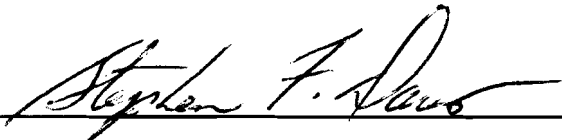


AN ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS OF

ANITA M. BURKHALTER for the MASTER OF SCIENCE  
in PSYCHOLOGY presented on August 7, 1992

Title: Defining the activities and effectiveness of a university personnel department using the perspectives of multiple constituencies.

Abstract approved: 

Quality of service as a measure of organizational effectiveness has been a focus of concern in the recent past. Since many suggestions for quality improvement involve human resources, the present project focused on the personnel subunit of a university organization. Tsui (1984) proposed the existence of a linkage between organizational effectiveness, activities, criteria, and constituent variables. This linkage was explored in the present project undertaken to obtain an evaluation of the service provided by a university personnel office. The second purpose of the project was to identify the activities considered most important by those served by the department. Perspectives of three constituency groups (administrators, faculty, and classified staff) were used as a basis for evaluation and rating of important activities. Constituents were randomly selected and surveyed using a mailed questionnaire. Data were analyzed using a separate repeated-measures analysis of variance in each of nine dimensions and subsequent Newman-Keuls tests. Results indicated that the perspectives of administration, faculty, and classified staff differ on which personnel activities are important and do not differ significantly when rating the personnel department for effectiveness. Conclusions and implications for future research are discussed.

DEFINING THE ACTIVITIES AND EFFECTIVENESS  
OF A UNIVERSITY PERSONNEL DEPARTMENT  
USING THE PERSPECTIVES OF MULTIPLE CONSTITUENCIES

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A Thesis

Presented to

the Division of Psychology and Special Education

EMPORIA STATE UNIVERSITY

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In Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree  
Master of Science


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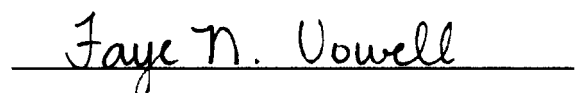
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Anita M. Burkhalter

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Four and a half years ago, many people told me I was a fool to give up a good career in order to pursue a dream. There were times when I thought the nay-sayers were right. But during the difficult times when I didn't believe in myself, there were those who did. I appreciate these special people. No friends have been more supportive than Gary and Marilynn. Crystal, Janet, Harley, Alice, Connee, and Harold have cheered me on.

I would like to thank my family. I am blessed with seven brothers, three sisters, and a grandmother who are confident that I can achieve whatever goal I set for myself. Their support and encouragement gave me faith in myself and my ability.

Finally, I owe an enormous debt of gratitude to my husband. He has been a leader, critic, devil's advocate, coach, chauffeur, typist, proof-reader, cheerleader, and proud on-looker. His pride in my accomplishments has inspired me to try even harder. Without his love and support, it's doubtful I would have attained my goal.

Thank you, David.

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## CHAPTER I.

### Introduction

Organizations exist because they can accomplish things that individuals cannot do alone. An organization is usually viewed as a system of subunits that continually transforms inputs into outputs. While there are many differences between organizations, all share common characteristics. Organizations constantly interact with a changing environment and are characterized by goal-directed behavior. Organizations also rely on the behaviors of individuals to perform activities and processes, and group people and jobs into a structure.

There are broad differences between the organizational structures of corporations and universities. The clientele served by the respective personnel departments are also very different. Research has found that personnel activities generally differ between settings and types of organizations (Tanner, 1973). Preferences for personnel department activities also generally differ based on the evaluator's position within the organizational hierarchy (Gomez-Mejia, 1985). These differences may reflect a lack of understanding of what the clients consider important or may be a function of organizational structure.

### Review of the Literature

Approaches used to evaluate organizational effectiveness fall into four broad categories. The most widely used evaluation approach defines effectiveness as how successful the organization is in meeting its goals and purposes (Ivancevich & Matteson, 1987). The problem with this approach is determining upon what or whose influence the goals are based (Connolly, Conlon, & Deutsch, 1980). For example, Pennings and Goodman (1977) suggested that a dominant coalition could arrive at

evaluation criteria, and Keeley (1984) argued that goals are biased toward those who have the most to gain. Gordon (1972) believed the criterion problem in program evaluation can be overcome if behavioral objectives are determined. However, Cameron (1980, 1981) pointed out that some institutions are not distinguishable on the basis of goals and that an organization may be ineffective even if goals are reached.

A second approach to measuring effectiveness focuses on how well the organization obtains necessary resources (Yuchtman & Seashore, 1967). Cameron (1980, 1981) argued that organizations can lose their ability to adapt even if needed resources are obtained. Another suggested measure of effectiveness is the manner in which the internal processes flow (Likert, 1967). While Campbell (1977) argued that focusing on the means can lead to a neglect of the ends, Phillips and Seers (1989) contended that performing functions efficiently does not ensure an increase in overall effectiveness.

The fourth method of organizational assessment defines effectiveness as the degree to which the organization satisfies the demands of those it serves, i.e., stakeholders (Connolly, Conlon, & Deutsch, 1980). Originally defined by Rhenman (1968) as "individuals or groups which depend on the company for the realization of their personal goals and on whom the company is dependent" (p. 25), stakeholders (also called constituents) may be management, customers, owners, suppliers, creditors, stockholders, or the community as a whole. Cameron (1980) enumerated several examples of effectiveness that occurred when constituency input was ignored, and Phillips and



Seers (1989) pointed out the lack of empirical evidence of a relationship between constituent satisfaction and overall organizational effectiveness.

None of these approaches to measuring effectiveness is applicable to all types of organizations and all circumstances (Cameron, 1980).

Determining the structural characteristics of the organization to be evaluated, understanding its purposes, activities, and processes, and identifying the constraints under which it operates will help evaluators choose a method that will give the most valuable information. For the present research, an understanding of the differences between businesses and universities is necessary.

According to Cohen and March (1974), universities belong to a class of organizations called "organized anarchies" (p. 2). Goals are inconsistent and ill-defined, operations are trial and error procedures, and the organizational participants vary greatly in the amount of time and effort devoted to the organization (Cohen & March, 1974). Cameron (1980) pointed out that organized anarchies have widely differing criteria of success operating simultaneously in various parts of the organization, and external environmental influences are partitioned among subunits. As a result, many factors can be ignored and subunits are fairly autonomous.

There are distinct differences between universities and business organizations. Neither has a single purpose; each has multiple purposes that determine the organization's internal features and how clients are served (Fincher, 1982). The internal structure of a university may be the result of teaching interests or funding possibilities. Resolving a campus issue or making a compromise may

result in university departments with unusual features. Rarely do business organizations decide departmental functions in this manner.

Distribution of power also differs between universities and businesses (Fincher, 1982; Fortunato & Waddell, 1981). Universities have a tradition of academic freedom and autonomy. As a result, members of the faculty may assume managerial roles. Even though businesses are evolving to a more participatory style of management, and the level of authority given faculty varies from institution to institution, faculty power far exceeds that of business employees (Fincher, 1982; Fortunato & Waddell, 1981).

Although general differences between businesses and universities are apparent, the contrast between personnel department responsibilities within the two types of organizations is less clear. In a handbook for college personnel administrators, White (1989) assigned university personnel departments a list of responsibilities that are similar to those relegated to personnel administration in business organizations by textbook authors (e.g., Singer, 1990). But a focus on responsibilities alone does not address the type of criteria to be used for evaluating effectiveness, nor does it identify the source of the criteria.

Fortunato and Waddell (1981) believed the greatest contrast between universities and business lies with the members of the academic community. Because of faculty's novel position, university personnel administrators face unique barriers in communicating their programs and recommendations (Fortunato & Waddell, 1981).

