius, 1986), even at a sacrifice of time with family (Gunter and Stambach, 2003). Bringing about one’s hoped-for self and avoiding the feared self can propel one toward career success.

Markus and Nurius’ essay that introduced the concept of possible selves included summaries of several studies supporting their theory. One of the studies was with college students, two with adolescents, and one with adults. The first study that Markus and
Nurius (1986) mention builds on an earlier, unpublished study in which they asked college students what they saw as possible for them. Markus and Nurius then developed a 150-item questionnaire to use as a comparison for other college students. The questionnaire included six categories: general descriptors, physical descriptors, life-style possibilities (active social life, cancer victim), general abilities (able to fix things, able to cook well), occupational possibilities, possibilities tied to the opinions of others (being loved, feared). In each of the six domains, 33% of items were identified in advance as negative, 33% positive, 33% neutral. To assess their use of possible selves, Markus and Nurius (1986) asked 210 male and female college students whether the items described them in the past, if they had considered the item as a possibility for them, the probability of the item being true for them, and the desirability of each item. Students averaged 80 possible selves that they had considered for themselves. Although one-third of the students said they thought about their past selves a great deal of the time or all of the time, two-thirds of the students thought about their future selves a great deal of the time, or all of the time. The positive selves were reported as thought about more often, and as more probable to be true in the future for these college students. Markus and Nurius (1986) concluded from this that the future possible selves were not identical with the current self-concept, nor past self-concepts. Markus and Nurius (1986) interpret this finding to indicate that the individual’s conception of his or her future self may be more related to motivation than the current self-concept.

Markus and Nurius (1986) studied individual adults who had experienced a crisis (N=30) and compared those who said they had recovered with those who reported that
they had not recovered. They found that the self-concepts of both groups were similar, including “not in control, weak, likely to die young, not able to fit in, poor, fearful, resentful, underachiever, depressed, and stupid” (p. 962). The noncrisis control group (N=30) reported more positive self-concepts. Even though recovered and nonrecovered crisis groups reported similar current self-concepts, the possible selves reported were extremely differentiated. The recovered crisis group’s possible selves were more in line with the possible selves of the noncrisis group, using terms such as “optimistic, secure, respected, successful, adjusted, interesting, loved, happy, and confident” (Markus & Nurius, 1986, p. 962). Using the possible selves construct helped to distinguish among recovered and nonrecovered crisis groups, even though the current self-concept of both groups could be characterized as negative.

The third study including adolescents was included in an unpublished paper by Oyserman and Markus (1986) (as reported in Markus and Nurius, 1986). One hundred youths in group homes or residing in a state training school were asked to describe their possible selves in an open-ended format. Although delinquent youths reported high self-esteem, they had constricted descriptions of future selves, feared selves and hoped-for selves. Feared selves included becoming criminals, such as murderers, junkies, or child abusers. The nondelinquent youths offered a broader array of possible selves, and less negative possibilities. The nondelinquent youth listed feared selves as poor, on welfare, unable to meet bills, or negative mental states such as depression.

In a fourth study, Markus and Nurius (1987) found that among homogeneous groups, the lists of possible selves generated independently were similar. Cohort groups
in this study were defined by age, education and socio-economic background. Older
groups of individuals (50 year-olds) produced more possible selves, specifically, more
negative (feared) possible selves than their younger comparison group (30 year-olds).
Markus and Nurius (1987) further found that positive possible selves were positively
correlated with feelings of control while negative possible selves were positively
correlated with feelings of lack of control. The number of reported positive possible
selves were reduced as the number of individuals dependent on the respondent increased.

Other researchers have utilized the possible selves theory, too. For instance,
Frazier and Hooker (2006) focused on the features of possible selves that influence how
social comparisons are used. Their study of 235 adults of different ages found that when
the hoped-for self was temporally close, people compared the desired self with their past
selves. For example, if an individual has a performance review coming up, they think
about past reviews to compare their expectations of the upcoming review. The self-
efficacy components of the desired self were compared with other people, specifically,
those perceived as worse off. For example, in the case of a performance review, someone
who desires to keep the job might compare his or her performance with someone who is
often corrected or warned about behavior, but still has a job. Feared selves were
compared with those perceived as better off than the perceived self. In this case, the
person expecting a performance review may consider someone who was fired from the
current company but now works for more money and is happier in the new job. When
looking for a comparison for self-efficacy in avoiding a feared self, people used past
selves for comparison, but targeted others they perceived as better off for the outcomes of avoiding the feared selves.

In a five-month interval study of adult women, Anthis (2006) found that possible selves, both feared and hoped-for, were relatively stable over time. Anthis (2006) recruited women of various education levels across a college campus, and from among respondents to an advertisement in a women’s magazine in a Midwestern city. Anthis (2006) studied two cohorts of women, the first around 30 years of age (N=62) and the second around 55 (N=58) by asking them to complete questionnaires, and then to complete them again in five months. The women in the study were given definitions and examples of possible selves, including both hoped-for and feared possible selves, and were asked to list their possible selves. Anthis (2006) found that the number of possible selves, both feared and hoped-for, were fewer in the older women, who were about 50, compared with the younger women, who were about 30. Within the cohort groups, the number and type of feared possible selves and hoped-for possible selves revealed more stability than change over the five months of the study.

**Possible Selves and Conceptions of Career Success**

Possible selves research can be related to conceptions of career success in several ways. First, views of possible selves are related to individual behavior, as individuals are motivated to bring about hoped-for selves and to avoid feared selves. Also, possible selves research has implications for career choices. In this section, I describe research that relates possible selves and conceptions of career success.
In their initial article describing several studies regarding possible selves, Markus and Nurius (1986) introduce the motivation of current behavior as a function of possible selves. They conceive of the detailed development of possible selves as a construct that motivates people to make decisions and to take actions that avoid feared selves and that bring about desired future selves. Hoyle and Sherrill (2006) further developed the link between motivation of behavior and future selves as a function of possible selves.

In an experiment using health messages for college students, Hoyle and Sherrill (2006) found that messages regarding future possible selves resulted in more immediacy for students when the feared possible self seemed possible in the near future. Also, messages regarding a feared possible self resulted in self-regulatory behavior when the students believed they had control over avoiding the feared possible self. In another study, Hoyle and Sherrill (2006) found that possible selves were most likely to motivate behavior when the future self is projected as engaging in specific behaviors or producing specific outcomes, and the future self is accepted (hoped-for self) or rejected (feared self) by others.

Strahan and Wilson (2006) found that students were more motivated to study for an exam if they perceive it as temporally near, and that those who anticipate doing well on the exam were more likely to study for the exam. Students who anticipated performing poorly on the exam perceived it as in the distant future, did not prepare, and performed poorly, as they anticipated, on the exam. The perception of temporal distance had a motivating effect in another way as well. Markus and Nurius (1986) earlier concluded that possible selves motivated behavior, but Strahan and Wilson (2006), and
Hoyle and Sherrill (2006) refined those findings by adding that to be motivating, possible selves must be perceived as temporally near, and when the individual perceives control over outcomes. When these conditions exist, individual conceptions of possible selves are more likely to include process descriptions rather than outcomes only.

Possible selves research has salience for the study of faculty’s perceptions of success in several ways. First, possible selves can provide a framework for explaining past and current behavior. Individuals are motivated to behave in ways that bring about positive possible selves and avoid feared possible selves. Secondly, possible selves provide a standard by which outcomes are measured, so a grade or a comment affects one person differently from another because of the images of feared selves they hold (Frazier and Hooker, 2006). Finally, possible selves are connected to the most vulnerable aspects of the self-concept, so an event that makes a feared possible self stand out in sharp relief can negatively affect one’s current self-evaluation (Markus and Nurius, 1986).

Possible selves research has implications for the development of the self as successful or unsuccessful. Future selves feared and hoped for may motivate behavior of faculty, but factors such as age, salience of the possible selves and perceived temporal proximity of the possible selves may influence possible selves as motivators of behavior.

Gender Differences in Possible Selves

Possible selves research also has implications for the career expectations and fears of men and women. The development of the self is at least in part connected to meeting the role expectations of others (Mead, 1934), gender roles may not be comfortable for the
individual, as seen by women’s tendency to fear feminine occupations as part of their possible selves.

Chalk, Meara and Day (1994) performed two studies regarding college students’ career expectations. Using several scales regarding work values, the self and perceptions of jobs, Chalk, Meara and Day (1994) found that men and women both feared feminine jobs, and women feared masculine jobs, even though they idealized them. Men did not perceive the feminine jobs as possible for them. Women perceived the masculine and the feminine jobs as more feared than possible or expected for them. They feared the feminine jobs less than the masculine jobs.

These findings have been interpreted as revealing role discrepancies for women and for men, but in different spheres. Discrepancies between hoped-for selves and actual selves can contribute to depression, low self-esteem and low life-satisfaction (Cross and Markus, 1991; Ogilvie and Clark, 1992). On the other hand, when hoped-for and actual selves are congruent, feelings of self-efficacy, control, competence and effectiveness are prevalent (Oyserman and Markus, 1990). The ideal individual in American culture, according to Markus and Kitayama (1991) is an independent, achievement-oriented self, and this ideal has been associated with masculinity. The feminine ideal is more dependent, passive, and relationally-oriented. Girls are more likely to be socialized to fit the feminine ideal, while boys are more likely to be socialized to fit the masculine ideal. Females tend to list career choices that will not disappoint others, and seem more concerned with family and relationships while defining themselves and career choices. Because the concern about what others think is stronger for women, views of others
influence both idealized and feared career choices (Chalk, Meara and Day, 1994; Kalakoski and Nurmi, 1998; Kerpelman, Shoffner, and Ross-Griffin, 2002). Women’s low self-esteem may result from the discrepancies between ideal selves—the societal ideal and the feminine ideal (Higgins, 1987; Richman, Clark and Brown, 1985).

While women experience role discrepancies when they choose a particular career, which is seen as the public sphere, men may experience some role discrepancy in ideal selves more related to the private sphere. When a male wants to be both a nurturing caregiver and a breadwinner, he may experience role discrepancy between the two ideals, since the nurturing role has been more associated with the feminine ideal. For both masculine and feminine roles, the ideals may be changing. In the meantime, both males and females may experience low self-esteem due to conflicts in possible selves, although self-esteem due to role discrepancies and perceived ideal selves appears to be greater for females (Baum, Whitesall and Harter, 1999; Hooker et al., 1996; Morfei et al., 2001).

Although Chalk et al. (2005) listed college professor as gender neutral based on the number of men and women holding that job at the time of the study, specific fields or universities may not have an equal number of men and women as college professors. For example, women are usually underrepresented in math, the natural sciences, and engineering. Men are usually underrepresented in the social sciences and humanities. Also, while an equal number of men and women may be teaching at the college level, women are underrepresented at the rank of full professor. Also, many community colleges, which are heavily reliant upon adjunct faculty, hire more women than men (Hagedorn, 2000; Hensel, 1991; Knapp, Kelly-Reid, Whitmore, Levine, Huh & Broyles,
Chalk et al. (2005) found an equal number of men and women in faculty positions, and rated the job of college professor as gender-neutral without considering rank and the type of college that employ women and men. While the career of college professor may be listed as “gender neutral” overall, role discrepancies for men and women still exist, due to differences between men and women in rank, discipline, and salary.

Buzzanell’s (1991) work on differing career models led to speculation regarding faculty’s views of their careers. To use Buzzanell’s (1991) term, current research assumes that the linear career model is desirable (Hagedorn, 2000). Although the research on possible selves addresses adult development of conceptions of the self, little research has connected possible selves research to higher education faculty, or to re-evaluations of career success. Sex differences have been researched in relation to the construct of possible selves and perceptions of desirable careers; “college professor,” for instance, has been constructed as gender-neutral, and was not a feared possible self for men or women. Yet relational organizational communication research (i.e., Fletcher, 1995) has found that men and women approach work relationships differently. This approach has not been applied to faculty’s conceptions of career success.

The Role of Conversations in Formulating Conceptions of Career Success

In symbolic interactionist theory, social interaction is a primary plane for forming and revising one’s conceptions. The role of communication opportunities to learn others’ views and conceptions through conversation provide a focused opportunity to acquire other interpretations that can shape one’s own views. Conversations provide a discourse
space to learn how institutional conceptions are viewed, modified or adopted by individuals. Critical theory, too, (Agger, 1992; Giroux, 1988) proclaims that critical discussions about normative concepts like success are crucial to effecting change within organizations and society. To date, no research reports on the conversations higher education faculty have about their own or their university’s conception of success.

In the last two decades there has developed a focus on studying the role of conversation and language in organizations. In their extensive review, Putnam and Fairhurst (2000) surveyed the field and found eight types of discourse focused studies in organizational communication research. Sociolinguistic studies have focused on the social and structural differences of code systems that distinguish organizational sub-cultures and affect organizational functioning. Conversation analysts have elucidated features of conversational structure in organizations, such as turn-taking, topic management, or patterns for handling conversation problems, while cognitive linguists have focused on the discourse patterns that come from scripts, frames and schemata. Studies employing pragmatics are numerous, and have typically focused on the study of speech actions, communication codes and rules, meanings, or the functions and structuring effects of social interaction for the organization. Semiotic, literary, and rhetorical perspectives have focused on the way interpretations evolve from signs and symbols, and the role of rhetorical strategies, argument, and tropes in organizational decision-making and functioning. Finally, critical and post-modern language studies in organizations have examined how power and resistance are enacted and sustained in an organization’s linguistic and interactional practices. One example in Van Maanen’s
(1980) account of his own tenure decision process. He received advice and speculation from a number of faculty, and found that when faculty applied the rules they each had picked up over the years at that university, the faculty gave conflicting descriptions of what the tenure committee would decide.

Consistent with a symbolic interactionist perspective (classified as pragmatic by Putnam and Fairhurst, 2000), it is not clear whether success conceptions are discussed, and if so, the type of conversations they are. For instance, does success conception talk function as teaching and instruction, as individual-problem solving, or as system critique? Does success conception talk function as mutual self-exploration? Are there opportunities for faculty to engage in success conception talk? What prevents success conception talk from occurring? Given the increasing focus placed on university reputation, it would be useful to learn how faculty talk about their conception of career success as well as their university’s conception of success, and their fears about attaining or not attaining success.

Rationale and Research Questions

Research from Cleveland (2005) and Fletcher (1999, 2005) have described organizations in which different definitions of success co-exist, with the organizational definition serving to reinforce a culture which allows some behaviors that are construed as useful in getting a job done by a few to be devalued by others. Work in building relationships, for example, was not seen as measurable or important, so time devoted to building relationships was not counted as work. In those research settings, the difference between the organizational and personal definitions were interpreted as devaluing the
work of women (Cleveland, 2005; Fletcher, 1999, 2005). How faculty define success, if
different from the university’s definition, may be devaluing efforts faculty perceive as
contributing to effectiveness. As indicated by the work of Fletcher and her colleagues,
more research is needed about how these different conceptions, if they exist in university
settings, are different for different faculty. This leads to Research Questions One and
Two:

RQ1: How do higher education faculty conceptualize career success?

Possible selves literature (e.g., Markus & Nurius, 1986) indicates that adults have
a well-developed view of themselves in the future. The view they have includes different
possibilities, those hoped for, those expected, and those feared. To work toward the
hoped-for self, adults generally set goals. Some they may not achieve, and the amended
view becomes the expected self. People are also motivated to avoid the feared self.
Understanding the connection in the workplace may have implications for their decisions.

Powell and Graves (1993) found that men and women may have the same
subjective conceptions of career success, but their objective conceptions may differ. Men
and women in several studies of MBA graduates form the same institutions report similar
job satisfaction ratings. However, over time, the women MBAs show less objective
measures of career success, such as income and managerial level. Women may lag
behind men because of interruptions in their working years for childbirth and possibly
child-rearing. Career paths and expectations, according to Powell and Graves (1993) are
based on an uninterrupted career model. Men may also be offered more opportunities for
a long stretch at a remote location, career development training and relocation,
opportunities that may not be offered to married women, or which married women cannot avail themselves of if offered. Another difference between men and women’s career experiences is the role of mentors. Women do not have mentors as often as men, and even successful women do not credit mentoring for their success (Powell & Graves, 1993). Differences in career experiences may lead women to conceptualize career success in ways that are different from men’s career success conceptions. These findings led me to speculate whether such differences in career success apply to faculty in higher education.

RQ2: Do faculty men and women differ in their conceptions of career success?

If administration and faculty define success differently, the values of faculty could be unacknowledged, leaving the faculty to feel undervalued at work. Also, if the faculty is operating under a different set of values than the administration, the faculty’s values may lead the faculty to make decisions about work that are negatively perceived. Secondly, if a faculty member perceives differences in administration’s definitions of success, and his or her own definition, those differences may or may not be communicated to the faculty. It is not clear how faculty become aware of the differences in their conceptions of success. Faculty may have picked up clues from other faculty, may have been informed directly what career success means for faculty, or may still be trying to determine the university’s definition. Van Maanen (1980) describes the process of determining success at his university as similar to a “black box,” about which there is much speculation and few answers. He describes rules that apply to university careers as
formal, contextual, or operational. Van Maanen (1980) adds that more research is needed about how these rules are perceived and enacted. This leads to a third research question:

RQ3: How do higher education faculty perceive their college or university’s conception of career success?

Powell and Graves (1993) point out that women and men may develop different conceptions of career success because of their differing gendered experiences. Schein (1980) points out that the development of the self and self-image influences one’s conception of career success, and the self is not developed independent of one’s gender. Powell and Graves (1993) found that women and men conceive of success differently, with women focusing on relationships and their feelings about their careers, while men focus on objective outcomes to measure their success. Using these findings and the gender-related research from Fletcher et al.’s work leads to the fourth research question:

RQ4: Do faculty men and women differ in their perceptions of their university’s or college’s conception of career success?

Marcus and Nurius (1986) argue that people develop images of the self that are determined by what they hope will happen, what they fear might happen, and what they expect to happen. In the case of career success, hopes, fears and expectations may affect faculty’s behavior, leading faculty to not attempt things that are important to them due to fears. The discrepancy between the hopes and expectations is usually developed, at least in part, through fears and the perception of constraints. Understanding how fears can mitigate aspirations of the hoped-for self may indicate ways to reduce fears, allowing faculty to achieve a self closer to their hoped-for self. Such personal achievements may
lead to more satisfied faculty. Because the possible selves are always in the future, the possible selves can, and do, change as a result of events, conversations or perceptions in the present. Adults are constantly re-formulating their possible selves. This research, along with gender differences found in previous research as mentioned above, led me to ask the next set of research questions:

RQ5: In what ways do faculty re-evaluate their conceptions of career success?

RQ6: Are male and female faculty both likely to re-evaluate their conceptions of career success over time?

RQ7: What constraints and fears do higher education faculty report about attaining career success?

RQ8: Do faculty men and women report different constraints and fears?

According to symbolic interactionism, individual’s perceptions influence their behavior. Interpretations are influenced by a number of factors, including past interactions on the subject and preconceived notions that can be altered through social interaction. By talking about their conceptions of career success, faculty may clarify their concepts and challenge their colleagues to re-examine their own conception. Faculty can also, through talk, learn what university sees as a successful faculty member. Through talk, faculty members may increase their understanding of fears and constraints, and they may even learn ways to allay their fears and mitigate constraints. Faculty may also gain social support through talk, and feel less alone in their perception of fears and constraints.

The aim of the final set of research questions is to learn the kinds of conversations faculty may have about career success. The possible selves construct is useful in
understanding the connection among hopes, expectations and fears in the development of conceptions about future selves. The development of the self is influenced by the environment, and by interaction with others. To learn more about faculty conceptions of success, three questions are advanced:

RQ9: If higher education faculty talk about career success, what do they talk about? Do faculty men and women talk about career success differently?

RQ10: If higher education faculty talk about perceived differences between the university and the faculty member’s definitions of career success, what do they talk about?

