

Comp Questions for Theodore C. Smith, May 14, 2004

Note: Papers will be developed for questions 1 through 6.

1. Institutions of higher education typically have a "mission statement." Describe and discuss the role mission statements play in (a) determining institutional scope (curriculum and content), (b) selecting relevant performance criteria and (c) achieving desired learning outcomes. Diagram and evaluate the importance of links between mission statements and iterative futuring and strategic planning processes in higher education.
2. Universities or parts thereof periodically must respond to demands for program reform. Review one institution's attempts to implement academic reform, discussing the goals, organizational dynamics, tensions, key events, and outcomes. Analyze the interactions that occurred within the organization and between it and its external environment. Recommend ways that other institutions might increase the likelihood of positive outcomes.
3. Several institutions of higher education have experienced governance problems. Survey governance structures used by private institutions of higher education and similar institutions. Describe and analyze reported governance problems. Synthesize a possible alternative structure and/or mode of governance, suitable for use in a private non-profit university, which may avoid or minimize such problems.
4. Gall, Gall, and Borg (2003) suggest that action-based inquiry promises to improve education and "strengthen the connection between research and practice" (p. 578). Compare, contrast, and evaluate key elements of action research, participatory action research, action learning, appreciative inquiry, and active assessment. Formulate a prototype plan whereby some or all of these five research traditions might become a basis for higher education strategic planning and governance.

5. Wilson (1989) believes that key challenges that managers face is to (a) define core tasks of their organization and (b) find incentives that will induce operators "to perform those tasks as defined" (p. 174). Identify and describe employee-related incentives typically used in higher education, reviewing strengths and weaknesses of each. Evaluate the role that the different approaches play in motivating faculty to perform various types of tasks. Propose an optimal approach that encourages sustained excellence.
6. Data collection in qualitative research poses various ethical problems. Compare and contrast the four types of ethics (utilitarian, deontological, relational, and ecological) that provide a basis for viewing and resolving ethical issues. Focusing on potential dilemmas, critique the role that each type plays in the federally mandated IRB process.
7. A dean is an administrator in charge of a division of a university or college (WordNet, n. d.). Survey four institutions and compile a list of the various deans therein. Analyze the duty statements for four different types of deans. Construct a guideline to guide an institution in determining whether a given position is, in fact, a dean-level post.
8. Colleges and universities typically provide resources and services to aid learning and maximize retention. Survey four institutions and available literature to (a) compile a list of such resources and services and (b) describe the purpose and activities of each. Analyze these purposes and activities to determine whether similar services are needed to support online learners. Formulate recommendations regarding how such services might be best delivered.
9. Online institutions may hire instructors who potentially have diverse perspectives and worldviews. Compare and contrast the challenges that online institutions face in promulgating a sense of mission and common institutional culture with those faced by

standard brick and mortar institutions. Analyze the elements of effective enculturation programs and synthesize findings to guide online institutions of higher education.

10. Quality education is an oft-stated goal of universities and colleges, including their online educational programs, yet critics have questioned whether such institutions are capable of achieving that goal. Review available literature to identify critical factors in quality of online educational programs. Describe selected existing performance evaluation tools and performance improvement programs. Critique these tools and improvement programs and synthesize a holistic approach to aid online instruction in higher education.

References Cited

Gall, M. D., Gall, J. P., & Borg, W. R. (2003). *Educational research: An introduction*. Boston, MA: Allyn and Bacon.

Wilson, J. Q. (1989). *Bureaucracy: What government agencies do and why they do it*. New York, NY: Basic Books.

WordNet 2.0 (n. d.). *Overview for "dean."* Retrieved April 21, 2004, from <http://www.cogsci.princeton.edu/cgi-bin/webwn?stage=1&word=dean>.