In an attempt to differentiate between personnel policies and practices in universities and in businesses, Tanner (1973) assessed

state colleges and universities in eight southern and midwestern states. The survey found personnel practices to generally differ between businesses and colleges. While central personnel offices managed the fringe benefits for all employees of both types of organizations, subjectivity played a major role in faculty compensation. Job descriptions were available only for non-faculty; department heads, not the personnel office, recruited faculty. In contrast to business organizations, universities had fewer training programs for non-faculty. Long-range human resource planning was not as common in universities as in industry.

While some research (e.g., Cleveland, Murphy, & Williams, 1989) has addressed organizational characteristics as predictors for specific personnel practices, research on how organizational characteristics shape overall personnel programs and policies is limited. Jackson, Schuler, and Rivero (1989) investigated the hypothesis that different personnel programs are needed by different types of organizations. They found personnel practices used by service organizations to be clearly different from those practices used by manufacturing organizations. For example, manufacturing organizations were less likely to provide training related to employees' current work and less likely to use performance appraisal results to determine compensation and to identify training needs. Dissimilar practices were found between personnel activities for hourly and managerial employees. For example, compensation for managerial employees was more likely to be based on performance appraisals. While customers were not generally a source of performance feedback for either type of organization, service

organizations were more likely to include client input as part of the performance appraisal process. This use of client input suggested that service organizations realize customers are important in determining organizational effectiveness (Jackson, et al., 1989).

In an attempt to identify effectiveness criteria for universities, Cameron (1978) interviewed five top administrators and 10 faculty members at each of six New England colleges. Results indicated that effectiveness is a multi-dimensional construct with effectiveness in one domain not always relating to effectiveness in another domain. For example, publication of research might be a criteria for effectiveness of individual faculty members, but have no relevance in assessing the effectiveness of university support staff. In follow-up research, Cameron (1981) validated the existence of nine dimensions of effectiveness in institutions of higher education. From these dimensions, four domains of major institutional characteristics were identified -- a morale domain, an extracurricular domain, an academic domain, and an external adaptation domain. The major characteristics of four groups of institutions, all of which typified effectiveness differently in each domain, were also identified. An affluent academic institution might emphasize high endowment revenue and high revenue for research, while a developing, teaching institution might emphasize growing enrollments and faculty development. As a result, Cameron (1978, 1981) concluded that organizations must consider the domain of activity in assessing effectiveness, and a general construct of

effectiveness is not likely to develop that is applicable to all types of organizations.

Even within organizations there is sometimes a lack of common effectiveness criteria. Research by Hitt and Middlemist (1979) found consistency in effectiveness criteria at the subunit level. However, a replication of this research revealed differences in criteria among subunits (Hitt, Ireland, Keats, & Vianna, 1983). A possible explanation for these divergent results is that the technologies and constituents varied between the two studies. The variance in results points out the importance of follow-up research before generalizations are made.

Given that each organizational subunit has a different domain of activity and that effectiveness is a multidimensional construct, it has been suggested that subunit evaluation is an appropriate measure for assessing a limited aspect of the organization (Hitt & Middlemist, 1979; Pennings & Goodman, 1977). The personnel department is the only organizational subunit that links people and process by serving individual, institutional, and instrumental objectives (Tsui, 1990). Because this linkage plays an important role in the accomplishment of organizational goals, an evaluation of the personnel department can identify opportunities or constraints in meeting these goals.

Until recently, personnel department evaluations have focused on the quantitative approach. The Employee Relations Index (ERI) integrates several statistics into an over-all index designed to measure the extent to which employees perform in accordance with the objectives and policies of the organization (Merrihue & Katzell, 1955). The Human Resources Index (HRI) provides a composite score on 15 factors and

gives a means for comparison against norms established by other organizations (Schuster, 1982). While a single composite index is appealing, Phillips and Seers (1989) argued that single indices do not have a theoretical base and are not adequate for measuring the complexities of the personnel function. Consequently, a variety of indices have been developed.

Rabe (1967) identified over 60 indices supposedly in use for manpower evaluations. The Personnel Practices Review (PPR) used by Citibank pinpoints weaknesses in functioning and administering personnel policies (Sheibar, 1974). Fitz-Enz (1980) claimed to have developed over 60 ratios of personnel activities to compute costs/benefits over time. Ratios continue to be used as audit tools for some aspects of the human resource function (Singer, 1990). Those most commonly used are turnover rates and absenteeism to number of hours scheduled to work.

Estimating the financial impact of absenteeism, turnover, and job performance is an example of cost-benefit assessment. Two other types of procedures characterize this effectiveness category. Utility theory considers the costs incurred to recruit, select, hire, train, and develop employees (Cascio, 1991), and human resource accounting attempts to relate information about human resources in financial terms by valuing employees on the organizational balance sheet (Flamholtz, 1985; Phillips & Seers, 1989). However, Gaertner and Ramnarayan (1983) pointed out that personnel department outcomes are not easily quantified and only indirectly related to terminal outputs; therefore, traditional accounting measures are not applicable in assessing personnel departments.

Phillips and Seers (1989) argued that human resource accounting and utility theory do not focus on the function of the personnel department, and therefore cannot be used to link personnel department performance with organizational performance.

In an attempt to provide tools for assessing personnel department effectiveness, several models or frameworks have been suggested. Peterson and Malone (1975) proposed a Personnel Effectiveness Grid (PEG). They suggested management and personnel be surveyed to obtain results that can be placed on a four-quadrant grid. The environment in which the personnel department operates can then be visualized and understood. The PEG provides clues as to how the personnel function is viewed and what activities are most likely to need improvement (Peterson and Malone, 1975).

Gross (1989) proposed the environment model strategy as a means for personnel department evaluation with approaches similar to those used by successful businesses. This model looks for differences between actual and desired states of the system or individual performance. Four levels of analysis are suggested. Interface analysis examines the common boundaries among the corporate and line human resource functions by evaluating missions, strategic plans, operating plans, resource bases, allocations, and constraints. Change analysis measures the affect and effect that result from organizational changes. The third level (readiness analysis) examines all organizational processes, as well as individual and system performance, for effectiveness. Finally, the organizational climate is examined by

performing periodic attitude surveys, holding problem-sensing groups, or conducting interviews with members of the system.

A three-part framework for assessing personnel department effectiveness was proposed by Tsui (1984) in which the value of the personnel subunit is defined in terms of "reputational effectiveness" (see Malone & Peterson, 1977). The model describes the complexity of the human resource function and suggests hypotheses that relate overall organizational effectiveness to activities, criteria, and constituent variables.

Using the organization's constituencies to evaluate the personnel subunit is consistent with Thompson's (1967) social test. Thompson asserted that when a unit lacks clear, measurable outputs and has an interdependent nature, evaluation should be "made on the basis of the unit's ability to meet the expectations of other units with which it is interdependent" (p. 5). Because effectiveness is a value judgment, Zammuto (1984) suggested it is appropriate to evaluate organizations from multiple value perspectives. Cameron (1981) maintained that constituencies are the appropriate evaluators when there are multiple domains, where outcomes are obscure, or when diverse groups of constituents are making demands. Even though these conditions are found in universities, Cameron argued that the anarchistic nature of universities makes the constituent model inappropriate as an overall evaluation tool. However, Cameron conceded that use of the constituent model might be appropriate in a subunit.

Malone and Peterson (1977) were among early researchers who used constituent perspectives to clarify the personnel department's role and



to determine criteria for assessing personnel department effectiveness. Asking executives in a variety of industries to rank descriptive statements as criteria for measuring effectiveness and ineffectiveness, Malone and Peterson found top management support to be critical to personnel department success. They also found that personnel participation in establishing policies and plans impacted the employees' perception of personnel department effectiveness. Results suggested that personnel departments can maximize effectiveness by linking activities to overall organizational goals (Malone & Peterson, 1977).