RQ11: If higher education faculty talk about career constraints and fears, what do they talk about?

Conclusion

In this chapter, I have briefly introduced the major areas of organizational communication research that are related to definitions of success. These areas include the history of the roles of men and women in relation to work and family, the changing work ethic, persistent gender stereotypes, conceptions of success, and possible selves. The theoretic basis of this study is symbolic interactionism. In the next chapter, I will describe the method used in this study.
CHAPTER 3

METHOD

This chapter presents the data collection and analysis methods used in the study. A description of the participants and procedures is presented first, followed by a description of a questionnaire that asked higher education faculty members about their conceptions of career success and conversations about career success. Last, the coding procedures and qualitative analyses used to address the research questions are described.

Participants and Procedures

Participants

Participants in the study were higher education faculty who completed an online questionnaire about their conceptions of career success. Initially, some of the faculty were members of the College and University where I teach. The College of Arts and Sciences at this small, private university in the Midwest hired a new Dean about three years ago. After his first year, the Dean started a number of new initiatives for the College. One of these was to encourage faculty to publish in peer-reviewed journals and participate in their profession at a greater level. Since the University has traditionally
been a “teaching” university, the new emphasis on publishing called into question issues of faculty evaluation.

I invited all of the faculty in the College of Arts and Sciences to see if they would participate in a study about the definition of success used at this university. I explained the approximate length of the questionnaire and in general, the topics to be covered. As the faculty responded “yes,” I sent them a link to Surveymonkey.com where they could complete the questionnaire. Because a small number of faculty (N=13) responded at this small university, the link to the questionnaire on Surveymonkey was also sent to colleagues at other institutions. Using professional list-serves and personal contacts, I distributed the questionnaire more widely. These procedures resulted in 123 participants with 75 questionnaires complete enough to be used in the analysis. The sex, age, race, size of university, and department of origin of the participants was obtained. The characteristics of the sample obtained from these procedures is contained in Chapter 4.

**Questionnaire Design**

A questionnaire was specifically developed to answer the research questions posed at the end of Chapter 2. These questions were originally designed to be answered in a set of face to face interviews, but time pressures forced the substitution of an online questionnaire, which is included as Appendix A. For pre-testing purposes an initial version of the questionnaire was sent to six college and university faculty to complete. Among their instructions, each pre-test participant was asked to track the time spent completing the questionnaire. Based on their responses, responses to three of the open-ended items were re-phrased. Three other items that began with the phrase “If you have
had no conversations about . . .” were added. I then sent the second test questionnaire to two other faculty at small colleges. I also sent the final questionnaire back to two of the faculty members from the first pretest and they found it easy to follow. At that point I entered the questionnaire on a website developed for research, Surveymonkey.com. The items for each construct reflected in the research questions are described next.

Constructs and Questionnaire Design

The questionnaire designed for the study probed higher education faculty for their conceptions about career success and the conversations they had about career success. This section describes the items in the questionnaire that address faculty conceptions of career success, constraints and features about attaining career success, and the items that address the conversations faculty have about career success.

Conceptions of Career Success

Current Faculty Conceptions of Career Success. As already been discussed, Fletcher (1999), Fletcher and Bailyn (2005), and Cleveland (2005) found that in the organizations they studied, women perceived success differently from the organizations in which the women worked, and the effect of devaluing women’s work and women’s communication excluded female employees from critical decisions and possibilities for advancement. The male employees appeared to have no discrepancies between what the organization defined as a successful employee and their own definitions. To learn the conceptions of career success of faculty members in higher education, faculty members were asked to write their current definition of success. Specifically, faculty members
were asked: We would like you to define “career success.” What does career success mean to you? How will/did you know when you were/are successful?

Re-evaluations of Conceptions of Career Success. Research on possible selves in adult development indicates that adults re-evaluate perceptions about themselves over time. Because possible selves research indicates that adults re-think their potential, faculty were asked if their original definition (the one they held when they began their careers) of career success had changed. To determine to the ways their conceptions of career success had changed, faculty were specifically asked:

Some research indicates that people begin their careers with a vision of success in that career, and that this vision changes over time. We would like to know if that kind of re-evaluation occurs with faculty at this university.

What happened that led you to alter your definition? Please describe a key event which contributed to changing how you view success.

Participants could write as much as they wanted to answer each open-ended question.

This type of question regarding key events about faculty members’ conceptions of career success was based on the critical incident technique. Flanagan’s (1954) critical incident technique offers a set of guidelines for critical incidents and for eliciting descriptions of incidents from participants for analysis. An incident qualifies as critical for analytic purposes if it stands out from the norm. In this study, incidents were considered critical incidents because the incidents were identified by participants to be significant to their conception of career success.
Perceived University Conception of Career Success. Faculty were also asked for their perception of the university’s definition of career success for faculty. Consistent with possible selves theory, the perception of what it takes to succeed has relevance, for what others actually expect may not be as meaningful as the perceptions faculty hold about university expectations (Markus & Nurius, 1986; Strahan & Wilson, 2006). Faculty were specifically asked: “How do you see your university’s conception of career success? List all the criteria you see as important to your university or college.”

Perceived Constraints and Fears Regarding Career Success

The possible selves construct includes feared selves as a component of one’s self conception (Markus & Nurius, 1986, 1987; Frazier & Hooker, 2006). Perceptions of fears can affect perceptions of what one can achieve (Markus & Nurius, 1986, 1987, and work-life balance issues, which Hochschild (1989, 1997) found can affect career success, often for married women with children more than for married men with children. So faculty were asked about fears and constraints that may be affecting their career success:

Now we would like you to turn your attention to factors that you perceive as constraining your achievement of success. Constraints may be factors at the university, physical or emotional limitations, fears regarding your career, or demands from other aspects of your life. Please list the constraints or fears that impede you in achieving your current concept of success.

Conversations about Career Success

The third type of questions contained in the questionnaire asked about conversations faculty had about career success. A similar set of questions were asked about conversations faculty members had about their own conceptions of success,
their university’s conceptions of success and conversations about constraints and fears they had about attaining career success. These are described next.

*Conversations about Conceptions of Career Success.* After giving their conceptions of career success faculty were asked to give the details of a conversation they had about their conception of career success. Faculty could write about a conversation they held, overheard or that occurred in a meeting. The only criterion was that the participants perceived the conversations as significant for them. Participants first indicated if they had had such a conversation. If they indicated they had such a conversation, they were then presented with the following:

We are interested in conversations you have had about your career, and how these conversations have helped you define your ideas of career success. Please select a memorable conversation you have had, and record it below. This may include ideas about how you budget your time, job requirements, criteria for promotion, etc. Try to record what you said and what the other person said, and write down as much of the conversation as you can recall.

After reporting their conversations, faculty were asked how the conversation helped or hindered development of their conception of career success. This item was designed to gather more information about the faculty member’s perception of the conversation. Glesner and Peshkin (1992) recommend nonthreatening probing questions to help gain information from participants that may not be forthcoming with a prompt that asks for description only, as did the conversations’ items.

Following the open-ended items about conversations, faculty were asked a series of items regarding the details of the conversation. They were asked who the conversation was with (male, female, family member, their position at the university and relationship
to the participant), and how well the participant knew the conversation partner or partners. If more than two were involved in the conversation, participants were asked to report the number of males and females. Participants were asked how typical the conversation was, answering on a four-point Likert-type scale, “very atypical,” “somewhat atypical,” “typical,” “somewhat typical,” or “very typical.” This item was added to indicate whether the conversations were representative of many conversations held, or if the conversation was significant to the individual because it was unique.

Participants were also asked to estimate the length of the conversation: “less than or equal to five minutes,” “less than or equal to fifteen minutes,” less than or equal to an hour,” “over an hour,” “about two hours,” or “longer than two hours.”

Finally, participants were asked about the overall quality of the conversation, in terms of the extent to which faculty felt satisfied, comfortable and validated by the conversation. Specifically, participants indicated how satisfied they were with the conversation based on a four-point Likert-type scale. Possible answers were extremely dissatisfied, dissatisfied, neither dissatisfied nor satisfied, extremely satisfied.

Participants were also asked “How comfortable were you with this conversation?” This response format was a five-point Likert-type scale that ranged from “Extremely uncomfortable” to “uncomfortable,” to “neither uncomfortable nor comfortable,” to “comfortable,” and finally, “extremely comfortable.” Finally, participants were asked “How did you feel as a result of this conversation?” On a five-point Likert-type scale, possible responses were: “I felt very disregarded,” “I felt somewhat disregarded,” “I felt neither satisfied nor dissatisfied,” “I felt somewhat validated,” “I felt very validated.”
These three items were averaged to form a measure of conversation quality \((\text{alphas} = .77, .83, .76)\).

**Conversations about University Conceptions of Career Success.** After indicating their university’s criteria for faculty success, faculty were asked whether they had had a conversation about others about their university conception of faculty career success. Fletcher’s (2005, 1999) studies found that some policies or practices were so much a part of the organizational culture that they remained unquestioned, even if some organizational members perceived inequities in policies or in practices. Employees sometimes felt that even questioning was not acceptable, and remained quiet about perceived unfair treatment. To determine whether a similar culture may exist for the participants in this study, faculty were asked if they had had such a conversation. If they indicated they had had such a conversation, they were presented with the following:

> How did you learn what your University values from its faculty? Describe the most significant conversation you recall that let you know how to succeed at this university and relate it below. In your detailed description, please include what you believe prompted this conversation.

After describing their conversations, participants were also asked about whether the conversation about the university’s definition of career success for faculty helped or hindered their understanding of career success at their college or university (Glesner & Peshkin, 1992). Then, as with the success conception conversations, participants were asked about their conversation partners, typicality and length of the conversation, and about the quality of the conversation in terms of its satisfaction, comfort, and whether
they felt validated or disregarded. The close ended items employed the same response format as previously described items.

Conversations about Constraints and Fears about Career Success. The last set of open-ended items asked about conversations faculty had regarding constraints or fears impeding career success. Participants were requested to provide detailed descriptions of conversations about constraints or fears, including what they said and what their conversation partner or partners said. Those who had no conversations about career fears or constraints were asked why they had no such conversations. For those who indicated they had such conversations, they were presented with the following:

We are interested in what you talk about regarding the constraints and fears to success you face in your career. Please describe a conversation that was significant to you regarding constraints to your career success. The conversation may have been about any type of constraint, internal or external, at the university, at home or elsewhere. Please include, to the best of your recollection, what the other person said as well as what you said.

After reporting their conversations, faculty were also asked with an open-ended question how the conversation helped or hindered the development of their conception of career success. Then, the same closed-ended questions were used to gather other details about the conversations, including conversation partners and their relationship to the participants, how well the participants knew their conversation partner, and sex of the conversation partner or partners. Faculty were also asked about their conversation partners, typicality and length of the conversation, and about the quality of the conversation in terms of its satisfaction, comfort, and whether they felt validated or disregarded.
A final item was designed to collect data about concepts regarding conceptions of career success not already mentioned: “We are very interested in all aspects of how people come to define success as they do. Please add observations about your career path, conversations about career success, and thoughts and feelings not already requested in this questionnaire.” This item allowed participants to include incidents, conversations or observations which may have had an effect on the development of a concept of success but did not fit a prompt.

The questionnaire ended requesting demographic information about the faculty members (i.e., sex, age) and the size of their universities or colleges. The question about the size of the university was based on the current Carnegie classifications for very small, small, medium and large universities (Carnegie Foundation, 2006). Faculty were also asked to list their departments. The demographic question about race was from racial designations drawn from the most recent US census.

In sum, the questionnaire asked faculty to answer items about their conceptions of success, to describe the conversations they have had about career success, and who they talk with. They were then asked about the size and type of college or university, and then were asked for some demographic information.

**Coding and Analytic Procedures**

Coding began after data was collected. Although 123 faculty members opened the questionnaire, only 75 completed the questionnaire enough to analyze the responses. The cases with no usable responses were deleted from the data pool. As is common with
online surveys, some people opened the questionnaire but did not answer any questions. They may have been curious about the questionnaire itself but did not want to participate. In this section I describe how I developed the categories that constituted the analysis.

Glaser and Strauss (1967) describe a process of inductive analysis for grounded theory which I used to derive a set of categories for describing the content of success conceptions. This process includes studying the responses for common features and then allowing the categories to emerge. The criteria for categories are that the categories are discrete and non-overlapping (Glaser & Strauss, 1967).

Selected Premises and Principles of Qualitative Research

The method used in this study, grounded theory, is a qualitative research method based in symbolic interactionist interpretive approaches as described by Schwandt (1994). Symbolic interactionism, with its emphasis on the construction of meaning through interaction, is consistent with the premises and methods of grounded theory (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Strauss & Corbin, 1994).

When determining whether to use qualitative methods, the researcher must consider the goal of the research. Qualitative research is appropriate when a researcher has a phenomenon in mind to study, but does not have a hypothesis about it, and so formulates research questions. Although qualitative methods often employ some aspects of quantitative research, qualitative research methods can lead to answers to questions not addressed by quantitative studies alone (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994). Also, quantitative data has some limitations in the phenomenon to be studied and what and how much can be learned.
The grounded theory method was described by Glaser and Strauss (1967) in *The Discovery of Grounded Theory*. Glaser and Strauss (1967) explain that the researcher looks for patterns in the data as it is gathered and endeavors to discover patterns that might lead to a general conclusion. Glaser and Strauss (1967) refer to this method as the constant comparative analysis, so named because the researcher is to continue to collect data and to re-examine collected data for continued confirmation. Through this method of generating conclusions and testing them against additional data, the researcher is constantly testing conclusions to see if they can be improved, clarified, or added to.

The constant comparative method involves two processes: the explication of the meaning systems, and building theory.

Miles and Huberman (1994) list thirteen techniques for drawing conclusions in qualitative research, some of which are descriptive and some of which are explanatory. These descriptive tactics are explained next, followed by the explanatory tactics.

The tactics for generating meanings which are descriptive are: noting patterns or themes, seeing plausibility, clustering, making metaphors and counting. Noting patterns and themes is described by Strauss and Corbin (1990) as an important step in the analysis of qualitative data. Grouping the data by patterns or recurring themes helps the researcher untangle the concepts that are in the data, but not immediately noticeable. Grouping the data allows the researcher to see under what conditions specific occurrences are repeated. Adler and Adler (1994) explain that research is seen as “authentic” when readers see the description as resonating with their own experiences, making the research plausible to the reader. To achieve plausibility, researchers may check perceptions with other
interpretations by asking other researchers to look at the data, by looking for negative cases, and by immersing themselves in the participants’ context. In this project, some initial categories were: research, teaching, service, national reputation, attaining tenure and promotion, family-work balance, personal fulfillment, and seeing success as a process rather than a product.

King (1994) successfully employed clustering in his research on patient referral decisions made by general practitioners of medicine. After initially grouping statements from 28 interviews, he found that the data was still unwieldy. He grouped the data into new groupings or clusters, which helped to clarify patterns in the data. In my research, the initial patterns were too many, so some were grouped. “Research,” for example, defined a group which included publications, national reputation, and writing and winning grants. Teaching and Service each stood alone, but attaining tenure and promotion, family-work balance and having an income and full-time work were placed under the heading “Achieving Practical Aims” because they seemed to fit together well and “Achieving Practical Aims” called attention to the purpose of the categories.

Making metaphors is explained by Patton (1990) when he says that metaphors can be used in qualitative analysis for the researcher to understand the language patterns of the participants. Faculty members on a backpacking trip, for example, begin making connections to their work with phrases such as “I need to balance my workload more evenly” (Patton, 1990, p. 229). To understand the significance of this statement, the researcher must know how much more challenging backpacking can be when the backpack is not balanced in weight from left to right and top to bottom. Metaphors can
also be used by researchers to make the findings more understandable to readers, according to Patton (1990).

The last descriptive method mentioned by Miles and Huberman (1994) is counting. Denzin and Lincoln (1994) explain that qualitative methods are by nature multi-methods, so even though counting is more associated with quantitative analysis, it has its usefulness in qualitative analysis. Reporting how many times a phenomenon occurred, for example, shows how common it is among the participants in the study, and allows for comparisons among variables, and for tests of significance when appropriate. According to Patton (1994), employing mixed methods can verify interpretations of some data. For this study, counting the responses in the initial categories helped to show how important some of the initial responses were in comparison to one another, in comparison with the conceptions held at the beginning of the career, and in comparison with the university’s conception of success. For example, research, teaching and service were reported in each of the three conceptions of career success, but with different weights.

The tactics suggested by Miles and Huberman (1994) which are more analytic or explanatory than descriptive are: splitting variables, subsuming particulars into the general, factoring, making contrasts and comparisons, noting relations between variables, finding intervening variables, building a logical chain of evidence, and making conceptual/theoretical coherence. Miles and Huberman (1994) explain that splitting variables and subsuming particulars into the general are important features of the constant comparative method. Moving the variables among categories and making sure the researcher continues to question is crucial to analysis. Strauss and Corbin (1990) describe
what Miles and Huberman (1994) call factoring as moving between inductive and deductive thinking. This process is an integral part of the constant comparative method as it keeps “grounded theory” grounded. In factoring, the researcher proposes possible properties, dimensions and relationships, and then checks those proposals against the data. Identifying intervening variables is a responsibility of the researcher (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). After noticing an intervening variable, the researcher should look for patterns in the intervention—find out why and under what conditions the intervening variables occur. The researcher then continues comparing the intervention to see if the initial conditions observed are borne out across the data. An example of an intervening variable occurred in this study when participants reported that they did not know the university’s conception of success. Although only a few (N = 3) said they did not know their university’s conception of success, a closer look revealed that in these cases, the university had been experiencing some changes, or the individual had experienced a particularly confusing tenure and review outcome, and was, at the time of completing the questionnaire, unsure of what the university expected from its faculty.

Strauss and Corbin (1990) go on to describe comparing and contrasting elements in and among categories. First, data is grouped by general properties, then by various identifiable properties, and finally, by specific dimensions. Theoretical and conceptual coherence is necessary for the theory resulting from the qualitative study to be grounded in the literature (Strauss and Corbin, 1990, 1994). Building a logical chain of evidence (Miles & Huberman, 1994) involves keeping track of the decisions made as the categories are made, reframed, collapsed and split. The logical connections among the
variables, categories and coding becomes apparent to the reader through the story that is told about the data. Developing the story involves deciding what categories and concepts are most relevant to the current study, and remaining focused on those variables. Strauss and Corbin (1990) recommend making decisions about the relevant variables and then setting aside interesting but irrelevant conceptual observations for a different study.

The process of qualitative research involves keeping theoretical concepts at the forefront of the data analysis to avoid becoming overwhelmed by the data, but keeping theories in mind as the researcher examines data that can confirm or challenge the theory. While theoretical and conceptual coherence are crucial to the progress of the research, coherence does not always mean that the theoretical framework at the beginning of the research process will be confirmed by the end (Hartley, 1994). Strauss and Corbin (1990) emphasize the importance of questioning as part of comparing, so an effective researcher is not blind to exceptions and differences in the data. Grounded theory makes use of all of these techniques in the constant comparative method (Potter, 1996). Researchers selecting among these tactics for data analysis should consider the type of evidence gathered as well as the kinds of conclusions they wish to construct.

Application of Grounded Theory

Developing Categories

Glaser and Strauss (1967) describe a process of inductive analysis for grounded theory which I used to derive a set of categories for describing the content of success conceptions. This process includes studying the responses for common features and then allowing the categories to emerge. The criteria for categories are that the categories are
discrete and non-overlapping (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). In this section I describe how I developed the categories that constituted the analysis.

