Political presidents at four-year institutions of higher education in Oklahoma: A study of leadership.

Abstract
The primary questions addressed by this study are: (1) What are the stories of university presidents of four-year institutions in Oklahoma who transitioned to the presidency from an elected or politically appointed office? (2) Do these stories constitute a way of operating that can be characterized as reflecting a particular leadership style?

Researchers concerned with academic governance have models to assist in understanding college and university’s complex decision processes. The usual models are the collegial model, the bureaucratic model, and the political model. Each model calls for a different leadership style. If the collegial model is being used, the president seeks to persuade people by appealing to reason. The president is considered to be “first among equals” in an organization run by professional experts. In this model, the role of the president is not to command or to lead, but to listen to “the equals,” to facilitate and to negotiate. If the bureaucratic model is being used, the president is considered to be a hero who stands at the top of a complex pyramid of power. The hero’s job is to assess problems, propose alternatives, and make rational choices. If the political model is being used, the president is a mediator or negotiator between power blocs and must play a political role by pulling coalitions together to fight for desired changes (Baldridge, Curtis, Ecker, & Riley, 1991). Over the years, there has been a transition in the higher education environment from the collegial model to the bureaucratic model, and more recently, to the political model of governance. This study will look at the leadership in the context of these three models of governance and more specifically, how political presidents may reflect a particular leadership style.
After completing four academic years with acceptable grades in an approved course of study, the student earns a bachelor's degree. Some students complete college in less than four years by attending summer sessions. At most colleges, the academic year is divided into either two or three terms, excluding the summer session. The first has to do with the social status or degree of respect ascribed to people who are involved in education. American teachers (that term usually applies to people who teach in kindergarten through grade 12, the final grade in secondary school) do not enjoy high status in the society. Respondents to a recent Gallup Poll placed teachers well below physicians, clergymen, and bankers in terms of their prestige or status in the community. Oklahoma's higher education system is composed of 66 colleges and universities. Of these, 31 are public institutions, 17 are nonprofit private schools, and 18 are for-profit private institutions. HIGHLIGHTS. Public university tuition in Oklahoma increased 61 percent between 2005-2006 and 2015-2016, about three times the rate of inflation. At public four-year colleges in Oklahoma, 22.8 percent graduated within four years, while 46.2 percent graduated within six years. These figures were lower than in The last several years have seen much white water in higher education. The currents of change have propelled the sector toward, or onto, one rock after another. This is an aspect of higher education long dominated by the American Council on Education. As more institutions are starting to make such determinations independent of one another, the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA) has created a commission to consider what is needed. Community college leadership programs are springing up in schools of education across the country. And while some may question whether these are the right places to be training future leaders in areas such as the use of technology, innovation, advocacy and entrepreneurial thinking, there is little else filling the void.