In an audit by Hercus and Oades (1982), the major functions of the personnel departments were identified and then compared to the policies and procedures in practice. Results pointed out that personnel department audits can identify difficulties and emerging trends and can become the basis for educating management to the human resource field. Likewise, a survey commissioned by International Business Machines (IBM) found the most effective human resource departments played a more strategic role in the organization and viewed employees as valuable assets (Alper & Mandel, 1984).

The complexity between activities, criteria, and constituent perceptions was investigated by Gomez-Mejia (1985) using three audit measures: a 31-measure employee attitude survey, executives' perceptions of the quality of 10 key personnel areas, and archival data. As a result of factor analysis, nine factors within four outcome measures emerged as personnel audit dimensions. The audit found that overall employee satisfaction with the personnel department varied with occupational level. Overall satisfaction was highest for managers and

administrators, followed by professionals and technicians, clerical, and operatives. When used as a predictor for satisfaction, the occupational level was highly significant.

Attempting to identify constituency perspectives and preferences for personnel department activities, Tsui and Milkovich (1987) undertook a research project with three studies. Other purposes of the project were to compare constituent perspectives at the operating and strategic organizational levels and to define effectiveness criteria. Using a panel of experts (Delphi process), the first study identified 101 important activities and 72 meaningful criteria for evaluation of a human resource department (Tsui, 1987; Tsui & Milkovich, 1987).

Seventy-three activities within eight underlying dimensions emerged in the second study (Tsui, 1987; Tsui & Milkovich, 1987). Rated significantly more important to employees were the Organization/Employee Development, and Employee Support dimensions. Both managers and non-management employees rated Administrative Services and Compensation/Employee Relations activities the most important and Labor/Union Relations as least important. Five factors for evaluation criteria were identified. There were no significant differences between non-management employees and managers on Responsiveness or Innovativeness criteria, and only slight differences on the other three criteria. Overall, the highest interest was shown in operational activities.

The third study examined constituency preferences for personnel activities at the operating and the strategic levels (Tsui, 1987; Tsui & Milkovich, 1987). Factor analysis verified the replicability of the eight

activity dimensions. The hypothesis that the most similarity in perspectives would be found between line executives and operating managers was supported. The largest degree of difference in preferences for personnel activities was between human resource executives and line managers. Overall, the largest differences in preferences for personnel activities were between corporate level executives and operating level managers. Smaller differences were found between constituents in the strategic level.

Analysis also found differences between the evaluation of individuals at the operating and strategic levels (Tsui, 1987). Line executives were the most satisfied with their personnel department's performance. Operating managers were the least satisfied. Variations were noted between each of the specific criteria and the overall effectiveness criteria. Quality of service was particularly important to line executives and human resource managers. There was a weak association between average time taken by the department to resolve disputes and overall effectiveness for all four constituencies. The degree of association between trust and confidence in the human resource department and overall effectiveness was highly significant for both the operating managers and the line executives. The degree of association was extremely weak on this criteria for the human resource and the employee relations managers. Constituencies at the operating level preferred administrative service activities, and constituencies at the corporate level preferred strategic activities. Results implied that constituency expectations for the personnel department varied from setting to setting.

Tsui (1990) investigated this implication in a study conducted in 151 operating units of three large organizations. Significant differences were found in the effectiveness ratings of the human resource department. Executives gave the department its highest ratings, and managers gave the next highest ratings. Employees gave the lowest ratings. These results implied that subunits attempt to satisfy the constituencies who control the resources. However, Tsui pointed out alternative explanations may be that the executives are simply not interested in the day-to-day operations of the department, or the ratings are an attempt to cover-up mismanaged departments.

Additional research investigating the difference in effectiveness ratings between human resource executives and line managers was undertaken by King and Bishop (1991). Results indicated that personnel managers did not understand what was important to line managers. Personnel managers thought line managers placed the greatest emphasis on compensation, establishing and improving work relationships, training and development, and appraising performance. Contrary to personnel managers perceptions, the line managers valued human resource planning, staffing, and improving work relations. King and Bishop believed this contrast in values suggested that less emphasis should be placed on functional specialization and general requirements should be more integrated. Results also suggested that the personnel department needed to understand what the general organization constituents considered important activities and criteria.

A study by Bohlander and Kinicki (1988) concluded that an understanding of which personnel activities are considered important

contributes to employee attitudes and organizational effectiveness. In this research, brainstorming (using the nominal group technique) generated a list of 11 human resource activities and a set of critical employee attitudes. Employees rated their company's commitment to the human resource activities and completed a survey that assessed employee attitudes. The hypothesis that actual personnel activities result in different employee perceptions about commitment to human resources was supported. The correlations between employee attitudes and perceptions about organizational commitment to human resource management were all significant. While not every attitude was influenced, there were differences in employee attitudes between the two organizations surveyed. Employees from the organization with superior personnel department activities had better attitudes. Bohlander and Kinicki believed these results suggested that an organization's commitment to personnel activities have an intangible impact on effectiveness.

As delineated above, there is evidence that the criteria used to evaluate personnel department activities varies with the type of organization and constituencies served. These criteria appear to be linked to constituency preferences for certain personnel activities, and occupational level appears to influence the degree of constituent satisfaction with the personnel department. There is also evidence that the multiple-constituency approach can be used to evaluate the effectiveness of a personnel department.

Although personnel activities occur in all types of organizations, a lack of research makes it difficult to generalize personnel activities and evaluation criteria. Corporations and universities have very different

internal structures and power distributions. One should not assume that constituency preferences for personnel activities and evaluation criteria are the same for both types of organizations. An evaluation of the personnel department at Emporia State University (ESU) will identify efficient operations, as well as those needing improvement, in order to maximize the personnel department's contribution toward a quality organization. It is anticipated that the results of the present study will provide a basis for further research on university personnel departments.

## CHAPTER II.

### Method

#### Subjects

The target population consisted of the internal constituents of the Emporia State University (ESU) Office of Personnel, Payroll and Employee Relations (PPER). According to Tsui and Milkovich (1987), a constituent is an individual who "exerts demands and holds opinions regarding the [personnel department's] effectiveness" (p. 519).

Constituents may be external or internal to the organization itself. For the purposes of this research, the external constituents were defined as those individuals outside the university (i.e., the community at large) and were not surveyed. Internal constituents were defined as those individuals who are employed by the university, or who have retired from the university, and to whom PPER provides compensation, training, staffing, and administrative services.

Student employees might be considered internal constituents because they are served by PPER through the payroll function. However, they are not generally in a position to influence the functioning and direction of the department and have more limited information about the department's programs. Therefore, student employees were not surveyed.

It might be argued that because retirees do not utilize all available PPER programs, retirees should not have been surveyed. This argument could be made about other employees as well, because all employees do not avail themselves of all personnel programs. However, in most cases the retirees use more than the payroll function and have a

broader perspective than do student employees. PPER disseminates information about retirement benefits, manages a constant flow of requests for additional information and assistance in filing claims, and hold seminars on topics of interest to retirees (N. Norian-Bain, personal communication, April 1, 1992). In many cases, retirees are the most visible service-users. Since PPER is a service-oriented department, retirees are considered important clients and were surveyed.

Sampling procedures. The subjects were randomly selected from the internal constituents of PPER using the ESU 1991-92 Campus Telephone Directory (pages 1-14) and a list of the retirees provided by PPER. Combining the two lists of internal constituents generated an accessible population of 1036 individuals. Each constituent was assigned a number. Using a random number table, a sample of 273 was drawn. Of these, 26 were administrators, 95 were faculty, 105 were classified employees, and 47 were retirees.