In applying the grounded theory to the data in this study, I began reading data as questionnaires were submitted. After perusing the data several times, I formulated some categories of themes that seemed to recur. However, when more data was submitted from various colleges and universities, the original themes were abandoned as they no longer applied across the data. Lists of themes were generated from the larger sample that occurred in the responses to the three definition questions (original definition, current definition, and university or college definition). The categories were research, teaching, service, tenure/promotion, national reputation, attaining an administrative post, winning grants, family-work balance, self-fulfillment, income, building relationships, success as a journey, and “no concept given.” These categories for definitions were useful in comparing among the three different definitions requested in the questionnaire. A more experienced researcher helped cluster (Miles & Huberman, 1994; King, 1994) these into larger themes for more efficient and useful analysis: Research success trajectory; teaching, service and networking; achieving practical aims; personal growth trajectory, and “other,” which included rising to an administrative post and “no concept given.” These categories revealed how many faculty conceptualized career success in ways consistent with the colleges’ and universities’ definitions (results are included in Chapter 4), but these categories were limited in their usefulness in addressing other research questions, such as how faculty talk about success, or for understanding broader themes. The first set of categories is presented in Table 3.1.
While the specifics of each category and analyses of these categories are presented in the next chapter, Table 3.1 presents the basic types of categories that emerged from the responses. For definitions of career success for faculty, the categories that emerged were: research success trajectory; teaching, service, networking trajectory; achieving practical aims trajectory; and a personal growth trajectory. The “research success” trajectory included research, a national reputation, and winning grants. The “teaching, service, networking” trajectory included excellence in teaching, providing service to the university or college or the discipline, and networking or building relationships. The “achieving practical aims” trajectory included tenure and promotion to a specified rank, balancing work and family, and having a steady income, or a specified income. The “personal growth” trajectory included personal fulfillment and a continual process or journey. An “other” category was added to include the few responses that did not fit into the trajectories. These were achieving an administrative post as defining career success for a faculty member, and “don’t know.” The same categories were applied to the types of definitions of success requested in the questionnaire: the current definition faculty describe for themselves, the definition they held when they started their careers, and the universities’ or colleges’ definition of career success for faculty. The were also used to develop larger patterns in the faculty responses, and provided guidance in developing categories for analyzing the conversations faculty reported having about career success.
### Career Success Conception

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Career Success Conception</th>
<th>Examples from Participants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Research success trajectory</td>
<td>Publishing four articles per year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Publishing a definitive work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bringing in $1,000,000 in grants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching, service, networking</td>
<td>I feel successful when my students are successful.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching</td>
<td>Serving on committees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service</td>
<td>Building successful mentoring and collegial relationships with other scholars</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building relationships</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Achieving Practical Aims</td>
<td>Promotion to full professor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attaining Tenure/</td>
<td>Allows me to have a sane family life</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promotion</td>
<td>Achieving a certain level of income</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family-Work Balance</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Income</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal growth trajectory</td>
<td>Having a job I love to go to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal fulfillment</td>
<td>Can only be gauged in the journey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Continual Process,</td>
<td>and the strength of the desire to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Journey</td>
<td>continue that journey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>Moving to administrative positions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attaining Seniority, Admin Post</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No conception given</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Table 3.1 Categories of Conceptions of Success |

After this coding and analysis was completed, it was determined that although comparisons among the conceptions of career success could be made, another level of analysis was needed. Frazier and Hooker (2006) provide a useful analysis in their research on adult development of possible selves. In their research, they used three categories of influence on adult development of possible selves, and I applied these categories as a higher level of abstraction in analyzing the definitions of success by looking for what influenced the definitions. The three categories used by Frazier and
Hooker (2006) were: mesosystemic influences, which are interpersonal influences; exosystemic influences, which are social norms and expectations; and macrosystemic influences, which refers to culture (interpreted here as organizational culture). Table 3.2 below shows the categories and an example of the type of statement that fits each category. The contents of the categories are reported in Chapter 4.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Higher Level Categories</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mesosystemic Influences</td>
<td>Intrapersonal or interpersonal sources of information or interpretation</td>
<td>My mentor gave me really good advice.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>My definition of success results from my spiritual journey.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exosystemic Influences</td>
<td>Behavior or perception results from social norms or expectations, such as gender roles</td>
<td>The department chair treats me like a secretary.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Macrosystemic Influences</td>
<td>Cultural influences can account for choices. In this study, organizational cultural influences are included</td>
<td>Noone talks about that here.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>My definition of success is different from others here, so I just don’t bring it up.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 3.2. Higher Level Categories*

Within the mesosystemic category, a third set of categories applied to the conversations items. These categories were identified by Benoit (1997) in her extensive analysis of success talk and are shown in Table 3.3. Benoit (1997) found that success talk can be characterized as fitting into four categories, based on whether the speaker is explaining how they are attributing responsibility and significance to the success. Responsibility is “acclaimed” by entitlement or internal causes for success.
Responsibility is “disclaimed” by dissociation, or giving credit to others, or by attributing the success to external or uncontrollable causes. The speaker may attribute significance to the event by “acclaiming” enhancement, such as overcoming obstacles, or an emphasis on self-improvement. In Benoit’s (1997) typology, significance may be disclaimed by detraction, in which the speaker claims the accomplishment is less noteworthy than others or that the success is in a narrow field, or otherwise flawed.

| Responsibility: Entitlement or Acclaiming | Talk of internal causes for success or failure | I worked very hard, putting in many hours when no other faculty were here. |
| Responsibility: Dissociation or Disclaiming | Talk of giving credit to others, or success or failure is attributable to external or uncontrollable causes | My department chair protected me from interference so I could complete my degree. |
| Significance: Enhancement or Acclaiming | Talk of overcoming obstacles in achieving success, or talks of self-improvement either in the process of achieving success, or as a result of the process | I was working full-time while completing my Ph.D., and the department chair put pressure on me to do committee work that was not placed on a male faculty doing the same things I was doing. |
| Significance: Detraction or Disclaiming | Talk of accomplishment being less noteworthy than others, or talks of accomplishment in such a narrow field that there is little competition. | I only teach at a community college, so my evaluations don’t compare with others. |

*Table 3.3 Mesosystemic subcategories for analysis of conversations*
The initial level categories were used to analyze each type of success conception and each type of conversation. Each success conception and conversation type was noted for the presence or absence of each type of category. These categories, along with the higher level categories were used to address the research questions in a qualitative description contained in the next chapter.

All of the data was also entered into an SPSS file for additional descriptive analysis. The number and percentage of representations of each category were calculated. For each of the categories of definitions and of conversations, men’s and women’s responses were calculated. Chi-squares were calculated to determine significance of differences between men’s and women’s responses.

In addition to the initial categories and the higher level categories drawn from Frazier and hooker’s (2005) research, patterns among the qualitative responses were sought. For example, one pattern that became apparent in responses to “How did you learn of your university’s conception of career success for faculty?” several patterns emerged. One was that some people learned through observation. Another pattern was that a dean or department chair might tell the new faculty member about the requirements for making tenure, or a chair might encourage a new faculty to start keeping items for a portfolio to be used at tenure review time. In this pattern, the administrator is cast as a neutral third party and is interpreting the policies or the expectations of the committee.

*Triangulation.* Triangulating multiple sources of data can help to enhance the validity of a qualitative study. “Triangulating” refers to the practice of using more than
one source of data to bear on a single point (Marshall & Rossman, 1994). In this study, faculty from various colleges and universities were asked the same questions. In addition, each participant was asked for a qualitative response about conversations, and then prompted for specific features about the conversation. With this approach, more consistent data about each conversation was gathered. For example, after describing a conversation, participants were asked about how well they knew their conversation partner(s), how they felt during the conversation, the length of the conversation, and if the conversation were typical or atypical. In this way, both subjective and objective data was collected regarding each conversation.

Chapter Summary. Data analysis was completed by employing the coding procedures recommended by Strauss and Corbin (1965) for grounded theory and developing categories for faculty conceptions of career success and conversations about career success. Quantitative analysis was used to compare the number and percent of categories, and to test for significance in comparing responses from men and women.
CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

In this chapter, the results of the study are presented. First, the characteristics of the faculty who completed the survey are described. Then the research questions pertaining to conceptions of career success are addressed: faculty conceptions of career success, perceived university conceptions of career success, and faculty re-evaluations of their conceptions of career success. Perceived constraints and fears are also examined. Then the findings pertaining to the research questions on conversations about career success are addressed: talk about faculty success conceptions, talk about university success conceptions, and talk about fears and constraints.

Faculty and Institution Demographic Characteristics

Table 4.1 presents the demographic characteristics of the faculty who completed the questionnaire. The sample consisted of 75 faculty members, 49% male and 51% female. While 32% of the participants fell into the 45-54 age range, 57% of the total sample was under the age of 45. The majority of the sample was white (74%) and married or partnered (77%). Since the demographic questions were presented last, this
information was not obtained from a group of participants ($N=16$) who did not fully complete the questionnaire.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristic</th>
<th>$n$</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sex</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>49.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>No designation</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age (years)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26-34</td>
<td>15</td>
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<td>35-44</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>32.3</td>
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<tr>
<td>45-54</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>25.4</td>
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<td>55-64</td>
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<td>65-70</td>
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<td>1.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No designation</td>
<td>16</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Race</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>73.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native American</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African American</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian/Indian</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No designation</td>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relational status</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Married</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>68.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partnered</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Separated or divorced</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>17.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No designation</td>
<td>18</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.1: *Demographic Characteristics of the Faculty Sample ($N = 75$)*

Table 4.2 presents characteristics of the institutions at which the faculty participants were employed. About 40% of the faculty was employed at four year institutions with masters’ degree programs, while another 45% of the institutions had doctorate programs. Institution enrollment size varied, with 39% of the colleges or
universities with 5000 students or less, 26% with 10000 students or less, and 36% with over 10,000 students. About 63% of the faculty had appointments in communication, journalism or rhetoric departments or programs.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristic</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Institution type</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two year</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>15.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Four year</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>18.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Four year plus masters’ program</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>20.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Four year through doctorate</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>45.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No designation</td>
<td>22</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institution Enrollment Size</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&lt;1000 students</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1001-5000 students</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>34.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5001-10,000 students</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>26.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt;10,000 students</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>35.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No designation</td>
<td>22</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty Members’ Units</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arts &amp; Humanities</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business, Management</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication, Journalism</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>47.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computer Science, Engineering,</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mathematics</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English, Writing</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>10.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychology, Social Sciences</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speech Communication, Rhetoric,</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>15.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theatre</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No designation</td>
<td>29</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.2: Institutional Characteristics of the Sample

112
Conceptions of Career Success

In this section are presented the findings pertaining to higher education faculty’s conceptions of career success.

Faculty Conceptions of Career Success

The first set of research questions focused on faculty conceptions of success. Research question 1 asked how faculty define career success. Table 4.3 presents the percentages of each category that appeared in faculty participants’ responses about their conceptions of career success.

Initial Conceptions of career success. Of the faculty who offered a conception of career success, 37% (N=37) identified a research success trajectory. The research success trajectory included research, national reputation, and funded grant proposals. The teaching and service trajectory included 53.2% (N=41) of the faculty. Teaching and service included building relationships. Achieving practical aims included attaining tenure and promotion, family-work balance, and income. Of the faculty who responded to the conception question, 39% (N=30) specified personal aims as part of their conception. “Income” included those who wanted a steady income, such as adjuncts who do not currently know what their income would be during the next academic term, and faculty who wanted a specific income so they could “live comfortably.” The personal growth trajectory included personal fulfillment, and faculty who envisioned career success as a journey or continual process. Those who defined career success as personal growth were 41% (N=30) of the faculty. Three faculty members provided conceptions of career
success that could best be characterized as “other.” One (1.3%) said that attaining seniority and an administrative post defined career success.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Success Conception</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Females n</th>
<th>Males n</th>
<th>Chi-square</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Research success trajectory</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>48.1</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>.817</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Publication</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>20.8</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Reputation</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>35.1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grants</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>44</td>
<td>53.2</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>.151</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching, service</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>23.3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Achieving Practical Aims</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>39.0</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>.013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attaining Tenure/</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>13.0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promotion</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>9.1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Income</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>18.2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal growth trajectory</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>26.0</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>.042</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal fulfillment</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>19.5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Continual Process</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7.8</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attaining Seniority, Admin Post</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Overall percentages based on N = 77. Df = 1, N=59, for Chi-square tests.

Table 4.3: Percentages of Career Success, Initial Conceptions Held by Female and Male College Faculty

Research question 2 asked about the differences between faculty men’s and women’s conceptions of success. A series of chi-square tests were conducted to determine if there were significant differences between male and female college faculty’s conceptions of success. Male college faculty were no more likely than female faculty members to have a conception of success based upon a research trajectory as well as a teaching trajectory. College female faculty had a more practical “survival” conception
than male faculty, but this difference was statistically non-significant. There were no significant differences between female and male college faculty in personal growth conceptions of success.

A second series of chi-square tests was conducted to see if there were significant differences in conceptions of career success by faculty from doctorate granting institutions compared with faculty from all other types of colleges and universities (i.e., two year, four year, or four year with masters’ degrees granted). Using a two category system for university type, Chi-square tests revealed no significant differences on the major categories that appear in Table 4.3 of research, teaching, practical aims, and personal fulfillment ($df$s = 1, $\chi^2$s = .668, .321, .004, and .001, all $ns$).

Many faculty members (66) defined career success for themselves as involving some combination of research, service and teaching, with the largest number referring to teaching. Faculty referred to teaching in a number of ways, with such phrases as “effective teaching/touching students’ lives” and “engagement with students.” One participant was more specific about how teaching can result in success: “students are able to specify in what ways I have contributed to their education, their lives, their understanding of the world.”

Faculty mentioned research in 27 of the responses, one referring to “establishing a respected program of research” while another mentioned that a balance between quality and quantity is important in being successful. One participant focused on research and a national reputation exclusively: “Career success means that I am considered an expert in my area of study. People quote my articles, invite me to speak on panels, and look to me
for guidance and knowledge regarding specific topics.” Grants were mentioned by faculty, with one response referring to $1,000,000 in funding as a career goal.

Service was mentioned by 21 participants. Two mentioned that service needed to be in “in balance” with teaching and research, but participants were not specific about what “balance” would mean to them. Another added this sentence to the end of a conception that specifically mentioned research and teaching: “I don’t really think of service when I think of ‘success,’ I fear.”

“Achieving practical aims” included attaining promotion and tenure, family-work balance, and references to income. Attaining promotion and tenure was the most frequent phrase, with 14 responses, and family-work balance also frequently used with seven responses. For one respondent, balance defined career success:

“Coming to a point where you have learned to balance your career and your personal life, in particular when your career does not take priority over personal life. I came to understand this when I let administration move me into Chairing; my life became overwhelmed by the “needs” of my department and university and I began to dislike my career. Only when I went back to faculty and began doing what I wanted—teaching, research and service, at moderate levels did I once again enjoy what my career is about.”

The personal growth trajectory included personal fulfillment, which was the single most frequently offered phrase (N=29). Three faculty respondents did not see career success as something they can define, but as a journey or continual process. One response said “Knew I was successful when I realized I would be doing what I did either as a volunteer or as a professional.”

In the “other” category, one respondent mentioned attaining seniority or an administrative post as indicative of success, and two gave no conception.
Further qualitative analysis of faculty conceptions of success revealed specific themes. The themes can be seen as relationships, or primacy of specific relationships for the faculty.

A preponderance of faculty (N = 18) gave primacy to their relationship with the university, and foregrounded tenure or rank in their conception of success. In these conceptions, a clear emphasis was placed on how they were perceived in their university, and if those who made the decisions would perceive them as worthy. For these faculty, tenure or becoming a full professor is the goal. Some of these faculty listed other specific goals, but their priority was their position in the university. Some examples were:

“Achieve tenured prof status and grow into department head and if possible dean positions before slowing down. Achieve mentorship of many MS and PhD students. Bring in over $1,000,000 in grants and contracts. Start new programs.”

“Career success means gaining tenure, publishing a definitive work in a noted, peer-reviewed journal in the field, being asked by others to do things like being an external reviewer for a department going up for accreditation, or as an outside reviewer for a tenure case, or being sought out by peers for advice, help, assistance with different aspects of the discipline, etc.”

For other faculty, the relationship they chose to foreground was the students (N =10). These faculty were specific about the kinds of relationships they wished to develop with students, and how their success would be measured. For some, it was teaching evaluations, but more frequently, there were more subjective measures of how the teacher-student relationship would indicate success to the faculty:

“As a teaching professor, career success means perfecting my ability to communicate a knowledge of and enthusiasm for at least the fundamentals of the course I am teaching to my students. If I see in their expressions and I hear in their comments that they understand, that day has been successful for me. If not, I search for another way to present that material the next time I teach it. In addition to my subjective observations, witnessing improvement in their writing performance, both
in technique and content, also makes my teaching seem successful. Finally, the
computerized course assessments required by the university helps me to measure
my attempts at success against colleagues in the same department from other
teaching institutions.”

“I think I am successful when my students are successful--are they able to complete
my course with success, are they able to use the skills in other courses, are they able
to graduate and move on to their chosen careers.”

Some faculty were less specific about how to measure their success in building rapport
with students, but relied on an internal detector:

“Being current in my discipline and having an ability to transfer as much of my
knowledge to students in ways that are interesting and relevant.”

“It means having a good rapport with my students and knowing that they respect
me because of my knowledge and what they learn from me.”

A third relationship that received emphasis in faculty conceptions of success was
their relationship to the field (N = 12). These faculty referred to respect from peers,
respect in their field, recognition through having their work cited, being invited to speak
to national audiences, or being an external reviewer for another university’s program. In
referring to conceptions of success as relationship to the field, faculty were specific and
clear, but stopped short of quantifying numbers of publications or naming specific
journals or venues for speaking. However, these faculty had clear criteria for success:

“To me, career success means making important contributions to research and
theory in my area of the field through carefully drawn case studies that illuminate
larger concerns.”

“Career success means gaining tenure, publishing a definitive work in a noted,
peer-reviewed journal in the field, being asked by others to do things like being an
external reviewer for a department going up for accreditation, or as an outside
reviewer for a tenure case, or being sought out by peers for advice, help, assistance
with different aspects of the discipline, etc.”
Other faculty foregrounded a relationship to a metaphorical conception of success, and saw success as a game or journey (N = 3). This may have been a linguistic strategy to help the faculty avoid achieving a goal and then stopping. These faculty did not specify stopping points in their journey or goals in their game, but formed a verbal picture of continuous striving:

“Excellence and growth in skill and ability with a sustained passion for the work over time. Therefore, success is not an endpoint; success can only be gauged in the journey and the strength of the desire to continue that journey.”

“Career success is understanding the rules of the game and playing the game successfully to achieve status, compensation and perks.”

A fifth relationship foregounded in faculty’s conceptions of success was more of a set of relationships that were working to give attention to (N = 3). These faculty spoke of balance between the professional demands of academia and their families or other interests. Rather than giving primacy to one aspect of themselves, they saw career success as intertwined with general satisfaction:

“Career success for me means achieving in areas of teaching, research, and service, while maintaining a balance of work, family, social, physical, and spiritual life activities. I feel like I can claim a fairly high degree of success by this definition using fairly “objective” indicators. I have received two teaching awards, have published a significant number of journal articles and other publications including some that have received awards, I am serving on editorial boards and on committees at my university, and serve as chair in my department. My wife and I have been married for over 30 years and our two children are successful and independent. I exercise three to four times a week and have even run a marathon. I am active in my church including teaching Bible classes from time to time. I am involved in a community activity or two. I perhaps do not have as many close friends as others, but my wife is my best friend and so a couple close friends seems like enough. So I think I have career success and balance in my life.”
The sixth relationship foregrounded in the faculty’s conception of career success was relationships with the self. For these faculty (N = 17), self-fulfillment was the key to career success. Self-fulfillment was variously described as happiness, job satisfaction, meeting personal goals, and feeling confident that “I would be doing what I do as either a volunteer or a professional.” Some examples of faculty who emphasized their relationship with themselves:

“Career success is being happy on the job. You may have a bad day every so often, but the good days way outnumber the bad.”