#### Survey Instrument

For the present research, the survey used was an adaptation of the instrument employed by Tsui (1987; 1990) and Tsui and Milkovich (1987). The survey consisted of 73 items rating the importance of personnel activities on a 7-point scale, with (1) anchoring not important and (7) anchoring extremely important. There are 17-items rating the personnel department's effectiveness on a 7-point scale, with (1) anchoring not effective and (7) anchoring highly effective. The word "administration or administrators/supervisors" was substituted for "management," and "university" was substituted for "organization." A copy of the survey appears in Appendix A.



The list of important activities and meaningful criteria for the survey were obtained from a Delphi procedure (Tsui, 1987; 1990). Thirty-five individuals representing eight constituencies participated in the Delphi, involving three rounds of mailed questionnaires. A total of 122 activities emerged from the Delphi, 101 of which received a "definitely yes" response from at least 50% of the participants and 17 activities received a "definitely yes" response from 100%. Eight hundred five individuals were surveyed on the 101 activities, and eight factors emerged after factor analysis. Internal consistency reliability coefficients ranged from .76 (for Administrative Services) to .92 (for Staffing/Human Resource Planning). The median alpha coefficient was .87 (Tsui & Milkovich, 1987).

After the Delphi, 90 effectiveness criteria resulted. Sixty received a "definitely yes" response from at least 50% of the participants. Factor analysis yielded five factors. Of these factors, two criteria are subjective in nature (Responsiveness/Proactivity and Innovativeness). Alpha coefficients for internal consistency reliability on the effectiveness criteria were .90 for executives, .91 for managers, and .89 for non-management constituencies (Tsui, 1990). In addition, Tsui (1987) asked three questions to measure the overall departmental effectiveness. Four questions to measure overall departmental effectiveness were asked in the present study.

Method. The survey was presented to the subjects in booklet form. In addition to the survey questions, the booklet contained a section requesting demographic information in which the participants were asked

their position at ESU, union membership, number of years at ESU, and supervision responsibilities.

Research has found significant differences in expectations between individuals at the corporate level and individuals at the operating level, as well as differences between managers and hourly employees (Tsui, 1987; Tsui & Milkovich, 1987). This previous research suggested that administration and classified employees would have different expectations for personnel activities.

Given that most administrators are also faculty, administrators were defined as the president, vice presidents, associate vice presidents, assistant vice presidents, deans, associate deans, assistant deans, division chairs, assistant division chairs, directors, and associate directors. This categorization was made regardless of the time spent in the administrative function.

The hierarchy within the classified staff is not well-defined. Staff with similar classification levels often have very different job duties. Supervisory responsibilities influence the classification level to some extent. For the purposes of this study, those designated "classified" under the university payroll system were grouped together. Demographic information provided an indication of supervisory responsibilities. The subjects were assigned a four-digit identification number with the first digit denoting categorization as follows: 1=administrator, 2=faculty, 3=classified employee, and 4=retiree. For cross reference purposes, one record was created that listed the subjects' name and identification number in alphabetical order, and a second record was created that listed the information numerically. The

survey booklets were stamped with the assigned identification number for the sole purpose of identifying those subjects not responding. No one other than the researcher knew which subject had been assigned the number.

### Procedure

The survey booklet was mailed to the randomly-selected subjects. Regular mail was utilized to send the survey to retirees; campus mail was utilized for all other subjects. In each instance, the purposes of the study and its confidential nature were explained according to a cover letter (see Appendix B). A computer generated address labels and personalized letters that were individually signed by the researcher. The subjects were asked to complete and return the survey in the six-inch by nine-inch envelope provided. Envelopes for returning the surveys were imprinted with the researcher's name and a campus mail box number. Those survey packets mailed to retirees were postage paid. The campus mail box number was assigned for the sole purpose of receiving the completed surveys, and no one other than the researcher picked up the surveys.

Ten days after mailing the survey, a follow-up reminder was sent to the non-respondents (see Appendix B). After an additional ten days, the completed surveys were scored. Input data for the computer were the subjects' identification number and the score for each question.

## CHAPTER III.

### Results

Fifty-six percent of the 273 surveys were returned. Of these returns, 16 surveys were from subjects in Group 1 (administrators), 50 from subjects in Group 2 (faculty), 58 from subjects in Group 3 (classified employees), and 28 from subjects in Group 4 (retirees). The response rate in each group varied from 53% (for the faculty) to 62% (for the administrators). Although there was a 60% response rate from the retirees, 15 of these returns were blank, while others were partially completed. Due to the small sample size of the retirees, the data from these subjects were not included in subsequent analyses. The relevance of this particular group will be discussed subsequently.

A separate repeated-measures analysis of variance (ANOVA) was performed on the data from each of the nine dimensions. In each case the independent groups constituted the between-groups factor while the domain-relevant questions constituted the within-groups factor. An alpha level of .05 was employed to determine significance for all effects. As the meaning of differences between specific questions within dimensions is obscure at best, the results of this factor will not be presented. Hence only the main effect of groups and the interaction of groups by specific question will be considered. The results will be presented on a dimension-by-dimension basis.

#### Staffing/Human Resource Planning

The ANOVA for these data failed to yield significance for the groups effect,  $F(2, 99) = 2.31, p = .10$ . However, the groups by questions interaction was significant,  $F(30, 1485) = 2.37, p < .0001$ .

Simple main effects analyses were employed to evaluate the significant interaction. The results of these analyses indicated that the groups differed significantly [smallest  $F(2, 113) = 3.79, p < .0255$ ] on Questions 3, 7, 8, 9, 10, 13 and 14. Subsequent Newman-Keuls tests indicated that administrators scored higher ( $p < .05$ ) than faculty and classified employees on Question 3. Faculty scored lower than administrators and classified employees on Questions 7, 8, 10, and 14. Classified employees scored higher than faculty and administrators on Questions 9 and 13. Table 1 in Appendix C summarizes these results.

#### Organization/Employee Development

Analysis of these data yielded significance for the groups effect,  $F(2, 102) = 7.94, p < .0007$ , but not for the groups by questions interaction,  $F(24, 1224) = 1.23, p < .20$ . The Newman-Keuls procedures probed the significant groups effect and indicated that the scores of the classified respondents were significantly ( $p < .05$ ) higher than those of the faculty group. The scores of the faculty and administrators did not differ reliably.

#### Compensation/Employee Relations

Significant groups,  $F(2, 107) = 8.61, p < .0003$  and groups by questions interaction,  $F(22, 1177) = 2.38, p < .0003$  effects were shown by this analysis. Simple main effects analyses indicated the groups differed significantly on all questions [smallest  $F(2, 116) = 4.52, p < .0129$ ] except Questions 1, 2, 4, and 5. The Newman-Keuls tests indicated that the classified employees scored higher ( $p < .05$ ) than administrators and faculty on Questions 6, 8, and 9. On Questions 3, 7,

10, 11, and 12 faculty scored lower than classified employees and administrators. These results are summarized in Table 2 in Appendix C.

### Employee Support

Analysis of these data failed to yield a reliable groups effect,  $F(2, 110) = 1.86, p < .5$  effect; however, the groups by questions interaction was significant,  $F(16, 880) = 1.67, p < .05$ . The significant interaction was evaluated by simple main effects analyses. These analyses indicated that the groups differed significantly on Question 8,  $F(2, 115) = 5.94, p < .003$ . Subsequent Newman-Keuls indicated that the administrators scored significantly ( $p < .05$ ) lower than the classified employees and faculty on Question 8 (see Table 3 in Appendix C).

### Legal Requirements/Compliance

There was neither a significant groups effect,  $F(2, 114) = 0.22, p < .8029$ , nor a significant groups by questions interaction,  $F(12, 684) = 1.00, p < .4465$ , on this dimension.

### Labor/Union Relations

The ANOVA for these data failed to yield significance for the groups effect,  $F(2, 108) = .02, p < .9777$  and for the groups by questions interaction,  $F(8, 432) = .38, p < .9293$ .

### Policy Adherence

In this dimension, the ANOVA yielded significance for the groups effect,  $F(2, 110) = 9.14, p < .0002$ , but not for the groups by questions interaction,  $F(8, 440) = 1.50, p < .1562$ . The Newman-Keuls procedure probed the significant groups effect and indicated that the scores of the classified subjects were significantly ( $p < .05$ ) higher than those of the faculty and administrative subjects, which did not differ.

### Administrative Services

Analysis of these data failed to find significant groups effect,  $F(2, 107) = 1.65, p < .1970$ ; however, the groups by questions interaction was significant,  $F(10, 535) = 2.94, p < .001$ . Simple main effects analyses were employed to evaluate the significant interactions. These analyses indicated that the groups differed significantly on Question 3,  $F(2, 115) = 5.41, p < .005$ , and Question 6,  $F(2, 109) = 3.29, p < .05$ . The Newman-Keuls procedure indicated that the classified employees scored higher ( $p < .05$ ) than did the administrators and faculty on both questions (see Table 4 in Appendix C).

### Effectiveness

Analysis of these data failed to yield a reliable groups effect,  $F(2, 64) = .96, p < .3893$ , and groups by questions interaction,  $F(54, 1728) = 1.29, p < .0761$ , effects.

## CHAPTER IV.

### Discussion

The purposes of this research were to determine which activities are considered important for a university personnel department to perform and whether the perspectives of constituents at various levels of the university hierarchy differ significantly. More specifically, this study was designed to evaluate the perspectives of administrators, faculty, classified staff, and retirees. Of the four target groups, the personnel office staff considered retirees as the most frequent user of departmental services for individuals not currently employed. However, the type of responses received from this group indicated that being a frequent user did not signify a knowledge of personnel activities. Not only were many of the retiree surveys returned blank or partially completed, but many respondents wrote notes to the researcher or telephoned to explain that their lack of recent contact with the department precluded a knowledgeable response. Interestingly, those retirees who completed surveys tended to rate the importance of activities higher than did the respondents in the other groups.

Turning to the perspectives of the faculty, administrators, and classified employees, the finding that mean responses ranged from a low of 3.75 (conduct union/management meetings and ventures) to a high of 6.18 (ensure consistent and equitable treatment of all employees) indicates that these groups generally consider the questionnaire activities important. This positive comment notwithstanding, there are differences among the groups.



When activities are grouped into dimensions, classified employees rate Organization/Employee Development activities more important than do faculty or administrators. These results are similar to those reported by Tsui and Milkovich (1987) who found this dimension to be important to hourly employees. While Policy Adherence activities are also more important to the classified staff than to faculty and administrators in the present study, Tsui and Milkovich (1987) found these types of activities to be more important to managers. Differences did not occur in every dimension; personnel activities that address Labor/Union Relations and Legal Requirements/Compliance were of comparable importance to all constituency groups.

On the other hand, the presence of significant Groups x Questions interactions preclude general conclusions about the dimensions of Staffing/Human Resource Planning, Compensation/Employee Relations, Employee Support, Administrative Services, and Effectiveness. These specific results will be discussed on a dimension-by-dimension basis.

#### Staffing/Human Resource Planning

Administrators want to be consulted on the practical implications of university human resources programs, while classified employees and faculty do not feel it is as important that administrators be consulted. It is less important to faculty that the university personnel office keep up with human resource programs developed at the State Division of Personnel Services (DPS), while classified staff and administrators rate this activity as important. Since DPS governs the classification system for the employees at the university, the importance afforded this activity by the classified employees is not surprising. Perhaps administration

realizes the liability which might ensue if this activity is not performed properly. Also rated as less important by faculty is the processing of external requests for professional courses. While faculty certainly are cognizant of the importance of professional courses, their lack of interest in this activity may be due to the fact that they assume more responsibility for their own professional development. Faculty also do not consider the university personnel office's role in advising administration on staffing and salary planning and in evaluating management levels and span of control to be as important as do classified personnel and administrators. Classified employees would like the department to provide career pathing information. While classified employees consider the office's role in assisting administration in salary planning/forecasting activities to be important, administrators and faculty consider it less so.

#### Compensation/Employee Relations

The classified respondents consider many activities in this dimension to be more important than do administrators and faculty. For example, processing salary actions and developing/implementing performance appraisal systems merit significantly higher ratings from classified employees. Activities such as planning employee relations programs, conducting surveys to determine employee attitudes, and communicating to administrators/supervisors about employee relations strategies and problems also are of considerable importance to the classified staff. Ensuring consistent and equitable treatment of all employees received the highest rating ( $\bar{x} = 6.67$ ) in this dimension from the classified personnel. In contrast, the activity which faculty rated

least important is developing and monitoring job descriptions. Since job descriptions do not play a major role in faculty salary level (as it does for classified staff), this low rating is not surprising. Administrators and classified respondents rank job description activities comparably but significantly higher.

### Employee Support

Administrators do not agree that publishing a newsletter pertaining to personnel matters is important. Faculty and classified employees consider this activity to be above average importance.

### Administrative Services

Two personnel activities in this dimension are of significant importance to the classified employees: having the university personnel office conduct new hire orientation sessions and administering relocation procedures. Administration and faculty considered these activities to be less important.

Since the bulk of new faculty are hired in the fall, the personnel office currently conducts new hire orientation sessions for faculty in the fall. Orientation sessions for classified staff are conducted only when a sizable pool of new classified staff is accumulated. While this practice makes sense from an administrative point of view, classified employees might translate it to mean that they are considered less important than faculty. Being informed about policies, procedures, and services on an official basis might ease the transition to a new job, as well as enhance the personnel department's image as a service-provider.

The term "relocation procedures" may have been construed differently by the various constituencies. Considering the term in

context of job layoffs, classified employees may want the university personnel office to provide information about unemployment compensation, options on continuing benefits, and assistance in finding a new job with the state civil service system. Considering the term in context of hiring, administrators and faculty may want job search assistance for a spouse or ask for referrals to realtors and financial institutions in order to purchase a home.

### Effectiveness

The third purpose of the present research was to obtain an effectiveness rating for the Emporia State University Office of Personnel, Payroll and Employee Relations (PPER). Research by Gomez-Meija (1985) found overall satisfaction with the personnel department varied with occupational level. This finding was not supported by the present research; administrators, faculty, and classified staff rated the effectiveness of PPER similarly. Faculty gave PPER its highest effectiveness rating ( $\bar{x} = 4.87$ ), administration gave the next highest rating ( $\bar{x} = 4.51$ ), and classified respondents gave the lowest rating ( $\bar{x} = 3.90$ ). These ratings indicate that the constituents find the personnel office's service slightly above average. Given that a departmental goal is to provide quality service, the rating suggests that the university personnel office has room for improvement.

### Conclusions and Implications for Future Research

In general, this research indicated that the perspectives of administration, faculty, and classified staff differ on which personnel activities are important. These results suggest that the hierarchical structure influences constituency expectations for personnel activities.

The administration, faculty, and classified staff do not differ when rating the personnel department for general effectiveness.

It is interesting to note the similarity between administrators and classified employees in rating the importance of many activities. The reason for this similarity is unclear. One reason may be that these two constituencies have more frequent contact with the personnel department and observe the department's performance more directly than do the faculty.