“career success = having a job I love to go to”

“Being happy with the quality of your teaching and research.”

One faculty who defined career success as self-fulfillment appeared to interrupt her own thoughts on the subject:

“Currently, I define "career success" as meeting my personal career-related goals, whatever they may be. I have short-term and long-term goals set for myself. Honestly, I never really thought about defining career success.”

A seventh and final relationship foregrounded in faculty responses was a relationship with principles. An antithesis to the participant above who “never really thought about it,” two faculty seemed to have spent careful reflection on career success and had a multi-tiered response:

“As a university professor, career success means having successfully applied Boyer's principles of scholarship, being a successful educator and practitioner of communication, a successful researcher integrating my research in my teaching, revisiting my philosophy of teaching and adapting my teaching to a changing student population and its various learning needs. It also means being involved in the discipline and developing research interests that respond to the need for dealing more effectively with diversity issues and globalization. Career success also means engaging my students in research and contributing to my colleagues' professional and personal growth as the chair of the department. I see my success in academia as
the opportunity to experience all facets of the discipline through administrative activities, curricular activities, publications and the sharing of knowledge. Having a successful career means having had the opportunity to test and develop my abilities and talents in the profession and as a human being. I believe my career has made me a better person.”

“I think of career success for an academic to exist on three tiers. The first tier ("smaller game") is measured in terms of profile and impact in the department, college or university where one teaches. This is measured by having, in any of those entities, visibility as a force for good. This would be indicated by (a) high-quality, trustful relationships with students and colleagues; (b) an ability to weave together (it's an always-evolving, never-completed humbling process) the life of the mind, the resources of the spirit and the teachings of the heart, as well as (c) inspire students and colleagues to do the same; and (d) meeting or exceeding the quantifiable expectations articulated by the university (e.g., receiving certain scores on student evals, accumulating particular line items on the CV, etc.). The second tier ("larger game") is essentially "a," "b," "c" and "c" writ on a national scale. Tier three ("largest game") would, similarly, be those criteria mapped onto an international scale. I am successful in the "smaller game," and to that extent successful in life. I entered the tenure-track academic world in my late 40s and I have not actively pursued second- and third-tier success, although I wouldn't mind if I were to achieve at least second-tier success.”

**University/College Conceptions of Faculty Career Success**

Research questions 3 and 4 asked about faculty knowledge of their college or university’s conception of faculty career success. Faculty responses were coded into the same categories and are presented in Table 4.4. As can be seen, university conceptions exclusively focused on research, teaching and service expectations. Personal growth and practical aims were not a focus. Employing a series of Chi square tests, no differences between male and female views were discovered. A second series of chi-square tests between faculty from doctoral granting institutions versus all other types showed no statistically significant differences on the major categories of research and teaching ($df = 1, \chi^2 = .317$ and 1.276, all $ns$).
Table 4.4: University/College Initial Conceptions of Faculty Career Success

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>University/College Conception of Faculty Career Success</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Females %</th>
<th>Males %</th>
<th>Chi-square</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Research success trajectory</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>73.8</td>
<td>72.4</td>
<td>75.9</td>
<td>.090</td>
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<tr>
<td>Publication</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>68.9</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Reputation</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8.2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grants</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>13.1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>45</td>
<td>73.8</td>
<td>65.5</td>
<td>79.3</td>
<td>1.381</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching, service,</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>73.8</td>
<td>65.5</td>
<td>79.3</td>
<td>1.381</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>67.2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>57.4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Achieving Practical Aims</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attaining Tenure/</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promotion</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family-Work Balance</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Income</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal growth trajectory</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal fulfillment</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Continual Process, Journey</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attaining Seniority, Admin Post</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6.4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t know</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6.6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* Overall percentages based on \( N = 61 \). Df = 1, \( N = 58 \) for Chi-square tests.

Males and females both saw that their universities and colleges perceived faculty career success to emphasize research, teaching and service. While a few (N=4) saw success at their university as acquiring an administrative post, a much greater emphasis was on teaching (N=41) and research (N=42).

A qualitative analysis of the responses yielded a richer picture of the way faculty saw their college or university’s conception of career success. Taking the responses and categories as a whole, six patterns could be discerned, reflecting different experiences about their university perceptions of career success.
A first pattern consisted of those few faculty (N=4) who said they were “not sure” about their university’s conception of career success, partially because “tenure and promotion varies” or that they were “not longer sure;” “darned if I know.”

A second pattern consisted of nearly half the faculty (N=30) who indicated some cluster of success criteria, but who named teaching as first in their university’s conception of career success (e.g., “teaching, research, service”). Teaching was referred to in a variety of ways in these responses, such as “good,” “excellent”, or “successful” or as just “teaching,” or the teaching criteria was expressed not as the activity of teaching, but as “teaching evaluations.” Excellent teaching was “teaching evaluations above a 4.0,” or “quantitative data from Course and Teaching ratings.” Far fewer faculty indicated dimensions of teaching beyond obtaining quantitative course ratings. Two exceptions were:

“Good teaching required, judged by content, rigor, method, and effectiveness. Evidence from peer observations, student evaluations, self-reflection, course materials, comments on graded materials.”

“Criteria: Teaching effectiveness/academic rigor; Student Learning Involvement (Classroom/Research/Internships); Program Development; Student Placement After Graduation (Employment/Graduate School); Faculty Governance/University Involvement.”

A few other faculty indicated “load credit” or “retention of students” as teaching related criteria.

A third pattern of responses to faculty perceptions of university conceptions of career success indicated a sense of change occurring with their university’s conception of success and dissatisfaction with that change, or were just expressions of other
dissatisfactions with their university’s conceptions of success. While only a small number, the expressions were clear, as in these examples:

“The Dean of our college defines career success by filling out standardized forms which do not reflect in the least what it is I do as a member of this institution.”

“Faculty here are referred to as ‘children’ by the HR Director and are spied on…”

“As a coach/faculty member it is very complicated. Many of us feel that a contradiction exists.”

“evaluating in a positive manner those faculty who are compliant.”

“This university is shifting gears and I am watching some very negative things happen.”

While university conceptions of career success were seen as shifting to an emphasis on more research related activities, many faculty members reported that these were already the primary criteria on which they were evaluated at their universities. This fourth pattern of responses regarding career success took several forms. Many perceived the university’s conception as involving scholarly productivity, as in:

“several papers published”

“number of desired research publications of a certain quality.”

“Publishing 5+ refereed manuscripts a year”

“publishing, publishing, publishing probably after that, good teaching and service”

Others stressed national reputation, perhaps best summed up this way:

“To my knowledge my university defines success in ways similar to my own conception by emphasizing recognition (in a field, in the university, in the community) as the ultimate measure of success. …the key term here is RECOGNITION.”
Fewer faculty \( (N=5) \) stressed grants, although the responses indicated that grants were gradually being stressed more as a conception of career success. Yet, the following was the only response that named grants as a first criterion:

“Being a P.I. on a federal grant is the criteria. Other things that will carry weight include editing a journal, holding office in a professional organization (national or international)…”

The teaching and research patterns of response could be distinguished by the relative role of the importance of teaching. While some faculty reported teaching first, some increasingly saw their university stress scholarly productivity and down play teaching. As one faculty member put it: “No one has ever been denied tenure because of their teaching.”

A fifth pattern of responses were from those faculty who recognized the university’s conception as having a practical aim. Two faculty saw attaining tenure or receiving a Ph.D. the criteria, while another faculty member tied the university’s conceptions to income. This faculty member talked about merit and changes in how salary decisions were made:

“The baseline for success is how well I meet the expectations for teaching, research, and service that correspond with my position description. Our faculty has unionized since I’ve been here and that is casting a long and uncertain shadow over how and what is valued. Salary increases are now to be based in part on "merit," and the detailing of what constitutes "merit" is beginning to imply that a whole host of additional tasks and opportunities and recognitions may become important. In this case, salary increases appear to be related to several factors, and is leading to some re-evaluation about the conception of success at that institution.”

A last pattern were a few responses from those faculty who cited service to their department or university or attaining administration posts as part of what the university
viewed as career success. Faculty believed the university wanted more and higher
service from them, as in the following examples:

“Moving to administrative positions. College and community service.”

“I teach at a community college where instructors work themselves to the bone.”

“I think this college views faculty as 'successful' when they leave the faculty and
do something perceived as real work, like becoming a chair, dean, or department
director.”

**Summary of initial faculty conceptions of career success.** Faculty generally saw
their university or college’s conception of success as incorporating varying types of
teaching, research and service. Achieving personal aims was mentioned much less
frequently than in personal conceptions of career success, and personal growth was not
perceived as part of the universities’ conceptions at all. Six patterns emerged in faculty
perceptions of the colleges’ or universities’ conceptions of success. First, some faculty
did not know what their university defined as career success. Secondly, nearly half of the
responses included teaching and teaching evaluations as the first criterion. A third
showed discontent with either the university’s conception of success or the university in
general. A fourth pattern was faculty who perceived research as the first criterion, with
research success measured by the number of publications or the reputation of the scholar.
A fifth pattern recognized practical aims as part of the university’s conception of success,
which included the terminal degree, or tenure or income as indicators of career success.
The final pattern was those who saw service as most important to the university. No
differences were reported between male and female faculty members on these categories.
Faculty Re-evaluations of Career Success Conceptions

Research question 5 asked how faculty reflect upon and re-evaluate their conceptions of career success. Tables 4.5 and 4.6 present descriptive statistics on re-evaluation conceptions. Table 4.5 shows that 61% of the faculty re-evaluated their conceptions of their success at some point. The re-evaluations took place equally among females and males. Table 4.6 presents the types of re-evaluations that occurred.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reevaluation of Career Success</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Females</th>
<th>Males</th>
<th>Chi-Square</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No re-evaluation</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>38.67</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Re-evaluation taken place</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>61.33</td>
<td>63.3</td>
<td>72.4</td>
<td>.557</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Overall percentages based on $N = 75$. $df = 1$, $N=59$, for Chi-square test.

Table 4.5 Percentage of Reevaluations of Career Success Conceptions of Female and Male College Faculty

Table 4.5 shows that over half the faculty re-evaluated their views of research, teaching and service success. As can be seen, there were no differences between female and male faculty on these two category types, but there was a significant difference in the re-evaluations of practical conceptions, with females altering their conceptions more than males. There was little re-evaluation that occurred in the personal growth category.

A second series of chi-square tests between faculty from doctoral granting institutions versus all other types revealed no significant differences on success re-evaluations for research, teaching, and practical aims ($df = 1$, $\chi^2 = .048$, .114, and .305, all $ns$).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Types of Success Reevaluation</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Females</th>
<th>Males</th>
<th>Chi-square</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Research success trajectory</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Publication</td>
<td>29</td>
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<td>65.0</td>
<td>61.9</td>
<td>.042</td>
</tr>
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<td>National Reputation</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>29.8</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grants</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching, service,</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>53.4</td>
<td>10.0</td>
<td>23.8</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>17.0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Achieving Practical Aims</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>38.3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attaining Tenure/</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promotion</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>29.8</td>
<td>55.0</td>
<td>23.8</td>
<td>4.188*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family-Work Balance</td>
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<td>0.0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Income</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>10.6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal growth trajectory</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td></td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal fulfillment</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Continual Process, Journey</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attaining Seniority, Admin Post</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6.4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* Overall percentages based on N = 75. Df = 1, N=41, for Chi-square tests. Denotes inability to compute Chi-square tests due to low frequencies.

Table 4.6: Reevaluations of Career Success Initial Conceptions of Female and Male College Faculty

Table 4.6 shows how faculty conceived of career success at the beginning of their careers, before their conceptions were re-evaluated. Using the same categories as the conceptions currently held (Table 4.4) shows that over time, conceptions of success have evolved to include more concepts. A further qualitative analysis of these categories showed five distinct patterns of response. By far, the most common type of faculty re-evaluation concerned the university’s expectation for scholarly reputation and productivity. Twenty five faculty indicated that they shifted from a conception of success
that focused on research to a conception of success that embraced teaching, service, or other aspects of life in a more balanced way. For example:

“Publishing, making a name for myself, used to be a consideration. It is less important now.”

“I don't think I would have considered having a job at a lower-tier university to have been compatible with success. ..What led me to change my conception was feeling reasonably fulfilled and academically stimulated at a relatively small state university.”

“Seeing how unhappy people are even when they are full professors, or even more so as administrators. I look at that and think, ’is that the life I want?’ Often the answer is no…”

“While in graduate school I met a partner that I wanted to marry. Suddenly I began to realize that there was far more to life than work and recognition for work. I saw through my partner's eyes that I was putting my work above any other aspect of life.”

“The key event is a feeling of pointless in my job. I have achieved those things that I thought would make me 'successful' (except for being a well-known researcher). Yet, I am incredibly unhappy…”

Faculty cited many different types of events that led to their re-evaluation. Job competitiveness prevented some faculty from obtaining jobs at tier 1 institutions. Most indicated that it was not one event that led to their re-evaluation, but a series of events over time. Most reported a general disenchantment and dissatisfaction with their research trajectory as their conception of career success, instead embracing a balance of teaching, research, service and family life in their lives.

Four other faculty indicated that their re-evaluations moved in the opposite direction; they had not intended to become researchers, but found the process an enjoyable addition to their teaching.
A second pattern of responses were those faculty members who had switched from some career into higher education as a career. These faculty saw their career switch to education as a switch to serving others: “previously in my career my idea of ‘success’ was focused only on my own product (output) and not on helping others succeed in their career ambitions.”

A third pattern came from those faculty who were re-evaluating teaching or administration. A few faculty saw teaching today’s students as particularly difficult, but others welcomed the challenge:

“Students have changed. In the early days, they seemed to want to learn, to gain knowledge. Now, it is challenge to keep their attention while entertaining them. And they have lost respect for what we, as teachers, do.”

“At each stage there is some revelation about how I could do my job better. My primary job is still as a professional educator. I see now, though, that colleagues who will stimulate and challenge my ideas make me a better teacher.”

Still others saw themselves as incorporating more service to professional organizations or to the administration of their own universities.

A fourth pattern came from those faculty who had focused on securing employment, teaching, and attaining tenure and who had changed their conception of success once they had received tenure: “I still think tenure is important, but have come to appreciate that some people have what I consider a successful career without it.”

Summary of faculty re-evaluations of career success conceptions. Over half the faculty re-evaluated their conceptions of career success since the beginning of their careers, with the largest shift moving from research as their first goal to teaching, service or other aspects of their lives in a more balanced way. Some faculty also discovered that
they enjoyed research and moved it to a more prominent place in their view of success. A second pattern of re-evaluation emerged from those for whom education is a second career, one which they characterized as helping others. A third pattern indicated that faculty were re-evaluating their role in teaching or administration or service, and a fourth were those who had worked to attain a job in academia and tenure, after which re-evaluation occurred. The re-evaluations of conceptions of success on these basic categories indicate that faculty can and do shift their conceptions of success during their careers.

**Perceived Constraints and Fears about Career Success**

Research questions 7 and 8 asked about faculty’s perceptions of constraints and fears about their career success. One analysis of their responses is presented in Table 4.7. Nearly 90% of the faculty recognized constraints in obtaining their notion of career success, with most indicating that the constraints came either from the university or themselves. There were no significant differences in the perception of constraints by male and female faculty, $\chi^2 (df =1), = .002, ns.$

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Perceived Constraints and Fears</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Perceived constraints</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>89.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>from university</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>53.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>from other sources</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>13.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>from self</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>43.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No designation</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>16.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note. Overall percentages based on $N = 75$. Sub-categories may not total to 100% because faculty could list more than one statement or message element.*

Table 4.7: *Perceived Constraints and Fears about Faculty Career Success*
A qualitative analysis was undertaken to learn the kinds of constraints and fears faculty members experienced as they pursued their careers. This analysis produced five patterns of response.

A first pattern of response concerned the use of time. Faculty (n=11) complained that they just had no time to complete what the projects they wanted to complete or that the workload made quality work difficult to produce:

“Time is the only real constraint. I know what I want to do and how to do it. There just isn't enough time.”

“2. I have many ideas for projects, but there is not time in the day to do all of them.”

“Amount of time spent teaching - we are asked to teach so many sections it makes teaching well a challenge. Committee service eats up much important time for writing and teaching prep…Time is the biggest constraint.”

“I teach many classes and large classes. Drains time from the scholarly activities that university demands.”

A related second pattern concerned the sheer workload faculty faced, such as “ridiculous” paperwork, as with “dissatisfaction with continuous contract renewals.” One faculty member put it this way: “The greatest constraints to my professional success are an unreasonable teaching load, a heavy advising load, and a lack of compensation (time or money) for particularly onerous service.” Another put it this way:

I have a concern that the work load expected at this school could get in the way. At times I feel like I don't have enough time to really be as excellent as I could. There are activities, such as research, that I really don't have time to do.

A third pattern is faculty’s belief that their university does not support faculty for their ideas, does not respect faculty, or does not provide faculty with needed resources to teach or to conduct research, despite university expectations:
“Faculty support for ideas and implementation. University financial support. Equipment availability. Increasing demands from administration for increased research involvement with little support for effective research.”

“Lack of support from the chair/dean. Lack of resources.”

While most responses in this pattern focused on the individual faculty member constraints, some discovered their department’s programs as part of their own success. Seeing the university not care about the faculty member’s department, poor leadership, or apathy from other faculty were also seen as constraints.

A fourth pattern of response concerned the faculty members’ need to balance their personal and family life. Several faculty (N=14) reported managing the arenas of work and personal life as a constraint or life choice that shapes career success:

“The need to balance family and social life with my work is a real constraint in my mind.”

“a desire for perfection at odds with a desire for balanced living, fatigue that settles in when too many tasks are on the table”

“Family has become more important to me, constraining my desire to see 'success' only in my career.”

“My spouse is an athletic coach and has a completely different schedule than mine. We have a 4 year old daughter and we are constantly juggling schedules to drop off/pick up from preschool and dealing with typical family situations.”

Besides structural and time management issues, faculty indicated several other patterns that were constraints and fears. A fifth pattern had to do with faculty members’ own fears and anxieties about publishing to attain tenure or to achieve merit or higher levels of promotion, such as:

“Poor self-discipline--I simply do not make myself do what I must in writing and publishing to get to the second tier. That's it.”
“The other are just mainly fears, I fear loss of control over my words, and it makes it hard for me to subject my work to peer-review, even though I know I have to, and that I do want that validation.”

“The need to publish to be considered a good professor.”

This is complicated by the observation by some faculty that colleagues do not foster collaboration and their administration does not recognize or respect faculty work:

“My chair sees my administration work as secretarial which is emotionally tedious and administratively tedious.”

“Stupid administrators at the provost level and above. And fellow/peer administrators who were jealous and wanted to stop our growth.”

“Lack of university or department reward or recognition. It doesn't matter to them if I achieve my personal career goals; I can do average work and still get what I'm getting now.”

“A restricting competition among colleagues. Faculty sometimes find success in 'one-upping' others, outshining instead of supporting efforts and personal accomplishments.”

“Colleagues who seem to resent when someone other than themselves gets a publication.”

This last pattern revealed a distinct set of constraints, both unified by a lack of respect and good will. Colleagues are reported to be non-caring and competitive, while administrators do not recognize one’s worth.

Summary of perceived constraints and fears about career success. These patterns form a distinct picture, one of faculty who often lack the time to accomplish their goals, goals that often lack university or collegial support. Interpersonal jealousies, departmental lack of respect, and personal life presents other external constraints that
exacerbate the internal anxieties some faculty have about meeting university expectations for tenure or merit.

Conversations about Career Success

In this last section I address the ways higher education faculty talked about career success. Three types of conversations were examined: conversations about career success, conversations about the university’s conception of career success, and conversations about faculty’s fears and perceived constraints about attaining career success. For each type of conversation, two types of analyses are presented, one focusing on structural features of the conversations, and the second focusing on the topical content and practices appearing in the conversations.