Although one might have the impression that the classified employees are subservient to the academic staff, many of the classified personnel are highly paid and hold positions of great responsibility. The civil service system, however, tends to stifle creative thinking and limits the power of the individual. Certainly, the classified staff lacks the autonomy the faculty enjoys. This treatment may account for the classified's high ratings of compensation and staffing activities.

In business organizations the personnel function is a result of the department's economic power (i.e., controlling employment, transfer and promotions). In higher education the administration and faculty control these functions for a large portion of the staff so that the personnel department becomes basically a support function. Faculty may perceive the university personnel office as less than professional (i.e., only a clerical function) and therefore consider the department to have little power to effect change. This perception, in turn, lessens expectations for the department's services.

In order to generalize the findings of the present study, further research is necessary. For example, the university in the present study

utilizes the state civil service system. University constituents who are not members of a state system may perceive the system to be more flexible and feel more comfortable in demanding services from their personnel department. Faculty unions are becoming more common in larger universities; this fact, coupled with a bigger work force, may lead these constituents to consider Labor/Union Relations more important. It would be interesting to compare union members with non-union members on all questions. Universities with a more diverse population, or those with a greater turnover rate, might value Organization/Employee Development activities more highly. In addition to conducting similar research at universities of varying size, it would also be interesting to conduct an analysis to associate each question back to overall effectiveness.

Tsui (1990) suggests that the services provided by the personnel department may be the result of an attempt to satisfy the constituencies who control the resources. Although resources are allocated by the state system of the university studied, university administration indirectly controls resources by determining the distribution of funds. Further research that considers changes made by the personnel department in response to constituency expectations may provide insight into this hypothesis.

The present research is a beginning, and as such, has its limitations. For example, in interpreting the results of the present study, one should consider whether precise, exact language was used in the questionnaire. Some of the classified and retiree respondents

indicated that they did not understand the terminology, thus validity and reliability may have been effected.

There was a typographical error in the directions; however, only two respondents made note of it. It is possible that the directions were not read, or the respondents were familiar with Likert scales and felt confident enough to complete the survey without reading the directions.

The homogeneity of the sample should be acknowledged. The university in question is a small (6,000 students) Midwestern university that lacks a culturally diverse population. In addition, longevity of both classified staff and faculty may be a factor. It is not uncommon for personnel to have been members of the campus community for 10 or more years. Lack of exposure to other types of organizations and environments may limit the respondents' perspectives.

The present research did not compare university and business organization personnel activities directly; consequently, it did not establish that activities and criteria generated for business can be used in universities. However, the research did provide tentative evidence that organizational structure influences constituency expectations for personnel activities. The research further demonstrates that the multiple-constituency approach provides valuable information within a university subunit and gives tentative evidence that this approach can be used in other organized anarchies.

Identifying the activities that are most important to its constituencies is an important first step in developing an action plan to improve the university personnel function. From the present research, a list of activities and evaluation criteria that are applicable to the

university setting can be developed. In order to become a provider of quality service, the university personnel department must be willing to not only accept the opinions of their constituencies, but also must be willing to learn new behaviors, adapt procedures, and improve interaction with their constituents.



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**Appendix A**  
**Questionnaire**

**Survey  
to assess  
Emporia State University  
Office of Personnel, Payroll  
and Employee Relations  
Spring, 1992**

**A study by  
Anita M. Burkhalter  
In partial fulfillment of the requirements  
for the degree Master of Science**

**Directions:** This survey is designed to determine what activities are desired of a university personnel department from the perspective of those the department serves. In addition, we want to know how effective the ESU Office of Personnel, Payroll and Employee Relations is in meeting your expectations for service.

Your personal reaction to each item is important! Your comments will help the department provide quality service by identifying operations needing improvement, as well as those that are efficient.

Please respond to the items in this survey by circling the number that indicates your degree of agreement with the statement, with "1" expressing "not important or not effective," and "10" expressing "highly important or not effective."

Please use this space to make any comments you wish about any of the activities/programs provided by the ESU Office of Personnel, Payroll and Employee Relations.



DEMOGRAPHIC DATA:

What is your position at ESU?

President, Vice President,  
Associate or Assistant VP \_\_\_\_\_

Dean, Associate or Assistant Dean \_\_\_\_\_

Division Chair or Assistant Chair \_\_\_\_\_

Director, Associate or Assistant Director \_\_\_\_\_

Faculty \_\_\_\_\_

Retiree \_\_\_\_\_

Classified Staff \_\_\_\_\_

Are you a union member?

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

What is your length of service at ESU?

\_\_\_\_\_

Not counting student employees, do you supervise other employees?

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

How important is it to you that the ESU Office of Personnel, Payroll and Employee Relations perform each of the following Staffing/Human Resource Planning activities?

1. Assess benefits from human resource development activities
 

	Not Important								Extremely Important
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
  
2. Develop human resources staffing plan to meet business needs
 

	Not Important								Extremely Important
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
  
3. Consult with administration on the practical implications of university human resources programs
 

	Not Important								Extremely Important
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
  
4. Develop and implement recruiting advertising programs
 

	Not Important								Extremely Important
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
  
5. Be aware of job market factors in related industries in the development of university personnel programs
 

	Not Important								Extremely Important
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		

6. **Develop and implement succession planning (e.g. replacement charts)**
- Not Important 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Extremely Important
7. **Keep up with human resource programs developed at the State Division of Personnel Services**
- Not Important 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Extremely Important
8. **Process external development requests for professional courses**
- Not Important 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Extremely Important
9. **Provide career pathing information**
- Not Important 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Extremely Important
10. **Provide advice and counsel to administration on staffing policy and related problems**
- Not Important 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Extremely Important
11. **Assist administration in the development of five-year strategic plan**
- Not Important 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Extremely Important

24. **Is department effective in dealing with poor performing employees?**
- Not Effective 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Highly Effective
25. **How effective is the department in administering the university payroll program?**
- Not Effective 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Highly Effective
26. **Overall, to what extent do you feel the personnel department is performing its job the way you would like it to be performed?**
- Not Effective 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Highly Effective
27. **To what extent has this department met your expectations in its personnel management roles and responsibilities?**
- Not Effective 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Highly Effective
28. **If you had your way, to what extent could you change the manner in which this department is doing its job?**
- No Change 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Completely Change

19. Does department initiate programs to effectively utilize "people" resources?

Not Effective								Highly Effective
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	

20. Does department have a strategy to support university business plans?

Not Effective								Highly Effective
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	

21. Have you communicated your expectations to the personnel department clearly?

Not Effective								Highly Effective
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	

22. How frequently do you consult with the personnel department?

Not Effective								Highly Effective
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	

23. How involved is personnel department in employee concerns, complaints, or grievances?

Not Effective								Highly Effective
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	

12. Conduct special compensation projects

Not Important								Extremely Important
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	

13. Assist administration in conducting salary planning/forecasting

Not Important								Extremely Important
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	

14. Evaluate and assess levels of management (numbers) and management ratio (span of control)

Not Important								Extremely Important
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	

15. Improve personnel productivity through process flow analysis techniques, etc.

Not Important								Extremely Important
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	

16. Develop and implement recruiting programs

Not Important								Extremely Important
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	

**How important is it to you that the ESU Office of Personnel, Payroll and Employee Relations perform each of the following Organization/Employee Development activities?**

1. **Assist administration on organizational development activities (e.g., formal team building efforts)**  

Not Important	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Extremely Important
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2. **Assist administrators/supervisors in constructing employee development plans**  

Not Important	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Extremely Important
---------------	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---------------------
  
3. **Evaluate the effectiveness of training courses and programs**  

Not Important	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Extremely Important
---------------	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---------------------
  
4. **Conduct training needs assessment**  

Not Important	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Extremely Important
---------------	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---------------------
  
5. **Monitor administration of in-house training courses and programs**  

Not Important	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Extremely Important
---------------	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---------------------

13. **How much mutual respect is there between personnel departments and other departments?**  

Not Effective	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Highly Effective
---------------	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	------------------
  
14. **Is the department open and available to employees?**  

Not Effective	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Highly Effective
---------------	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	------------------
  
15. **How innovative is the department in devising programs to enhance employee morale and university allegiance?**  

Not Effective	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Highly Effective
---------------	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	------------------
  
16. **How effective is department in developing a positive university image?**  

Not Effective	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Highly Effective
---------------	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	------------------
  
17. **How much team work is there between the department and supervisors?**  

Not Effective	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Highly Effective
---------------	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	------------------
  
18. **Does department have a clear idea of what is expected?**  

Not Effective	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Highly Effective
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7. What is the average time for department to resolve disputes?  
Not Effective 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Highly Effective

8. How quick is department in responding to questions?  
Not Effective 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Highly Effective

9. How much trust and confidence do you have in the department?  
Not Effective 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Highly Effective

10. How cooperative is your personnel department?  
Not Effective 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Highly Effective

11. How much respect do you have for this department?  
Not Effective 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Highly Effective

12. How does this department compare to other personnel departments of which you are aware?  
Not Effective 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Highly Effective

6. Provide advice and counsel to administration on design and development of the organization  
Not Important 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Extremely Important

7. Help administrators/supervisors resolve organizational problems  
Not Important 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Extremely Important

8. Assist administration in human resource planning  
Not Important 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Extremely Important

9. Provide career and development counseling to employees  
Not Important 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Extremely Important

10. Develop and design innovative programs for the university  
Not Important 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Extremely Important

11. Develop university training and development plans  
Not Important 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Extremely Important

**PART II**

12. **Communicate training program or courses to administrators/supervisors and employees**

Not Important								Extremely Important
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	

13. **Identify internal candidates for promotion or transfer**

Not Important								Extremely Important
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	

How important is it to you that the ESU Office of Personnel, Payroll and Employee Relations perform each of the following Compensation/Employee Relations activities?

1. **Implement policy on equal pay**

Not Important								Extremely Important
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	

2. **Develop and implement audit program for equal pay**

Not Important								Extremely Important
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	

3. **Develop and monitor job descriptions for all jobs**

Not Important								Extremely Important
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	

1. **How effective is the ESU personnel office in responding to questions?**

Not Effective								Highly Effective
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	

2. **What is the quality of services provided?**

Not Effective								Highly Effective
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	

3. **What is the quality of information and/or advice provided?**

Not Effective								Highly Effective
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	

4. **Is the department uniform and fair in administering policies?**

Not Effective								Highly Effective
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	

5. **Is the department objective and neutral in resolving disputes?**

Not Effective								Highly Effective
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	

6. **What is the average time for department to respond to inquiries?**

Not Effective								Highly Effective
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	

3. **Conduct new hire orientation sessions**

Not Important 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Extremely Important

4. **Present informational material at administrative and employee meetings**

Not Important 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Extremely Important

5. **Resolve benefits administration problems**

Not Important 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Extremely Important

6. **Administer relocation procedure**

Not Important 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Extremely Important

4. **Assist administrators/supervisors in resolving salary problems**

Not Important 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Extremely Important

5. **Perform job market pricing to determine the local fair market value of jobs**

Not Important 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Extremely Important

6. **Process salary actions (e.g., review salary offers, approve grade promotions and special merits, provide documentation for unusual or unique salary actions)**

Not Important 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Extremely Important

7. **Develop and implement system for timely performance appraisal**

Not Important 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Extremely Important

8. **Conduct surveys to determine employee attitudes**

Not Important 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Extremely Important

9. **Ensure consistent and equitable treatment of all employees**

Not Important 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Extremely Important

10. **Plan, develop, and design employee relations programs**

Not Important								Extremely Important
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	

11. **Provide advice and counsel to administrators/supervisors on employee relations problems**

Not Important								Extremely Important
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	

12. **Communicate to administrators/supervisors the philosophy, legal implications, and strategy relating to employee relations**

Not Important								Extremely Important
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	

How important is it to you that the ESU Office of Personnel, Payroll and Employee Relations perform each of the following Employee Support activities?

1. **Maintain health maintenance programs**

Not Important								Extremely Important
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	

2. **Provide hardship, emergency counseling and assistance to employees in need**

Not Important								Extremely Important
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	

3. **Ensure equitable administration of attendance and leave policies**

Not Important								Extremely Important
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	

4. **Serve as mediator between supervisors and employees**

Not Important								Extremely Important
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	

5. **Explain and interpret personnel policies and procedures for administrators/supervisors (e.g., general application, acceptable deviations)**

Not Important								Extremely Important
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	

How important is it to you that the ESU Office of Personnel, Payroll and Employee Relations perform each of the following Administrative Services activities?

1. **Communicate compensation/benefits programs to administration**

Not Important								Extremely Important
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	

2. **Process enrollments and communicate benefits program to employees**

Not Important								Extremely Important
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	



3. Determine parameters for meet and confer process
- |               |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |                     |
|---------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---------------------|
| Not Important |   |   |   |   |   |   |   | Extremely Important |
|               | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |                     |
4. Conduct union/management meetings and ventures
- |               |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |                     |
|---------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---------------------|
| Not Important |   |   |   |   |   |   |   | Extremely Important |
|               | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |                     |
5. Conduct arbitrations
- |               |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |                     |
|---------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---------------------|
| Not Important |   |   |   |   |   |   |   | Extremely Important |
|               | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |                     |

How important is it to you that the ESU Office Personnel, Payroll and Employee Relations perform each of the following Policy Adherence activities?

1. Ensure proper administration of disciplinary procedures
- |               |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |                     |
|---------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---------------------|
| Not Important |   |   |   |   |   |   |   | Extremely Important |
|               | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |                     |
2. Ensure equitable and uniform interpretation and implementation of university policies by all supervisors
- |               |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |                     |
|---------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---------------------|
| Not Important |   |   |   |   |   |   |   | Extremely Important |
|               | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |                     |

3. Establish functional relationship with local physicians and insurance carriers to effectively assist employees' needs in the areas of physical and mental health
- |               |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |                     |
|---------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---------------------|
| Not Important |   |   |   |   |   |   |   | Extremely Important |
|               | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |                     |
4. Act as an information source for employees on any problem or concern they have
- |               |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |                     |
|---------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---------------------|
| Not Important |   |   |   |   |   |   |   | Extremely Important |
|               | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |                     |
5. Process benefits claims
- |               |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |                     |
|---------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---------------------|
| Not Important |   |   |   |   |   |   |   | Extremely Important |
|               | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |                     |
6. Administer pension plans coupled with financial planning as employee benefits
- |               |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |                     |
|---------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---------------------|
| Not Important |   |   |   |   |   |   |   | Extremely Important |
|               | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |                     |
7. Seek out and provide meaningful jobs to handicapped people
- |               |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |                     |
|---------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---------------------|
| Not Important |   |   |   |   |   |   |   | Extremely Important |
|               | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |                     |
8. Publish newsletter of personnel matters
- |               |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |                     |
|---------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---------------------|
| Not Important |   |   |   |   |   |   |   | Extremely Important |
|               | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |                     |

9. **Coordinate activities with other departments**

Not Important							Extremely Important
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

How important is it to you that the ESU Office of Personnel, Payroll and Employee Relations perform each of the following Legal Requirements/Compliance activities?