Table 4.8 presents the percentage of faculty who reported such conversations. Of the faculty responding to the questionnaire, 52 faculty reported conversations about their University’s conception of success; 32 reported conversations about their university’s conception of success; and 45 faculty reported conversations about fears and constraints.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Conversation Types</th>
<th>Yes N</th>
<th>No N</th>
<th>Chi-square</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Conversation about conceptions of success</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>17.75***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conversation about university conception of career success</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>.621</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conversations about fears and constraints</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>24.00***</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. df = 1, N = 69, for success conversations, N = 58 for university conceptions conversations, and N = 58 for fears and constraints conversations. *** = p < .001.

Table 4.8: Percentage of Faculty Reporting Conversations about Career Success

Table 4.8 shows that faculty reported they were more likely than not to have a conversation about their conceptions of success, but that they were not more likely to have conversation about university conceptions of success. Faculty also reported that they were more likely than not to have a conversation about their fears and constraints.

Features of Conversations about Conceptions of Career Success

Research question 9 asked about how faculty talk about career success. Structural features of the conversations that faculty reported about career success are presented in Table 4.9. Conversations were likely to be with another faculty member (48%). About 17% of the conversations took place with friends or family. Faculty participants knew their conversation partners at least somewhat well (94%) and considered the conversation to be typical (88%) and of at least of moderate quality, in terms of being satisfying, validating, and comforting (60%). While 40% of the faculty reported that their conversations took less than 15 minutes, 21% reported that their conversations lasted longer than an hour.
Faculty who did not report on conversations about career success were asked why they did not have such conversations. They reported that the climate, including differing opinions was not conducive ($N=9$), that the topic was too personal ($N=6$).

“I can't recall a conversation in which "career success" was meaningful topic. I tend to reflect on it after conversations about courses people teach, faculty load, administrative responsibilities, etc. Career success for me is something I think about by myself rather than talk about with others.”

or that it never occurred to them ($N=10$). Some faculty who did not talk about career success felt that views of success were exhibited through behaviors, and that talk was not necessary:

“I tend not to communicate about my successes. I am a type A and very committed to my profession. My colleagues come to work to socialize, collect a paycheck and occasionally write a conferences paper. I have worked as a Research I university and understand what it means to work hard. My colleagues mock me for my successes, so I remain voiceless.”

Most faculty who did have conversations regarding career success reported that they helped (69%, $N=35$) rather than hindered them (11.8%, $N=6$) or that the conversations neither helped or hindered them (13.7%, $N=7$). Female and male faculty did not differ in the percentage of those who had helpful conversations, $\chi^2 = 1.83$, ($df=1$, $N=44$), $ns$. 
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Conversation Success Conversation Features</th>
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<td>Who conversation was with</td>
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<td>Spouse, parent, child</td>
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<td>Another faculty member</td>
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</tr>
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<td>4.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students, former students</td>
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<td>3.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mentor, adviser, elder</td>
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<td>Somewhat typical/Typical</td>
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<td>Length of the Conversation</td>
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Table 4.9: Features of Faculty Conversations about Conceptions of Success
A qualitative analysis of the conversations revealed several patterns or types of conversations. One type was a mentoring conversation (N = 7). This type of conversation took place between the faculty member and a younger colleague, or between the faculty member and his/her own advisor, mentor, administrator, or trusted colleague. In them, faculty members learned or were taught conceptions of success, as in these examples:

“My mentor has talked about places where I can grow intellectually, as well as academically.”

“One of my professors pulled me aside and told me that I needed to find a secular sense of ‘calling,’ and that if I found that and followed, I could consider myself successful.”

“The most satisfying thing about being a chair was helping the faculty in the department improve their research—to empower them.”

“When I was in grad school I had a conversation with my advisor in which we discussed choices. He pointed out to me that we all make career-related choices and that I shouldn't judge others' choices based on my own values. I agreed. I still think of this conversation a lot. He basically conveyed that we all define our own goals and make choices regarding them.”

A second type of conversation was similar to mentoring, but focused on the specific tasks involved with attaining tenure, promotion, and merit recognition (N = 7). These conversations typically revolved around the idea of what the faculty needs to achieve to be successful at their particular school, not necessarily within the field itself. While some faculty recognized that these conversations “overemphasized” number of publications, faculty reported having “how are you doing” conversations with their mentors at annual conferences. Topics include:
“Faculty talk more about jumping through the hoops defined by the university to reach some level...mostly rank.”

“Most of the conversations of career success around my department have to do with how many ‘A’ publications you have. And, how it relates to tenure. That’s almost all that anyone talks about.”

These conversations leaned toward finding out exactly what is needed to attain tenure, so that the faculty member would be assured he or she would be completing the minimum requirements.

A third type of conversation focuses on collegial discussions of teaching, including effective teaching techniques, problems with the university disregarding instructors, and only occasionally, innovation (N = 3): “I often talk about this with a colleague. We talk about the importance of freedom to be creative and the importance of connection with students.”

A fourth type of conversation involved colleagues and students between or within the faculty member’s institution and focused on program goals and development (N = 4), as in:

“It is more of a general ‘how is your program doing’ and leads to discussions of future goals.”

“As my experience has grown, I have had former players/students who have communicated what they enjoyed about our program.”

A fifth type of conversation focused on the practical aims of working and problems associated with working at the faculty member’s current institution (N = 3). These conversations were infrequent and focused on faculty dissatisfactions and frustrations:
“Talking with a professional colleague: I feel like I’m wasting my time—my students don’t care, as long as I don’t get sued the administration doesn’t care what I do. Colleague responds that she feels the same way a lot of the time—frustration, knowing that we will never be able to get 99% of our students to recognize, much less understand, the theories we find so illuminating and important.”

A sixth type of conversation was discussions of contradictions between policy and practice at specific universities, or judgments about others’ views (N = 11).

“When I first arrived on campus I asked what would be the measure of the success of my program. I was given a five year goal and exceeded it in my first year. Therefore, I realized the goals were artificial and had no meaning. I asked my dept. chair and was told that I could write my own benchmarks because I was the expert in the field. I have been doing so ever since.”

“I remember a conversation about the disconnect between formally recognized career success at my university (publication, rank, etc) and the ‘perks’ that accompany career success (office location, teaching schedule, pay). The perks are still awarded to the "Good Old Boys," despite young female and male faculty successes in officially recognized ways. That is, seniority counts for a lot where I work--as does who you go out drinking with after work.”

“Most of the conversations that might apply were too long to detail here but can be summarized as colleagues/friends/acquaintances complaining about promotion/advancement procedures and my own relief that I did not care about such procedures.”

A seventh type of career success conversation among faculty was discussions of including aspects of personal fulfillment when considering what success means, and the primacy of perception in what personal fulfillment, or career success might be for oneself or others. Some faculty mentioned the usefulness of verbalizing their conception, as the talk helped clarify conceptions:

“The basic gist of the conversation I have had more than once involves my general philosophy of what it means to be successful. I think part of the conversational process has been to clarify for myself what I believe success to be. I think success has a lot to do with being competent in what I do, but also being happy with what I
do and feeling a sense of fulfillment in my interactions with students. While I understand the need for more standardized measurement of success, I can’t define personal success as only living up to those standards. I have been able to live up to my own standard. I have to know in my gut that I am doing well-for me-not just adhering to some checklist of behaviors that is viewed as success. success has a cognitive and emotional component to me, not just a behavioral component.”

An eighth pattern of responses to the questions regarding faculty conceptions of success was perception-checking (N = 12). Faculty wanted to verify that they understood policies, were making wise career decisions, or at least that someone else saw their choices the same way. Faculty seemed to find others in similar life circumstances or those who had been through similar circumstances, and verified that they were still in the right career or university:

“Much of what my faculty friends and I talk about surrounds the issue of career-as-lifestyle. (It may be appropriate to note that I'm fresh out of graduate school, which affects some of the conversation.) Our advisors kept telling us that we'd have to "pay our dues" at R1 jobs in order to be happy later in life, but we're not so sure. We keep talking about the desire to balance a life (social, family, personal) with a career, and find ourselves resisting conventional wisdom that tells us to take certain paths through our work.”

Some faculty found a trusted friend and then through talk, gained perspective on their own feelings:

“I can only think of one conversation about [a rancorous faculty meeting and negativity that followed] that stands out. It was soon after, later last spring. I said something like the following to a colleague in my area, while sitting chatting in his office. "For the first time since I came here, this spring I haven't felt completed sure that I am meant to be here." He immediately said, "you're going to be leaving us and taking another job!" Not having gotten that far in my thinking, I was startled and asked me, "what makes you say that?!" He said, "I don't know! It just came to me and I said it." That was really the first time I put the two thoughts together and opened my mind to the possibility I might be leaving, and to consider what that might mean. I don't know that this conversation was explicitly about career success, but certainly it was meaningful, and certainly it had implications about optimal career path.”
Summary of conversations about conceptions of career success. Faculty talked about their conceptions of career success most frequently with other faculty that they knew somewhat well and second most frequently with family members. Those who had no conversations about career success said the climate was not conducive, or the topic was too personal, or it did not occur to them to talk about it. Of those who held conversations, eight types of conversations emerged from faculty responses: mentoring conversations: advice regarding achieving tenure or promotion; collegial discussions of teaching; program goals and development; practical aims and problems with the university; contradictions between policy and practice or judgments about others’ views; personal fulfillment and the primacy of perception; and perception-checking. Faculty were more likely to see these conversations as helpful than not.

Features of Conversations about University Conceptions of Career Success

Research question 10 asked about the conversations faculty had about their college or university’s concept of career success for faculty. The categories that resulted from analyzing their responses are presented in Tables 4.10 and 4.11. About 58% of faculty reported having conversations with colleagues or administrators about university success conceptions, while 44% reported learning about their university’s success conception through formal forums, such as the job interview, faculty handbook, performance evaluations or the tenure and review process. Others noted that they learned about their university’s success conception through observation or their union contracts.
Chi-square tests showed no differences on the conversation or formal forums by male and female faculty, $\chi^2 = .596$ and $.381$, $df = 1$, $N = 55$, $ns$, respectively.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Methods of Learning about University’s Success Conception</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>Conversations</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>with administrators</td>
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<td>22.8</td>
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<tr>
<td>in meetings</td>
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<td>19.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>about discrepancies about policy &amp; practice</td>
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<td>1.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Formal University Forms</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Job interview</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>No designation</td>
<td>18</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Note. Overall percentages based on $N = 73$. Sub-categories may not total to 100% because faculty could list more than one learning method.

Table 4.10: Methods of Learning about University Conceptions of Career Success

Structural features of these conversations are presented in Table 4.11. Most of these conversations were initiated by the other person (61%), typically a male (69%), and a University chair, Dean, or administrator, or another faculty member. Almost a quarter of faculty indicated that they did not know the person they had the conversation with very well, most conversations lasted an hour or less, and most conversations were considered at last somewhat typical and moderate in quality. The quality of these conversations did not differ between female and male faculty, $F (1,43) = 2.461$, $ns$.  

144
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Conversation Initiator</th>
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<th>%</th>
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<tbody>
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<tr>
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Table 4.11: Features of Conversations about Perceived University Conceptions of Faculty Career Success
Further qualitative analysis of these responses yielded seven patterns. A first pattern of response was faculty reporting that they learned about their university’s conception and expectations for success in their formal job interview, or right after they were hired, with their Department Chair, or Dean. Even though their interviews could have been years ago, the interview talks were considered to be a primary place for learning about the university’s conception of career success: for instance, “Teaching effectiveness…has always been…mandated from day one…it was discussed during the faculty interview.” A second method of learning about university conceptions of success appears to be from institutional checklists, supplied in university documents, departmental promotion and tenure guidelines, or union contracts. These written materials were distributed to the faculty, often with no discussion of them. So, for instance:

“University X values meeting the criteria set out in standardized forms and meeting goals outlined in such forms. This information is typically transferred through email. It was not a conversation, it was presented to me.”

“Our yearly evaluations delineated what was necessary to achieve success at the university. Otherwise, we have not discussed success in this way.”

“During faculty orientation, from the dean. We were read the guidelines for promotion and tenure in the faculty handbook and told what criteria would need to be met.”

There were two other related patterns of response about learning the university’s conception of career success. Some faculty emphasized their solo efforts at learning the university’s conception of success through individual observation, without conversation: “I looked around and saw what was going on. No one told me about it,” or “I just learned
on my own what the institution valued.” A few others noted the role of mission statements, and speakers at faculty convocation or graduation that provided expressions of university values and conceptions of success: “The president of my university gives a speech at every graduation in which he emphasizes the value of recognition -- not so much quality of work but recognition. I've heard the speech at least three times and each time he mentions how he has been recognized…”

The remaining three methods of learning about university conceptions of career success were conversation-based. One method was to converse with their department chair. These types of conversations either took the form of faculty review meetings in which the checklist evaluations wearer conveyed or conversations that cast the chair as a neutral party. So, for instance,

“My department chair told me what I should do to get tenure at the school. He explained the college's emphases and that some of their procedures were a little archaic. He talked and I listened. I didn't say anything other than 'Thank you for the information.'”

“I have had several conversations with my current division chair. All of these conversations center around ensuring that I have the proper credentials to attain tenure, to rise to the rank of full professor.”

“When I first came here the chair of the Dept. used to speak with me. He is now gone. The current chair can barely stand to speak with me.”

A sixth way faculty learned about university conceptions of success was through meetings faculty had, either in the department or committee meetings on campus. In these meetings faculty learned, typically indirectly, about what the university valued and expected from faculty. So, for instance:
“Ongoing conversations in faculty senate about what the administration 'really values' in approving promotion and tenure decisions.”

“I have been a department head so have participated in meetings with heads, deans, and provost in which faculty and department assessment criteria have been developed. I continue to chair and serve on tenure and promotion committees so I see what is rewarded.”

The latter example is the exception, for most faculty reported that they learned indirectly about university conceptions of success in meetings, as opposed to actively participating in creating the university’s conceptions of success. One might argue that even though meetings are discursive places for mutual sense-making, in these cases meetings were merely another place for observational learning to occur about university expectations for faculty.

The final method of learning about the university’s conceptions of success is through informal conversations with colleagues, either in or outside the department. Faculty just noted that these conversations occurred, typically on the number of publications required for merit or promotion or what the university respects. Not all of these conversations were positive (n=2), as in this example: “I am not on the tenure track. I am a lecturer. Once I was asked by a senior faculty member what I had published--two articles. ‘Oh,’ he asked, ‘Would you be able to write my index to my book?’ Instant disdain for my work.” After subtracting these non-productive conversations, only 12 of 73 faculty reported having informal productive conversations with colleagues about their university’s conception of career success.

Those who did not report having conversations were asked why they didn’t have conversations about their university’s conception of career success. They reported
having no time \((N=2)\), no need \((N=4)\), differences in opinion \((N=1)\), being expected to know about the University’s expectations \((N=3)\) or perceived apathy by administrators \((N=1)\).

Faculty were asked if the conversations they did have were a help or hindrance in understanding the University’s conception of success. Most \((80\%, N=36)\) reported that they were a help, with only 1 person reported that it was a hindrance and 7 reporting that the conversations were neither a help or hindrance (together 17.8%; no conversation or missing, \(N=30\)).

*Summary of conversations about university conceptions of career success.* Faculty learned about the university’s conception of career success for faculty through seven identifiable patterns. The first pattern was through formal meetings during or shortly after hiring process when they were told what was expected of faculty. These were formal and planned. A second pattern was the solo efforts of faculty who read the literature and learned on their own through formal documents, such as faculty handbooks. A fourth pattern of learning about what the college values from faculty is through graduation speeches. A fifth pattern of learning about the values of the university values is through performance reviews in which the department chair is cast as a neutral third party. A sixth pattern of learning about what the university expects of faculty was through meetings, but in this pattern, unlike the first, formal meeting, faculty learned by putting together what was heard indirectly. The seventh and final pattern was through informal interactions with colleagues. Some picked up the university’s conception of success through personal observation.
Features of Conversations about Faculty Career Constraints and Fears

Research question 11 asked about the conversations faculty had about fears and constraints related to attaining career success. Of the 45 faculty who reported having conversations about fears and constraints most indicated that they expressed specific fears and constraints, as reported in Table 4.12.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Expressed Constraints and Fears</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fears and constraints expressed</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>66.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>from university</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>37.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>from other sources</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>18.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>from self</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>20.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Questions, advice, solutions given</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>33.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No conversations reported</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>16.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No designation</td>
<td>21</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Overall percentages based on \( N = 75 \). Sub-categories may not total to 100% because faculty could list more than one statement or message element.

Table 4.12: Conversations about Faculty Career Constraints and Fears

Faculty who did not report conversations about constraints and fears were asked why they did not have such conversations. Of those who responded, two faculty (2.6%) believed the climate was not conducive, another two faculty (2.6%) believed it was too personal a topic to bring up, and another three (3.9%) believed they had no constraints or the topic just did not come up. When asked if these conversations helped or hindered them, 71% (\( N = 27 \)) reported that the conversations helped their perception of constraints and/or fears, while 13% (\( N = 5 \)) reported that the conversations hindered their perception
of constraints and/or fears. Another five faculty (13%) reported that the conversations neither helped nor hindered constraints and/or fears. Low frequencies prevented computation of gender differences, but helpful conversations were perceived fairly equally between male (N =12) and female (N =15) faculty.

Features of the conversations about fears and constraints are presented in Table 4.13. These conversations tend to be initiated by the faculty member, and involved one’s spouse, partner, or friend (26%) or another faculty member (23%). One third reported not having these types of conversations. The conversations equally involved males and females who the faculty member knew at least somewhat well (87%). Faculty participants considered the conversations to be at least somewhat typical (48%), and at least moderate in quality (73%). Most of these conversations lasted less than an hour.

There were no significant differences in the quality of the conversations as perceived by female and male faculty members, $F(1,40) = 2.06, ns$. Females were also just as likely to converse with males as with females, $\chi^2 = .004, df = 1, N = 41, ns$. 

151
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fear-Constraint Conversation Features</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Conversation Initiator</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participant initiated</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>48.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other person initiated</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>32.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No conversation</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>19.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No designation</td>
<td>23</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Who conversation was with</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spouse, partner</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>18.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friend</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Another faculty member, former faculty</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>16.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty in different department</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty/colleague at a different university</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Department chair, Dean, administrator</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>14.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Department secretary</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Had no conversation</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>33.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No designation</td>
<td>21</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sex of Conversation Partner</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>43.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>56.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No designation/conversation</td>
<td>34</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acquaintance with Conversation Partner</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not very well</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>11.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somewhat well</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>41.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extremely well</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>46.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No designation/conversation</td>
<td>32</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Typicality of the Conversation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Atypical</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somewhat typical</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>17.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Typical</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>15.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very typical</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>15.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No designation/conversation</td>
<td>33</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Length of the Conversation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>≤ 15 minutes</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>28.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>≤ 1 hour</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>18.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt; 1 hour</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No designation/conversation</td>
<td>33</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality of the Conversation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low quality</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>26.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderate quality</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>48.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High quality (i.e., satisfying, validating, comforting)</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>24.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No designation/conversation</td>
<td>34</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.13: Features of Conversations about Faculty Fears and Constraints Regarding Career Success
Another qualitative analysis probed the details of these conversations, and produced three patterns of response. A first pattern involved conversations with friends and colleagues and ranged over a variety of problems regarding teaching and research activities that faculty experienced, from daily complaining about teaching load and too many advisees, quality of students, problems of having a visiting position, or horror stories about the journal review process. Sometimes the conversations focused on venting and leave-taking as in the following:

“Tons of conversations about faculty members leaving here, feeling constrained here. Oh, you're leaving? Common question. Each year who is leaving is a wide ranging question.”

Other conversations focused on specific problem-solving behaviors:

“I had a conversation with the dept secretary, who told me to keep focused on what I wanted to get out of the situation. When I kept talking about constraints, she kept pushing me to consider ways around them.”

A second pattern involved seeking support and help with one’s partner or family. Expressing anxieties about publishing or being marginalized were often directed toward one’s spouse:

“I have these conversations all the time, but they always seem to be me spinning my wheels. I lament a lack of time to do everything I need to, my spouse tells me to cut down the amount of time I spend grading, and nothing changes.”

In a third pattern interpersonal politics and anxieties were brought up to department Chairs or Deans, but the conversations that faculty reported mostly displayed insensitivities on the administration’s part:

“One conversation with the dean in my previous job was traumatizing. He continually asserted that I should have no difficulty performing my numerous job obligations and finish my dissertation simultaneously.”
“My chair thinks I'm a secretary, and he'll say things like 'I'm your boss' and I see he knows little about my job, never mind his. He pretends to listen and doesn't because he's overwhelmed.”

“New Dean came in and interviewed all colleagues in my department. I described the atmosphere of the department for the last decade (backbiting, gossip, vengefulness, etc.). I was told 'What you are describing is typical.'”

Other conversations reported by faculty focused on issues of financial support for projects. These conversations typically reported that the administration was sympathetic but not able to “help our program advance.”

Summary of conversations about faculty career constraints and fears. Faculty reported talking about constraints and fears with people they knew at least somewhat well, either colleagues or someone else close to them. Conversations were more likely to be seen as a help than a hindrance. Conversations included venting and leave-taking, problem-solving behaviors, seeking social support, addressing anxieties to administrators, or asking for financial support. Ironically, while over two thirds of faculty reported that these conversations were helpful, many of the reported conversations had negative outcomes (e.g., no funding forthcoming, no support provided).

Van Maanen (1980) wrote about his own experience with the tenure a review process, and the conversations he held with colleagues about what to expect, and the conversations included speculations about which way the committee would decide. He found that in the discussions he had about the tenure and review process, he identified three types of rules in the talk. One was formal rules, which are written down and are used as guidelines. Another type of rule is contextual rules. Contextual rules can override formal rules, as individuals are considered for tenure. Contextual rules also apply to rules
for talk, and how people communicate with one another in a given setting. Contextual rules, according to Van Maanen (1980) are recognized only by their breach. That is, members of the community do not usually discuss the contextual rules, and may not be consciously aware of them, until someone calls attention to them by breaking them. The third type of rules is operational rules, which apply to the particular individual at the time of a given action, and are the most relevant for the faculty member who must decide what to do. The rules Van Maanen (1980) describes are used by faculty on a daily basis as they interact within their context and manage their careers.

A qualitative analysis of the conversations revealed several patterns or types of conversations in the accounts of conversations collected in this study. Although the patterns of these conversations were different, the rules that Van Maanen (1980) described can be identified in the patterns. One pattern in this study was a mentoring conversation. This type of conversation took place between the faculty member and a younger colleague, or between the faculty member and his/her own advisor, mentor, administrator, or trusted colleague. In them, faculty members learned or were taught conceptions of success, as in these examples:

“My mentor has talked about places where I can grow intellectually, as well as academically.”

“One of my professors pulled me aside and told me that I needed to find a secular sense of ‘calling,’ and that if I found that and followed, I could consider myself successful.”

“The most satisfying thing about being a chair was helping the faculty in the department improve their research—to empower them.”
These mentoring conversations relayed operational rules. Whether referring to the field, the university, or the department, operational rules about how to make an academic career work for the individual were being discussed. Faculty had figured out how to “play the game,” to use Van Maanen’s (1980) metaphor, and they were talking about what they learned.

A second type of conversation focuses on collegial discussions of teaching, including effective teaching techniques, problems with the university disregarding instructors, and occasionally, innovation: “I often talk about this with a colleague. We talk about the importance of freedom to be creative and the importance of connection with students.” The faculty in this pattern are employing contextual rules. They understand that teaching evaluations are how teaching fits into the assessment of faculty, and may be concerned about how to keep their evaluations in the expected range. Faculty in this pattern may also be concerned with student learning and how to use their resources to maximize learning. Part of the talk, though may be focused on understanding contextual rules at their university. “How much creative freedom can we exert?” “How do we balance measuring student learning, which include exams and presentations, which students do not like, with creative activities that help gain better evaluations?” The teachers engaged in discussion about teaching maybe also engaged in discussion that helps them to “play the game,” watching their conversation partner, checking to see what is and is not acceptable in that specific context before taking the risk of implementing a creative idea in the classroom.
A third type of conversation focused on the specific tasks involved with attaining tenure, promotion, and merit recognition. These conversations typically revolved around the idea of what the faculty needs to achieve in order to be successful at their particular school, not necessarily within the field itself. While some faculty recognized that these conversations “overemphasized” number of publications, faculty reported having “how are you doing” conversations with their mentors at annual conferences. Topics included:

“Faculty talk more about jumping through the hoops defined by the university to reach some level…mostly rank.”

“Most of the conversations of career success around my department have to do with how many ‘A’ publications you have. And, how it relates to tenure. That’s almost all that anyone talks about.”

The conversations in the third pattern express concern with formal rules. “Jumping through hoops” echoes Van Maanen’s metaphor of a game, yet tenure is very serious for some people. In understanding formal rules, the conversations are limited to what people “have to” do or “should do” to ensure that the tenure decision goes their way.

The faculty in the statements above express frustration with the university, one because of too much attention (the university wants hoop-jumping) and one because of too little attention. Even though the faculty in this study were able to identify the universities’ conception of success, and there is overlap in the conceptions of success, the university and the faculty do not conceive of tenure in the same way. The university presents tenure as a system that the university has established to motivate faculty towards excellence and to reward faculty who consistently demonstrate excellence over several
years. The university gains from faculty who bring in grants, publish in nationally- or internationally renowned journals, or consult on large projects. The universities want to retain those individuals and are willing to enter into long-term contracts with them. The faculty, however, are talking about themselves, what the university wants from them, and they are concerned with meeting the expectations of the university; specifically, the minimum expectations. The faculty work hard to understand the minimum expectations so that they perform the right amount of work in the right places—publish in the correct journals, receive the student teaching evaluations they should, perform service to the university, all in the right combination. The university, however, as represented by the Dean and department chairs, want to be quiet on these issues because if the faculty is unsure, they are more likely to do more than the minimum, and the university receives a “bonus,” faculty that give back more in recognition than the university had planned. In the interest of fairness, universities, as all large employers, are expected to make the requirements for promotion clear. They also, however, allow for interpretation of their policies, or what VanMaanen (1980) refers to as “operational rules.” If, for example, a faculty wins large grants but performs no committee work and does not teach because of release-time from grant funds, the university may still want to offer tenure due to income. Other faculty look at the requirements and the tenured faculty, and try to guess exactly which hoops, in which combination, will allow to reach their conception of success, which is tenure.
A fourth type of conversation involved colleagues and students between or within the faculty member’s institution and focused on program goals and development, as in:

“It is more of a general ‘how is your program doing’ and leads to discussions of future goals.”

“As my experience has grown, I have had former players/students who have communicated what they enjoyed about our program.”

These conversations are following operational rules. The conversation partners in these talks seem to emphasize the positive, operationalizing a rule that employees do not air grievances outside the organization, but present the positive that is occurring, or accept and repeat positive evaluations that are unsolicited.

A fifth type of conversation focused on the practical aims of working and problems associated with working at the faculty member’s current institution. These conversations were infrequent and focused on faculty dissatisfactions and frustrations:

“Talking with a professional colleague: I feel like I’m wasting my time—my students don’t care, as long as I don’t get sued the administration doesn’t care what I do.”

This pattern of expressing frustration provides examples of operational rules, as this participant expresses an interpretation of the rules to be followed: “Don’t get sued.” Operational rules are “common sense” rules that indicate what faculty can and cannot do. These rules are seldom broken, and there is no reason to codify them into policy statements because faculty adhere to them without being told (Van Maanen, 1980).

A final type of conversation were discussions of success contradictions in higher education and attempts to implement changes to improve program quality. These conversations were infrequent, too:
“I remember a conversation about the disconnect between formally recognized career success at my university (publication, rank, etc) and the ‘perks’ that accompany career success (office location, teaching schedule, pay).”

In this pattern, faculty are pointing out discrepancies between formal rules and operational rules. Since both types of rules are at play simultaneously, and operational rules, though pervasive, are not written, determining the operational rules from afar (not being part of the decision-making process) can be challenging. Yet the operational rules often override formal rules due to specific circumstances or personal judgments being made. Van Maanen (1980 found that one of the roles of talk in an organization may be to help others understand the rules so they can determine their course of action.

One of the criteria sometimes used to determine career success is whether the faculty member fits into the organization. If one does not understand “the game,” or how to follow the formal, contextual or operational rules, one may no longer be at that organization, so understanding the rules in a particular context is important to career success. From a symbolic interactionist approach, the people engaged in the talk should be aware that these conversational rules do not occur on their own, or emerge from the institution. The faculty who engaged in talking are operationalizing rules as they talk. The rules are made, broken, altered, or forgotten because of the talk that occurs. The faculty can affect change if they want their organization to change.

**Results of Conceptions Using Higher Level Categories**

Possible selves researchers Frazier and Hooker (2005) found that phases of adult development can be seen as resulting from mesosystemic, exosystemic, and macrosystemic influences. Mesosystemic are interpersonal influences, such as following
in the career path of an admired professional, listening to and following advice, or learning from the mistakes of others. Exosystemic are social norms and expectations, such as gender roles and societal standards of professionalism, income, or parenting. Macrosystemic influences are cultural influences, such as the organizational culture of the colleges and universities where the faculty members are employed. Using these categories, the responses pertaining to all success conceptions were categorized and general results presented in Table 4.14.

Table 4.14 shows that 52% \((N=39)\) of the faculty respondents referred to macrosystemic influences. These are attributable to the organizational culture. Sixteen percent \((N=12)\) of the faculty’s conception of success may be attributable to exosystemic influences. These are social norms and expectations, while 6.7% \((N=5)\) of the faculty’s conceptions of success may be attributed to mesosystemic, or interpersonal influences.

The reasons to alter conceptions of success are also shown in Table 4.14. Mesosystemic influences were listed by 66% \((N=31)\) of the faculty. Exosystemic influences were attributed with leading to an altered conception of success in 23.4% \((N=11)\) of the faculty participants. Macrosystemic influences were attributed with leading to an altered conception of success in 61.7% \((N=29)\) of the faculty. These numbers indicate that re-evaluations of personal conceptions of career success are more likely to be affected by oneself or interpersonal interactions, or by organizational culture than by social norms, values or roles.

The university’s conception of success was attributed to macrosystemic influences in 70.7% \((N=41)\) of the faculty participants. Exosystemic influences were
attributed with 22.4% of the conceptions of the university’s conception of success. Meso-
systemic influences were attributed for 24.1% or (N=14) of the participants’
understanding of the university’s conception of success.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Success Conception</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Females</th>
<th>Males</th>
<th>Chi-square</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Faculty Success Conception</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mesosystemic Influences</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exosystemic Influences</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>16.0</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Macrosystemic Influences</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>52.0</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>.012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Reasons to Alter Success Conception</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Mesosystemic Influences</td>
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<td>66</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>1.610</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exosystemic Influences</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>23.4</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Macrosystemic Influences</td>
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<td>61.7</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>.465</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>University Success Conception</strong></td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Mesosystemic Influences</td>
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<td>7</td>
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<td>.530</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Macrosystemic Influences</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>70.7</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>.865</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note:* None of the chi-squares are significant for differences between males and females.

Table 4.14 *Percentage of Higher Level Categories on Success Conceptions*
Influences on Faculty’s Changing Conceptions of Career Success

The discussion above regarding faculty conceptions of success indicates that a shift occurred among many faculty regarding their conceptions of success. To learn more about why such a shift occurred, faculty participants were asked:

What happened that led you to alter your conception? Please describe a key event which contributed to changing how you view success. Describe the event in detail, including when it was, the other people involved, and why this event led to a change in your view of success.

Responses to this item were analyzed by looking at the sources of influence as described by Frazier and Hooker (2006). Of the 47 faculty who responded, mesosystemic influences (interpersonal influences, intrapersonal influences) were credited 32 times with leading to a re-evaluation of their conception of career success. Macrosystemic influences (cultural, including organizational culture) were credited with influencing re-evaluation 15 times, and exosystemic influences (social norms, values and roles) were credited with leading to re-evaluation 9 times.

When asked what led to a shift in conceptions of career success, the largest higher-level category of responses was mesosystemic influences (N=32), which included interpersonal and intrapersonal influences. Six patterns of response characterize mesosystemic influences. The first pattern had faculty re-evaluations (N=7) related to a location or a change in position. The re-evaluation that occurred appeared to come after the change in location or position, rather than realizing that they are unhappy and then changing. The change in position led to the realization that former priorities were not as important as originally thought, and new priorities took the place of old ones. For
instance, some of the faculty took a job in a different university, or moved to administration and saw academia from a different perspective.

Students appeared to have been an influence in faculty’s re-evaluation of career success. Several (N=5) faculty working with students or being “a teacher at heart” as the reason for re-evaluating their conceptions of career success. Two specifically mentioned that emphasizing research took time away from students, and they preferred to invest their time in students.

In a third pattern of response, several faculty referred to a process, or change over time as influencing a re-evaluation of career success. Even though other faculty also mentioned that they did not recall a specific event or conversation, the faculty in this group refer to a change over time without mention of a precipitating event, a specific change, or a moment of awareness that a change was needed, or had occurred. As one faculty explained, ”there was no clap of thunder.” Over time, and with self-evaluation, the faculty understood that their conception of career success had shifted. The example below characterizes the “no clap of thunder” group:

“... I see now, though, that colleagues who will stimulate and challenge my ideas make me a better teacher. I’ve also reached a point where I’m more interested in depth of investigation than I am in "more." ...

In a fourth pattern, five of the faculty credited relationships for the re-evaluation of their conceptions of career success. Mentors and friends influenced three faculty to re-evaluate their conceptions of career success, including one who was influenced by “meeting the ‘Greats’ in the discipline.” Two were specifically influenced by intimate partners. One met someone and planned to marry, which influenced the conception of
career success, because this person “. . . saw through my partner's eyes that I was putting my work above any other aspect of life and that was not acceptable to me.” The other learned that her husband is now ready to have children, leading her to ponder whether her assistance professorship and parenthood would mix.

In a fifth pattern, another group of faculty (N=5) gave a “sense of lack of fulfillment” as the impetus for re-evaluating their conception of career success. These faculty used terms such as “unfulfilled,” “unhappy” and “not satisfied” to describe their careers prior to re-evaluation. In addition to a general dissatisfaction, one faculty participant found re-evaluation necessary after a severely broken ankle, and began the slow process of healing, but with a new attitude: “The job is one part of my identity, not my identity!” One faculty participant characterized success as elusive, and the feeling of striving for something that cannot be achieved:

“It wasn't so much a specific key event as it was the building of a sense of unfulfillment. I started to feel like success was completely unattainable. I found that even reaching specific goals or benchmarks, I never felt like I achieved success. Something else always popped up as, "no when you do this, THEN you will REALLY be successful." [emphasis in original]

Another faculty participant had a similar feeling of discontent, and seemed to be processing what career success means personally:

“The key event is a feeling of pointlessness in my job. I have achieved those things that I thought would make me "successful" (except for being a well-known researcher). Yet, I am incredibly unhappy, which has made me question exactly what it is I have been striving for--and if I have been striving towards someone else's imposed sense of success!”
The final group of participants in the mesosystemic influences group was characterized by a need for balance. Faculty members took an academic job because it is less demanding than the corporate world, or returned to teaching after a stint as department chair. The faculty in this group defined career success for themselves as involving what they consider a “balance” between work and other aspects of their life. In an attempt to understand how to balance these different aspects of work and leisure, one faculty participant actively sought out a panel about “balance” at a conference:

“I also did not recognize the importance of balance early in my career. I went to a conference panel on balance expecting the participants to talk about balancing work and nonwork activities, but they only talked about balancing teaching, research, and service.”

Macrosystemic influences are cultural influences, and for purposes of this study, I included organizational culture as a macrosystemic influence. Of those faculty who referred to cultural or organizational cultural influences as affecting their conception of success (N=15), six were very negative about their organizational culture. In this first group, they mentioned what they considered unreasonably heavy workloads, frustrations with the bureaucracy, lack of support from their universities, and an organizational culture that is not supportive. One described “a department that was dysfunctional with jealousies, filled with big egos and a lack of respect of others’ scholarship.” In another case, the pressures from the university had long-term effects. The participant reported a great deal of pressure from her university even though she was finishing a Ph.D. and a male colleague did not have the same demands:

“. . . When my health began to fail, the institution refused to accommodate me and instead continued to assign more work. I had a complete physical breakdown and had to go to physical therapy in order to walk normally again. This all happened about four years ago and I still haven't completely recovered my physical strength. . . . I'm not sure my health will ever allow me to work full time again.”
Many of the faculty who answered the question about what influenced their shift in their conceptions of career success referred to a series of events or a shift over time. One faculty participant, though, gave an account of an incident during which the realization of a need for a personal change occurred. This faculty member attributed this new-found discontent to the organizational culture, and to a history of interaction there that preceded this faculty’s employment, yet still affected him:

“I noticed a shift in how I felt last spring semester. That was the first time in eight years that I questioned whether I would remain at this university for the rest of my academic career. [after a rancorous faculty meeting in which his department lost a faculty position] . . .It took me awhile to understand the contempt came from one colleague, and was probably directed at another colleague in my area, and had its roots in conflict from many years before I arrived at this institution. But I had the sudden sense that perhaps I would be "called" away to some other position in another institution sooner than later. The situation in which I’d bloomed and thrived might be changing so much that it would no longer support me.”

Three other faculty indicated macrosystemic influences that led to changing their conception of career success. These faculty appear to perceive the organizational culture as responsible for their change, but are not specific about why the organizational culture led to the change. These included statements such as:

“Experience and working in the position. Need for outcome-based measures of success (precipitated by [my university]) and limited research opportunities at [my university] and the surrounding community.”

Three of the faculty referred to broader influences than their universities when referring to macrosystemic influences. One referred to the academic field, i.e., “The job market is very competitive;” the other to international influences. Some examples were:

“I moved to a school that put a premium on teaching rather than on publication. Moreover, the literature in my chosen field "passed me by." I now find many of the journal articles in my field obtuse and arcane.”
“I feel more and more passion about the things that are important to me because of the things that I see happening in the world around me at the local level, and nationally and internationally.”

One faculty who mentioned tenure as a goal is prepared to change the conception of career success if that goal is not attained, although this person admitted to not having changed the conception of career success before.

Exosystemic influences were credited with leading to the re-evaluation in eight responses. Two faculty members judged others by their own values, and re-affirmed their own conception of success in contrast to colleagues:

“I began to believe that people who spend too much time on work do not fit my conception of success. They may be driven and they may achieve more financial benefits, but they are missing out on a successful life, one that balances work and nonwork activities. So being successful in a career began to mean also being able to balance career and other activities.”

“My colleagues are unethical and egotistical. They are more concerned about turf than about the things in the university that are important, such as students, research and collegiality.”

Another faculty member valued respect and thought that students should respect faculty. This faculty member believed that current students do not share the same value:

“Students have changed. In the early days, they seemed to want to learn, to gain knowledge. Now, it is challenge to keep their attention while entertaining them. And they have lost respect for what we, as teachers, do.”

Changes in their situations which affected their social expectations, roles or values are attributed responsibility for the re-evaluation in conceptions of career success in five of the responses. Three were changes in careers, one leaving a military career for academia, and the other two explanations were briefer, such as “doctoral work.” One faculty member attributed a change in conceptualizing career success to her situation because her “husband
became downsized.” One faculty member learned to value service to the discipline as part of being in academia. Another chose to spend more time with aging parents:

“I am an only child and my parents were getting older and not in good health. I worked pretty much 7 days a week in industry. I decided that there had to be more control over my life and my time (needed time for my family).”

Two of the references to exosystemic influences also included elements of mesosystemic influences. In these cases, the value, social norm or role was not the sole influence, but interaction or self-reflection was specifically credited for the re-evaluation.

Chapter Summary. Chapter 4 presented the results of the study, first presenting the demographics of the population, which was 74 faculty members, mostly white, married, evenly distributed between male and female, and between 26 and 54. Faculty members were from a mix of colleges and universities, but the largest number were from small and medium-sized universities granting four-year degrees.

Data was analyzed by initial categories first, which revealed that faculty and universities include some arrangement of teaching, research and service, with teaching and research being weighted differently and service consistently in third place. While faculty mentioned such values as work-family balance and personal fulfillment, they did not generally start the careers with such values in mind, but included those things when re-evaluating career success conceptions. Universities were perceived to value research, teaching and service, and some universities valued advancement to administrative positions. Faculty saw tenure and promotion as related to career success for themselves, but did not perceive that the universities valued tenure and promotion.

Men and women differed in that males valued research and teaching more and women valued achieving practical aims, such as tenure and promotion, and income.
Males and females were equally likely to re-evaluate their conceptions of success during their careers, and perceived the universities’ conceptions of success similarly.

No sex differences emerged in how men and women talked about success. Patterns were described in the responses to open-ended questions, and the patterns revealed that faculty talk relatively little about career success, but those who did talk about it found the conversations useful, even though these conversations were briefer than conversations regarding fears and constraints. Some faculty reported that they did not talk about career success nor fears or constraints, citing that the culture was not conducive to such conversations, or that the topics were too personal.

Results will be discussed in Chapter 5.
CHAPTER 5
DISCUSSION

In this chapter, I summarize the findings from the study and then discuss their significance and implications for faculty conceptions of and conversations about career success. The limitations of the study are also discussed, followed by directions for future research.

Responses regarding initial conceptions of career success from faculty showed that faculty and universities agree that career success for faculty include combinations of research, teaching, and to a lesser degree, service. Faculty emphasized teaching in their conceptions of success, but perceived the universities as emphasizing research more. However, faculty also include other factors such as balance between work and family, and self-fulfillment in their conceptions of success. No significant differences were revealed between male and female faculty in their conceptions of career success, or in their perceptions of university conceptions of career success.

When faculty talked about career success, they reported good quality of the conversations and that they were useful in helping people clarify their own goals, or in understanding the university’s expectations. However, the conversations were few and
relatively brief. Males and females did not differ in how they talked about career success. Patterns emerged in conceptions of career success. Faculty saw the university as measuring research success by the number of publications, and teaching success by student evaluations. Some reported not knowing what the university valued.

Well over half of the faculty in this study re-evaluated their conceptions of career success during their careers. Most shifted from research to a conception that included teaching and research, although some reported giving research more prominence in their conception of success after re-evaluation. An event or conversation and changes in health or living conditions contributed to re-evaluations of conceptions of career success. Most faculty, though, did not cite one precipitating event, but said that the new conception evolved over time.

Faculty reported perceived constraints or fears that originated from the university, the self, or other sources. The most frequently cited constraint for success was time. Faculty perceived themselves as not having enough time to do what they needed to do. Some cited family conflicts as a constraint, and some cited lack of support and structural factors at the university as constraints to career success.

When talking about career success, faculty reported mentoring conversations, collegial discussions of teaching, the process of attaining tenure, discussions about programs and goals, airing frustrations, complaining about discrepancies between policies and practices at the university, and attempts to improve program quality.
Interrogating the findings about conceptions and conversations about career success

In this section the implications and significance for the findings are discussed. Faculty success conceptions are discussed first, followed by faculty conversations about career success.

Success Conceptions

The first set of research questions probed higher education faculty on how they conceptualized career success. The key finding regarding faculty conceptions of success is that faculty appear to be consistent with a general trend toward self-fulfillment as a work value. Faculty members appear to be consistent with the most recent career values as discussed by Yankelovich and Immerwahr (1999), which are related to self-fulfillment and work-family balance. Faculty still appear to define career success in ways consistent with the university, with teaching, research, and service listed the most frequently. Since the university definitions are clearly mixes of teaching, research and service, faculty may have adopted those three concepts into their definitions of career success so they may continue in their jobs.

Male-Female differences. Given the previous literature, one would have expected to find differences in the career success conceptions of men and women college faculty, yet no differences were found. A key finding is that faculty men and women are similar in their conceptions of career success. Faculty members had similar views of research, teaching and service expectations. They also had similar perceptions of their university’s expectations of them and similar perceptions of fears and constraints. The findings suggest that women faculty members are assimilating their university’s expectations,
while men faculty members recognize the need for personal and work-family integration, too. Personal conceptions of research, teaching, service, and personal fulfillment were shared. No differences were found in the initial categories of aspects of career success for men and women.

Men and women used similar expressions and phrases in their references to teaching and to collegiality. Relational communication literature may have led one to expect that women would emphasize the interpersonal nature and rewards of teaching, but no differences could be identified between men’s and women’s responses.

*Assimilating university definitions of success.* The key findings regarding university conceptions of success are that faculty are relatively consistent with one another and with the universities about what they describe as career success. The faculty and the university see tenure as an indicator of success, even though they may see tenure differently. The faculty view tenure as a goal but the university sees it as a reward. While these differences may not make a difference in faculty behavior in attaining tenure, the expectation for what tenure means after it is awarded may differ.

The patterns further revealed the ways faculty members reasoned about career success. Career success was largely seen in the university’s terms; publications, reputation, good teaching evaluations, and service to the university. Yet many saw these initial categories as ways of finding personal success and fulfillment. A couple of broad themes emerged: one was to see research and teaching activity as personally fulfilling—publishing and seeing students succeed formed part of one’s internal experience of success. The other was to become fulfilled through relationships with others—students,
colleagues at one’s university, or colleagues at other universities. Consistency across conceptions of success may be explained by the nature of the field. By the time one accepts a college or university faculty position, one may have already accepted that success will be measured, at least by the university, if not by faculty, by teaching, research and service. Those who do not accept these indicators of success may have already self-selected out of academia.

The culture of academia is strong enough that faculty listed research, teaching and service more exclusively at the beginning of their careers than in their re-evaluated conceptions. When faculty listed the conceptions of success that they held previously, the one that has since been re-evaluated, that conception of success was closer to the universities’ conception of success than the current conceptions held by faculty. The currently held conceptions of success are the ones that included personal fulfillment and work-family balance in greatest numbers.

Male faculty members were more likely than female faculty in higher education to base their definitions of success on research, and on teaching, service and networking. Consistent with Yankelovich and Immerwahr (1999), both male and female faculty mentioned some aspect of personal fulfillment in their definitions of career success. This is indicative of a cultural shift that emphasizes personal fulfillment as a work value. Also, Buzzanell, Meisenbach, Remke, Bowers, and Conn (2005) found that professional women who often have choices about whether to work or not, and whether to work full- or part-time are likely to concern themselves with such issues as personal fulfillment on the job. Mothers are especially likely to seek a fulfilling job; otherwise, they have more
difficulty justifying their role as a “good mother” when they are away from their children meeting the demands of a career.

Consistent with Marcus and Nurius’ (1986) findings, faculty members had experiences that affected their view of themselves enough that they re-evaluated their definitions of success. The shift in definitions appeared to move away from the university’s definition of success that included research, service and teaching in varying degrees to broader definitions of success that include personal fulfillment and work-family balance. Some faculty members had a particular realization that they needed to change their approach to work because of a health problem or because of a conversation that helped them realize they needed to change. Several respondents mentioned changing their definition of career success over time, not related to an incident or to a specific conversation. One participant said that she had not re-evaluated her definition of career success, but if denied tenure, she would develop a new definition for herself. This approach to re-thinking the self is consistent with possible selves research. Rather than see herself as a failure, she will create a new conception of career success in which she is defined as successful. Possible selves research found that when people do not attain their hoped-for self, which can become narrower over time, people will develop another view, an expected self, that still avoids the feared self (Markus & Nurius, 1986, 1987; Frazier & Hooker, 2006).

Most faculty gave differentiated conceptions of career success, with research success, teaching and service, achieving practical aims, and personal fulfillment the major categories. That research success, teaching and service constituted the major types
of success conceptions is not surprising, as they match the current academic discourses and codes in higher education. The other two categories that emerged for career success conceptions were achieving practical aims and personal fulfillment. Practical aims were those conceptions that were focused on the immediate tasks of coping with life—making money, making the grade, and juggling family. It was not a matter of not getting by, but struggling to cope with the multiple demands and tasks and expectations; for some, accomplishing the juggling act is the sign of career success. As Buzzanell et al. (2005) found, women take great pride in being able to meet the demands of a mother while holding a job.

For other faculty it was a matter of personal fulfillment. While universities and colleges appear to be defining career success as research, teaching and service, in various combinations, faculty have shifted to include personal fulfillment and a balance between work and family time. The career success definitions that faculty reported in this study are consistent with other findings regarding the shift towards a relational workplace (Fletcher, 2005) and with a shift in the work ethic towards personal fulfillment as a work value (Yankelovich & Immerwahr, 1999; Reich, 2005). Emphasis on relational approaches to communication is apparent throughout answer regarding conceptions of success. Both male and female faculty often list the respect of others, collegiality, and building relationships with students as very important in their conception of success. Faculty also judged harshly those faculty who were seen as self-centered, egotistical or indolent. Personal fulfillment seemed to enter many of the faculty’s conception of career
success more recently—fewer faculty listed fulfillment as part of their original conception of career success.

That most faculty members perceived their university’s conception of success to involve research success and teaching is fairly consistent with academic missions at most colleges and universities. That there were no differences in these conceptions between faculty employed at different types of universities is somewhat surprising, but may reflect the shift of small universities to begin emphasizing research success more for their faculty.

The qualitative analyses still yielded distinct patterns of response for faculty’s perceptions of university views on faculty success, with those believing that teaching either comes first, comes second, or that the priority of teaching is shifting. Against this view, most faculty members indicated a number of fears and constraints that stood in the way of their attaining career success. These fears and constraints came either from the university or themselves. Internal anxieties, coping with a seemingly unreasonable workload, the huge time it takes to teach, and a lack of support from the university all contribute a perception that career success will be difficult to achieve. The patterns of response show that, consist with social support research, that lack of support (either emotional or instrumental) is a barrier to success. Work-family or work-personal life conflicts are also seen as a barrier to success.

*Rugged individualism-academic style.* A general theme throughout the research trajectory category was an emphasis on publication productivity and professional recognition. This appears to be the academic version of rugged individualism; one aims
to project a strong individuality through publications and reputation. To some extent relationship values were championed, too, through valuable relationships with students or colleagues. Still, the dominant view was a career success conception constituted by objective markers, such as high marks on teaching evaluations or many publications in highly-ranked journals. Rugged individualism in academia is constituted by overt notches on one’s belt. One of the notches is tenure. Both the faculty’s conception and the university’s conception of career success included tenure in a large number of responses. However, the meaning of tenure may be different. Faculty see tenure as a goal, but the university sees tenure as a reward, and a beginning. Faculty work to achieve tenured status, so that they can relax. The university looks for faculty to prove themselves worthy of tenure, so the university can begin a long-term partnership with faculty whom have already proven themselves to be productive and hard-working. The problem, as Dennis Gouran (1994) explains it is that:

An undesirable consequence of achieving tenure under conditions in which the goal itself is the only incentive for professional activity is that victory leads to letdown and performance may diminish, the individual has survived, but at what price to any genuine sense of professional commitment? (p. 112)

The disconnect between the faculty’s and the university’s conception of tenure can be seen in the conversations in which junior faculty member are asking tenured faculty members what to do to achieve tenure. Their emphasis is on the minimum expectations, and making sure that the efforts they exert “count” toward tenure. Many conversations were reported about attaining tenure and understanding the requirements, or discussing surprises when certain faculty were or were not awarded tenure. While the objective criteria may be clear and formalized through documentation, there seems to be little
discussion about the subjective criteria tenure committees may be using to finalize such
decisions. Faculty who do not question when the dean or department chair lists the
criteria for tenure or promotion can still be surprised by the decisions.

*Work-family-personal integration.* Previous research identified work-family
issues as important features pertaining to career success. Some faculty did note work-
family issues as a constraint on their career success, but most did not cite family or
personal issues as a factor. Rather, external factors, particularly a crushing workload with
inadequate time, or their personal anxieties were more likely to be mentioned as relevant
fears and constraints to attaining career success. Career success appears to be viewed as a
separate domain from family and personal goals. Whether or not most individuals
ultimately integrate these domains is unclear. Some however, did define their conceptions
of career success in personal fulfillment terms and list family and personal issues as part
of their career success conceptions, instead of as a constraint on career success.
Differences in these structural characteristics of work-family-personal issues in relation
to career-success deserves further study, as it may be the case that there are meaningful
outcomes for perceiving work-family-personal issues as a constraint or as an integral part
of one’s conception of career success.

Hagedorn (2000) found that factors contributing to job success for faculty varied
by career stages. In her model, early career was defined as 25 years or more before
retirement. This group derived satisfaction from positive interaction with administration
and students. For faculty at midcareer, or 15-20 years from anticipated retirement,
satisfaction was positively correlated with compensation. Faculty in late career, or five
years or less from retirement, derived satisfaction from positive interaction with administration, and compensation. Mitigating factors were identified as changing faculty’s position on the “job-satisfaction continuum” (Hagedorn, 2000, p.11). These factors included changes in personal circumstances, such as addition of children or taking on the care of a parent, divorce, or personal loss. Conflicts between work and family can reduce job satisfaction as well as health, and Hagedorn (2000) found that females reported greater effects from work-family conflict. Changes in academic rank were also related to changes in sources of job satisfaction. Hagedorn (2000) found that women who perceived inequities in compensation, promotion or awards were dissatisfied with their jobs.

Conversations about career success. The most compelling findings of the study were about the conversations faculty members did or did not have about their conceptions of career success. These conversations did occur, but not with everyone. Those who reported them occurring found them a help. Yet the conversations were not always regular or recent. Many reported learning about their university’s conception of success in their job interview or in formal talks with their Chair or Dean, or in reading official documents. There did not appear to be regular conversations between faculty members about career-success. Those who had such talks typically reported acquiring tips from their colleagues on teaching or journal selection, in an effort to comply with university expectations of them. Why there are not more conversations between faculty members about career success conceptions is not clear. Professional competition rather than collaboration was reported by some, while others felt such topics were private. Critical
theorists would say that a university can better thrive with faculty members actively participating in discussions about the criteria that shape their personal lives as well as their institution’s expectations. Future work, then, could uncover the kind of environment that could invite more of these types of conversations.

Faculty members did report having crushing workloads and talking about their workloads, but mostly to commiserate. The longer conversations appeared to be about constraints and fears more than about career success. Faculty reported discussing fears and constraints with people who were closer to them, and some of these conversations were with partners and not colleagues. Of the conversations reported, the talk tended to be about overcoming the constraints or fears when speaking with partners or family members, and more about commiserating or “sharing horror stories” about teaching.

Of the conversations, the findings show that faculty members were not as likely to have conversations about their university’s conception of career success. When they did have such conversations, the conversations were likely to be initiated by a department chair or administrator, in the job interview, or in meetings. These conversations typically discussed university expectations.

That more faculty did not report on such conversations is surprising, particularly since a substantial portion of the sample were members of communication departments or programs, faculty who presumably like to talk. Yet faculty who did report conversations were likely to report competitive conversations with colleagues or they reported that they just learned about university expectations through formal written forms like the Faculty Handbook, or they learned about university expectations in their job interview.
University conceptions of career success appear to be there to be learned as received wisdom, and not discussed in a thorough way, or critiqued. Most of the faculty sample was young; one expects that their focus was on understanding the expectations so they could succeed in attaining tenure and promotion, and not challenging those expectations.

Van Maanen (1980) found that talk about the tenure and promotion process, which represents a marker of success to many faculty, could be seen as falling into three types of rules. These were formal rules, contextual rules or operational rules. Formal rules are published or explained in some official way, such as the Dean telling faculty about the tenure process during the interview. Contextual rules were those rules that are assumed and may be assimilated even before one becomes part of a particular organization. In academia, the concept that faculty will be judged on research, teaching and service is a contextual rule. This explains why faculty members’ initial conception of success is so closely aligned with the universities’. Contextual rules can also apply to daily interaction, and as such, receive attention when they are violated. Operational rules are the ones that are actually acted upon. These are enacted when there are exceptions to the standard formula for tenure, for example. One’s absence from university service may be overlooked if the candidate for tenure has won some large grants, for example.

Faculty members were more likely than not to have a conversation about their conception of career success. People use talk to establish who they are, and to establish their identity in relation to others (Weick, 1995). Faculty reported that the conversations were of high quality and more likely to help than hinder their understanding of career success. The conversations may have brought to light operational rules, making clearer
their relationship to the formal rules. One example of a faculty member understanding an operational rule was when a colleague told her of a speaking engagement that seemed insignificant to the faculty, but a source of great pride for the colleague. The faculty member realized that ANY kind of recognition was rewarded at that university, and that she had failed to offer the positive regard expected in light of such an achievement.

Faculty members’ conceptions of career success differed from their perception of the university’s conception of career success for faculty. The areas of difference between individual and university conceptions of success may be one of interpretation. For faculty, they may be defining career success in terms of personal rewards and recognition. For faculty, tenure is the goal. The universities, though, may be defining career success in terms of productivity. For the university, what counts is the number of publications with the university’s name attached, grants won, and students served. For the university, tenure is a reward for a job well-done, and an assurance that the university will continue to employ the faculty member. For faculty, achieving tenure is a career marker, and is more than an agreement between the faculty and the university. Tenure may be the motivation to make some of the career choices the faculty member has made.

Faculty members were more likely than not to have a conversation about their constraints and fears. These conversations were typically initiated by the faculty member and involved a variety of conversation partners. While they tended to be shorter in length than the conversations about university definitions of career success, the conversations covered a variety of concerns. Fears are part of possible selves. Talking about fears may be one way to gain assurance that the feared event is not going to occur. Often feared
selves originate in a past experience and the concern no longer has validity, yet the fear is real to the person who perceives it (Markus & Nurius, 1986). Fears continue to motivate behavior even after the threat is no longer valid. Having someone assure them that they need not worry may motivate faculty to talk about the fear or concern.

Some faculty reported not talking about their conceptions of success. Of those faculty, some had not thought to discuss it. Others, though, had tried to bring up issues along those lines that they were concerned about and the responses they received had the effect of silencing them. Fletcher (1999) calls this “Disappearing.” In organizations, behaviors can be met with messages that have the effect of ending the behavior. The process of disappearing a behavior is to ridicule or negatively label the behavior when it appears, and once it has been labeled, to ignore the behavior. Even if someone offers a good idea, if it challenges the status quo it is ignored after that. In some of the faculty accounts, differing opinions were “disappeared.” When an act is “disappeared,” the individual whose behavior is ignored feels inadequate and possibly alienated. This person is unlikely to bring up the behavior or idea, and possibly other ideas. In this way, the status quo is never challenged. This cycle could explain why there is apparent agreement on concepts such as career success—a different view is simply “disappeared” from the organization. It may also explain the lack of conversation about crushing workloads and having no time to complete the work the University expects of faculty.
Limitations of the Study and Future Directions

Limitations of the Study

As with any study there were problems that limit the interpretability of the findings. A principal limitation had to do with the method used. While online surveys are a useful tool, they have limitations. The data was collected through questionnaires, and if the participants were confused about a question, they were disinclined to take the time to contact the researcher, interpret the question, and return to the questionnaire. While one participant did mention not understanding a question, others may have skipped the items, and the researcher has no information about why some items were not answered. A more effective method of data collection may have been through interviews, either instead of questionnaires or in addition to the questionnaires. The interviewer could then explain questions where there may have been confusion. Also, an interviewer could have offered prompts and requested more information, yielding a richer data set for analysis. Despite its time consuming feature, Dervin’s (1995) sense-making technique might be a profitable tool to use to elicit faculty conceptions of success.

In retrospect, more background Information about the faculty that would have been useful is information regarding academic rank, years of service, and type of university, which could have been useful in making comparisons. Such data may have provided for comparisons in types of shifts of definition of career success at various times in faculty careers. Faculty members were not directly asked if they consider themselves successful now. Some faculty either stated or implied that they saw themselves as successful, or that they did not see themselves as successful. For example, some faculty
participants used phrases such as “I will know I am successful when . . .” while others said “I began to see myself as successful when . . .” which indicated their current view of their success. Explicitly asking if they saw themselves as successful now may have helped clarify between the hoped-for self and the expected self.

Another limitation of this study is that some respondents did not answer all of the questions. This was a particular disadvantage because the demographic information was requested at the end of the survey, and more complete demographic data would have been useful in statistics regarding sex differences in conceptualizing and talking about career success. Other people opened the survey and did not respond to any questions. This has become a common practice with online surveys. Some are simply curious about the survey and read it but give no response.

Another limitation concerned the focus of the study on career success. More insight into conceptions of work-family integration might have been obtained if I had asked about faculty conceptions of personal success, as opposed to restricting the discussion to career success. The lack of discussion about work-family issues shows that this issue may be viewed as separate from the domain of career success.

For individuals at a computer, the questionnaire may have seemed long. The questionnaire took a reported 20 minutes to three hours to complete, with most falling between 40 minutes and an hour. Another approach may have been to elicit a single, richly detailed account of a conversation about career success, which might have yielded more information about career talk among faculty.
A final limitation of the study concerned the lack of incorporation of existing work value instruments and measures. While the study was designed to be qualitative, the findings could nevertheless have been enriched through triangulating them with existing work-value measures.

**Directions for future work**

These findings provide a number of clues for future work on success conceptions and talk. To establish these findings, future work could replicate them with a larger and wider sample. Most of the faculty who participated were from liberal arts departments and programs; it would be useful to understand faculty conceptions of success and their conversation among engineering and science faculty, too. Such a study could delve more into the possible selves construct by specifically asking about the ideal self and how the ideal self motivated career choices. If the faculty has an expected self different from the ideal future self, how does this affect communication? Do faculty avoid discussing career success because they fear people will discover that they are not on the road to their ideal self? Do faculty make choices more to bring about the ideal self, or to avoid the feared self? How does avoiding the feared self affect talk about the future?

A future study could also be conducted at one university or college, where the researcher could talk with administrators and collect their definitions of career success, and compare the intended conceptions with faculty perceptions. Documents of the organizational definitions of success could be reviewed by the researcher and compared with the faculty members’ perceptions of career success defined by the university.
A study that compares conceptions of career success with work values may provide useful data about the connections between perceptions of career success and changing work values. More information is needed about the interrelationships between work values, conceptions of success, and constraints to career success. Universities and colleges may be able to be more responsive to shifts in work values, but more research is needed.

Another area is to learn more about the role of conversation in reinforcing or challenging conceptions of career success. Surprisingly, faculty reported not having many defining conversations about career success with their colleagues, particularly on the topic of university success conceptions. The conversations that were reported were mostly about information checking on whether or not they understood the university’s definition. Would there be benefit to crafting formal opportunities to have such conversations? Who might the conversations be with? What are issues that might be topically raised in such conversations?

A final area that deserves further work is on the conceptions of success themselves. Faculty members appear, for the most part, to adopt the higher academic discourse for representing career success. How reflective faculty are about this discourse is not known. What other career values do faculty members use in making sense of university conceptions of career success? How do personal success conceptions interact with career success conceptions? The findings here could be used in a larger scale study employing a quantitative design.
Practical Recommendations and Conclusions

Practical Recommendations

Faculty and universities seem to have differences in their views of success, in that faculty add such elements as personal fulfillment, work-family balance, and personal growth to their conceptions of success, in addition to the university’s conception of teaching, research and service. Universities may want to consider these additional areas as they define their criteria for success.

Some faculty added research to their conception of success because that’s what the university wants. Others appeared to enjoy research and are frustrated with finding the time to do it between teaching and service. Some faculty members seem to want a better balance between effectiveness at their careers and personal fulfillment. Universities may want to consider various “tracks.” In each track, the home and work obligations can be simultaneously attended to in a combination that the faculty and the university can be happy with. The rewards, such as tenure and promotion, could be arranged with greater flexibility and more personalized contracts. This kind of flexibility may allow for all faculty members to work to their strengths, and to be more satisfied personally. The contract approach to faculty rewards could also address the concerns of those who do not know what the criteria are, because requirements would be spelled out in each contract.

Conclusions

In this study on conceptions and talk of career success in higher education, it was found that higher education faculty conceptualized career success predominantly as research, teaching and service in various combinations, with service the least mentioned,
or playing the lesser role. Many faculty members have also adopted an ethic that is
becoming more prevalent which emphasizes personal fulfillment, including work-family
balance as part of their conception of success. Men and women are similar in their
conception of career success, with men and women referring to building relationships
with students and colleagues equally.

Men and women both perceived their university as conceptualizing career success
for faculty as research, teaching and to lesser degree, service. Overall, faculty and
universities were interested in the same goals, and universities tended to formalize their
criteria for success.

Over time, faculty who have been at a university for a while come to a point in
which they re-assess their department and the faculty’s role in it. The shift appears to
include more emphasis on balance and on self-fulfillment. This appears to apply to men
and women equally.

Faculty members see heavy work loads and apathetic administrators as the biggest
impediment to their career success. The other frequently mentioned impediment was
“myself.” Some faculty mentioned feeling unmotivated or starting jobs but never
completing them. A few felt as if they were trying to hit a moving target. Men and
women did not report differences in conception of career success fears and constraints.

When faculty talked about career success, they usually were giving or receiving
advice, mentoring, or complaining about the university or specific problems. When they
did talk about their conceptions of career success, faculty found the talk helpful. Faculty
did not generally seek out opportunities to discuss career success. Some said the conceptions of career success were personal and did not discuss them.

Except for some of the constraints, and understanding some discrepancies between policies and practices, faculty did not talk as much about the universities’ conceptions of career success.

**Summary**

Conversations of faculty members reported by faculty members from different colleges and universities on an online questionnaire were analyzed for patterns in how career success is discussed by faculty. The analysis applied concepts from possible selves literature, which looks at the development of the self through what is possible for the individual in the future. The analysis also applied concepts from symbolic interaction, looking at how meaning is created and co-created through language.

The history of the development of the work ethic helps to explain some of the differences between faculty and the university’s perception of career success. Over time, work values change, and recent developments are a shift towards personal fulfillment as a work value, and the beginnings of an era of building relationships as a work value. Universities have not incorporated these values in their rewards and promotions policies, even though faculty members value these aspects of their jobs.

This study has extended the use of the psychological construct of possible selves research into communication. The possible selves construct has implications for communication for the development of identity and for conversations about issues such as success or failure. Possible selves research includes the ideal self, the feared self, and
the expected self. The process that occurs that mitigates ideal self to the expected self may occur in communication, yet prior to this study, conversation has not been explored as a factor in the construction of possible selves.

Looking at faculty conceptions of success and more importantly, how faculty talk about success has revealed that such conversations are useful in clarifying goals and needed behaviors for faculty. This study reveals that these conversations are uncommon, though. Instead, faculty are told what success means at a given university. More conversations that delve into the meaning of terms that are assumed to be understood, such as tenure, may help to mitigate fears of faculty working to attain such rewards. Another implication of this study is that some faculty feel silenced regarding an issue that helps define who they are. Work in our culture is part of our identity, and for faculty to feel as if they cannot express their conception of career success seems worthy of more attention.
REFERENCES


Cherrington, D. J. (1980). The work ethic: working values and values that work. New York: AMACOM.


CONSENT FOR PARTICIPATION IN SOCIAL AND BEHAVIORAL RESEARCH

I consent to my participation in research being conducted by PhD student Debra Hoover and Dr. Susan Kline of The Ohio State University. I understand that it is not possible to guarantee anonymity in electronic communication, but that researchers will make every effort to keep my responses confidential. I also understand that the only information researchers may provide to my university with regard to this study is a general summary report on the results, not individual responses.

The investigators have explained the purpose of the study, the procedures that will be followed, and the amount of time it will take. I understand the possible benefits, if any, of my participation. I know that I can choose not to participate without penalty to me. If I agree to participate, I can withdraw from the study at any time, and there will be no penalty.

I have had a chance to ask questions and to obtain answers to my questions. I can contact the investigators at (419) 772-2054 or (614) 292-0464. If I have questions about my rights as a research participant, I can call the Office of Research Risks Protection at (614) 688-4792.

This research is for a dissertation and although permission has been granted for the study, no administrative changes are expected or implied following this research.

I have read and agree to the above and provide my consent by checking the box below.

☐ I provide my consent to this study.
PART I: Career Success

We are studying definitions of career success for faculty, how faculty develop their definitions, and what faculty talk about when they talk about career success. To start with, would you please enter your current definition of “career success” below? The most useful answers include what “career success” means to you, and how you will (or did) know when you are (or were) successful.

Enter:

Some research indicates that people begin their careers with a vision of success in that career, and that this vision changes over time. We would like to know if that kind of re-evaluation occurs with faculty at your university.

Has your idea of career success changed over time? _____Yes  ___No
If yes, please answer the question below. If no, please skip to the “conversations” question below.

If you have re-evaluated an earlier definition of career success, would you please describe your original definition?

Enter:

What happened that led you to alter your definition? Please describe a key event which contributed to changing how you view success. Describe the event in detail, including when it was, the other people involved, and why this event led to a change in your view of success.

Enter:

Conversations Question:

We are also interested in how faculty talk about career success. Please select a useful conversation you have had, or heard, about career success and enter it below. The talk may have been about your success specifically, or about the idea of career success. Try to record what you said (if anything) and what the other person said, and write down as much of the conversation as you can recall.

Enter:

How did the talk regarding career success help or hinder the development of your meaning of career success?

Enter:
The following items refer to the conversation you have described above regarding your career success. Please fill in the circle that best fits your answer.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>My conversation was with:</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>My spouse or partner</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A friend</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Another faculty in my department</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty at a different university</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A dept. chair or dean</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colleagues at a conference</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A parent</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A child in my household</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A student</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Who initiated this conversation?</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I initiated it.</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The other person initiated it.</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A third party initiated it.</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please indicate this party's relationship to you.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I believe that I know the person with whom I had this conversation:</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Extremely well</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somewhat well</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not very well</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not at all well</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>My conversation partner was:</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| If more than two of you were engaged in the conversation, please indicate the number of |          |
| Males _________                                                        |          |
| Females _________                                                      |          |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How satisfied were you with this conversation?</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Extremely dissatisfied</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dissatisfied</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neither dissatisfied nor satisfied</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfied</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extremely satisfied</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How comfortable were you with this conversation?</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Extremely uncomfortable</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uncomfortable</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neither uncomfortable nor comfortable</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comfortable</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extremely comfortable</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| How did you feel as a result of this conversation? | • I felt very disregarded  
• I felt somewhat disregarded  
• I felt neither disregarded nor validated  
• I felt somewhat validated  
• I felt very validated |
| How typical (or ordinary) was this conversation for you? | • Very atypical  
• Somewhat atypical  
• Typical  
• Somewhat typical  
• Very typical |
| About how long was this conversation? | • ≤ 5 minutes  
• ≤15 minutes  
• ≤ 30 minutes  
• ≤1 hour  
• ≤ half a work day |
Part II: The University’s Definition of Success

Besides wanting to understand your definition of career success, we are also interested in how your definition of career success compares with that of your college or university. For this part of the survey, would you please tell us how you see your college’s or university’s definition of faculty career success? List all criteria that you see as important to the college or university.

Enter: This university judges career success for faculty by:

How did you learn what your college or university values from its faculty? Describe a significant conversation you had, or heard, that let you know how to succeed at your university and relate it below. In your detailed description, please include what you believe prompted this conversation.

Enter:

How did this conversation help or hinder your understanding of career success at your university?

Enter:

The following items refer to the conversation you have mentioned above regarding your college’s or university’s indicators for success. Please fill in the circle which best fits your answer.

My conversation was with:

- My spouse or partner
- A friend
- Another faculty in my department
- Faculty at a different university
- A dept. chair or dean
- Colleagues at a conference
- A parent
- A child in my household
- A student
- Other ______________________

Who initiated this conversation?

- I initiated it.
- The other person initiated it.
- A third party initiated it.

Please indicate this party’s relationship to you.

__________________________

I believe that I know the person with whom I had this conversation:

- Extremely well
- Somewhat well
- Not very well
- Not at all well
My conversation partner was:  
- Female
- Male

If more than two of you were engaged in the conversation, please indicate the number of males and females.

How satisfied were you with this conversation?  
- Extremely dissatisfied
- Dissatisfied
- Neither dissatisfied nor satisfied
- Satisfied
- Extremely satisfied

How comfortable were you with this conversation?  
- Extremely uncomfortable
- Uncomfortable
- Neither uncomfortable nor comfortable
- Comfortable
- Extremely comfortable

How did you feel as a result of this conversation?  
- I felt very disregarded
- I felt somewhat disregarded
- I felt neither disregarded nor validated
- I felt somewhat validated
- I felt very validated

How typical (or ordinary) was this conversation for you?  
- Very atypical
- Somewhat atypical
- Typical
- Somewhat typical
- Very typical

About how long was this conversation?  
- ≤ 5 minutes
- ≤ 15 minutes
- ≤ 30 minutes
- ≤ 1 hour
- ≤ half a work day
Part III: Constraints or Fears Regarding Career Success

Now we would like you to turn your attention to factors that you perceive as constraining your achievement of success. Constraints may be factors at the University, physical or emotional limitations, fears regarding your career, or demands from other aspects of your life. Please list the constraints or fears that impede you in achieving your current concept of success.

Enter:

Do you recall an event or incident in which you became aware that something or someone impeded or constrained your achievement of career success? Yes No
If yes, please describe the event in detail, including when and where the event took place, and who else (if anyone) was involved.
If you do not recall any event in which you became aware of career impediments, please move to the Constraints and Fears Talk question below.

Enter:

How did your awareness of constraints or fears help or hinder your achievement of career success?

Enter:

Constraints and Fears Talk

We are interested in what you talk about regarding the constraints to success, or fears about your career. Please describe a conversation that was significant to you regarding career constraints or fears. The conversation may have been about any type of constraint or fear, at the university, at home or elsewhere. Please include what the other person said as well as what you said.

Enter:

How did this conversation help or hinder the development of your perception of constraints or fears?

Enter:
The following items refer to the conversation you have described above regarding your constraints to success. Please fill in the appropriate circle which best fits your answer.

| My conversation was with: | ○ My spouse or partner  
|                          | ○ A friend  
|                          | ○ Another faculty in my department  
|                          | ○ Faculty at a different university  
|                          | ○ A dept. chair or dean  
|                          | ○ Colleagues at a conference  
|                          | ○ A parent  
|                          | ○ A child in my household  
|                          | ○ A student  
|                          | ○ Other ______________________ |

| Who initiated this conversation? | ○ I initiated it.  
|                                  | ○ The other person initiated it.  
|                                  | ○ A third party initiated it.  
|                                  | Please indicate this party’s relationship to you.  
|                                  | ________________________________________________ |

| I believe that I know the person with whom I had this conversation: | ○ Extremely well  
|                                                                 | ○ Somewhat well  
|                                                                 | ○ Not very well  
|                                                                 | ○ Not at all well |

| My conversation partner was: | ○ Female  
|                             | ○ Male |

| If more than two of you were engaged in the conversation, please indicate the number of Males _________  
|                                                        | Females ________ |

| How satisfied were you with this conversation? | ○ Extremely dissatisfied  
|                                               | ○ Dissatisfied  
|                                               | ○ Neither dissatisfied nor satisfied  
|                                               | ○ Satisfied  
|                                               | ○ Extremely satisfied |

| How comfortable were you with this conversation? | ○ Extremely uncomfortable  
|                                                  | ○ Uncomfortable  
|                                                  | ○ Neither uncomfortable nor comfortable  
|                                                  | ○ Comfortable  
|                                                  | ○ Extremely comfortable |

| How did you feel as a result of this conversation? | ○ I felt very disregarded  
|                                                    | ○ I felt somewhat disregarded  
|                                                    | ○ I felt neither disregarded nor validated |
I felt somewhat validated
I felt very validated

How typical (or ordinary) was this conversation for you?

- Very atypical
- Somewhat atypical
- Typical
- Somewhat typical
- Very typical

About how long was this conversation?

- ≤ 5 minutes
- ≤15 minutes
- ≤ 30 minutes
- ≤1 hour
- ≤ half a work day
PART IV: ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT

Finally, think of the work you do at the university now. How well does each of the following words or phrases describe your work? Choose 1, 2, or 3 based on the following scale and fill in the appropriate circle.

1 for "No" if it does not describe it
2 for "Yes" if it describes your work
3 for "?" if you cannot decide

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Satisfying</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>Undecided</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gives sense of accomplishment</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Challenging</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dull</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uninteresting</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Think of the majority of people that you work with now or the people you meet in connection with your work. How well does each of the following words or phrases describe these people? Choose 1, 2, or 3 based on the following scale and fill in the appropriate circle.

1 for "No" if it does not describe it
2 for "Yes" if it describes your work
3 for "?" if you cannot decide

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Boring</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>Undecided</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helpful</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Responsible</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intelligent</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lazy</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Think of your job in general. All in all, what is it like most of the time? For each of the following words or phrases, fill in 1, 2, or 3 based on the following scale.

1 for "No" if it does not describe it
2 for "Yes" if it describes your work
3 for "?" if you cannot decide

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Good</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>Undecided</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undesirable</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Better than most</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagreeable</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Makes me content</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excellent</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enjoyable</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Listed below are a series of statements that represent possible feelings that individuals might have about the organization for which they work. With respect to your own feelings about your organization, please indicate the degree of your agreement or disagreement with each statement by checking the number corresponding to your response using the scale provided, with “1” being strongly disagree and “7” being strongly agree. Remember, all responses will remain confidential.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I am willing to put in a great deal of effort beyond that normally expected in order to help this organization be successful.</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I talk up this organization to my friends as a great organization to work for.</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I feel very little loyalty to this organization.</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I would accept almost any type of job assignment or responsibility in order to keep working for this organization.</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I find that my values and the organization's values are very similar.</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am proud to tell others that I am part of this organization.</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I could just as well be working for another organization as long as the type of work was similar.</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>This organization really inspires the very best in me in the way of job performance/involvement.</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It would take very little change in my present circumstances to cause me to leave this organization.</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am extremely glad that I chose this organization to work for over others I was considering at the time.</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There's not too much to be gained by sticking with this organization indefinitely.</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Often, I find it difficult to agree with this organization's policies on important matters relating to its employees.</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I really care about the fate of this organization.</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For me this is the best of all possible organizations for which to work.</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deciding to work for this organization was a definite mistake on my part.</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Part V: Demographic Information:

What is your sex?  
☐ Female  
☐ Male

What is your age (years)?  
☐ Under 25  
☐ 26 – 34  
☐ 35 – 44  
☐ 45 – 54  
☐ 55 – 64  
☐ 65 - 70  
☐ 71 +

What is your marital status?  
☐ Married  
☐ Partnered  
☐ Single, never married  
☐ Widowed  
☐ Separated or divorced

What is your race?  
(Check all that apply):  
☐ Latino  
☐ Hispanic  
☐ White (non-Hispanic)  
☐ Indian  
☐ Native American  
☐ African-American  
☐ Asian  
☐ Other ______________

My deepest felt “thank you” for all your time.