1. Comply with the technical requirement of the Affirmative Action Compliance Program

Not Important							Extremely Important
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

2. Develop Affirmative Action Compliance Program for protected classes

Not Important							Extremely Important
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

3. Implement approved Affirmative Action Compliance Program

Not Important							Extremely Important
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

4. Document efforts to meet Equal Employment Opportunity goals and other action oriented commitment within the university's most current Affirmative Action Compliance Program

Not Important							Extremely Important
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

5. **Audit/monitor the organization's attrition of employees in protected classes (i.e., minorities, handicapped)**

Not Important							Extremely Important
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

6. Ensure compliance with Federal and State Fair Employment Practices

Not Important							Extremely Important
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

7. Investigate internal and external complaints consistent with the university's policies and procedures on EEO/AA

Not Important							Extremely Important
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

How important is it to you that the ESU Office of Personnel, Payroll and Employee Relations perform each of the following Labor/Union Relations activities?

1. Meet and confer with union

Not Important							Extremely Important
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

2. Administer memorandum of agreement

Not Important							Extremely Important
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

**Appendix B**

**Cover Letter**

**Reminder Notice**

April 13, 1992

1~  
2~ 3~  
4~  
5~

Dear 1~ 3~:

As a graduate student in industrial/organizational psychology, I am conducting thesis research focusing on the activities performed by university personnel departments and the criteria used to evaluate departmental effectiveness. The purpose of this letter is to ask for your participation in this research.

The enclosed questionnaire is designed to obtain your views on the importance of various activities often performed by a university personnel department. In addition, the survey asks you to evaluate the effectiveness of the ESU Office of Personnel, Payroll and Employee Relations (PPER). It is anticipated that the results of this study will provide a basis for further research on university personnel departments and will yield suggestions for PPER improvement/enhancement at ESU.

As a recipient of university personnel services, you have unique insight into which personnel activities are important. Your opinion is especially valuable because your experiences will contribute significantly toward identifying operations necessary for quality service. Your responses will be kept completely confidential; no one in PPER will see the completed surveys. The number stamped on the questionnaire will only be used if a follow-up is necessary.

Please complete the questionnaire and return it in the enclosed envelope through campus mail by April 24th. I will be happy to send you a summary of questionnaire results if you desire. This study has been approved by the Institutional Review Board for Treatment of Human Subjects and by the Office of PPER.

I realize your schedule is a busy one and that your time is valuable, so your help with my thesis project is greatly appreciated.

Anita M. Burkhalter  
Graduate Student I/O Psychology  
ext. 5383 or 343-6239

## **JUST A REMINDER . . .**

Please return the survey about the ESU Office of Personnel, Payroll and Employee Relations you received recently.

It's a busy time of year, so your help with my thesis project is **especially appreciated!**

If you've misplaced your survey, please call and I'll mail another.

Anita M. Burkhalter  
Campus Box 74  
Ext. 5383 or 343-6239

**Appendix C****Tables**

Table 1.

Importance ratings on significant Staffing/Human Resource Planning activities by 3 constituencies

	Administrators		Faculty		Classified		ANOVA	
	$\bar{X}$	SD	$\bar{X}$	SD	$\bar{X}$	SD	df	F
3. Consult with administration on the practical implications of university human resource programs	5.69	1.01	4.36	2.02	4.41	1.64	111	3.86*
7. Keep up with human resource programs developed at the State Division of Personnel Services	5.44	1.15	4.58	1.87	5.48	1.21	112	4.86**
8. Process external development requests for professional courses	4.63	1.31	3.78	1.67	4.67	1.44	108	4.35*
9. Provide career pathing information	4.75	1.39	4.20	1.87	5.45	1.29	113	8.15***
10. Provide advice & counsel to administration on staffing policy & related problems	5.44	1.41	4.67	1.86	5.66	1.15	114	5.67**
13. Assist administration in conducting salary planning/forecasting	4.38	1.75	4.45	1.82	5.25	1.35	113	3.79*
14. Evaluate & assess levels of management (numbers) and management ratio (span of control)	4.06	1.95	3.67	2.03	4.82	1.45	110	5.25**

\*  $p < .05$ \*\*  $p < .01$ \*\*\*  $p < .001$

Table 2.

Importance ratings on significant Compensation/Employee Relations activities by 3 constituencies

	Administrators		Faculty		Classified		ANOVA	
	$\bar{X}$	SD	$\bar{X}$	SD	$\bar{X}$	SD	df	F
3. Develop & monitor job descriptions for all jobs	5.50	1.03	4.28	2.01	5.56	1.58	114	7.68***
6. Process salary actions	4.50	1.67	4.58	1.95	5.87	1.32	112	9.20***
7. Develop & implement system for timely performance appraisal	5.06	1.18	4.41	1.96	5.91	1.14	113	12.01***
8. Conduct surveys to determine employee attitudes	4.88	1.31	4.37	2.10	6.00	1.23	113	12.61***
9. Ensure consistent & equitable treatment of all employees	5.75	.93	5.76	1.51	6.67	.67	113	9.66***
10. Plan, develop, & design employee relations program	5.06	1.00	4.70	1.64	5.55	1.41	116	4.95**
11. Provide advice & counsel to administrators/supervisors on employee relations problems	5.25	1.00	4.62	1.76	5.79	1.41	116	7.57***
12. Communicate to administrators/supervisors the philosophy, legal implications & strategy relating to employee relations	5.56	1.03	4.96	1.84	5.88	1.39	116	4.52*

\*  $p < .05$ \*\*  $p < .01$ \*\*\*  $p < .001$



Table 3.

Importance ratings on significant Employee Support activities by 3 constituencies

	Administrators		Faculty		Classified		ANOVA	
	$\bar{X}$	SD	$\bar{X}$	SD	$\bar{X}$	SD	df	F
8. Publish newsletter of personnel matters	3.38	1.59	4.34	1.88	4.96	1.50	115	5.94**

\*\*  $p < .01$

Table 4.

Importance ratings on significant Administrative Service activities by 3 constituencies

	Administrators		Faculty		Classified		ANOVA	
	$\bar{X}$	SD	$\bar{X}$	SD	$\bar{X}$	SD	df	F
3. Conduct new hire orientation sessions	5.31	1.40	5.04	1.93	6.04	1.19	115	5.41**
6. Administer relocation procedure	5.00	1.41	4.48	1.89	5.30	1.28	109	3.29*

\*  $p < .05$

\*\*  $p < .01$

**Appendix D**

**Approval for Human Subject Research**



# EMPORIA STATE UNIVERSITY

1200 COMMERCIAL EMPORIA, KANSAS 66801-5087 316/343-1200  
RESEARCH AND GRANTS CENTER EXT. 5351

April 6, 1992

Anita M. Burkhalter  
Division of Psychology  
and Special Education  
Box 31  
CAMPUS

Dear Ms. Burkhalter:

The Institutional Review Board for Treatment of Human Subjects has evaluated your application for approval of human subject research entitled, "Defining the activities and effectiveness of a university personnel department using the perspectives of multiple constituencies." The review board approved your application which will allow you to begin your research with subjects as outlined in your application materials.

Best of luck in your proposed research project. If the review board can help you in any other way, don't hesitate to contact us.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Faye Vowell".

Faye N. Vowell, Dean  
Office of Graduate Studies  
and Research

FV:pf

cc: Stephen Davis

**TO: All Graduate Students Who Submit a Thesis or  
Research Problem/Project as Partial Fulfillment of  
the Requirements for an Advanced Degree**

**FROM: Emporia State University Graduate School**

I, Anita M. Burkhalter, hereby submit this thesis/report to Emporia State University as partial fulfillment of the requirements for an advanced degree. I agree that the Library of the University may make it available for use in accordance with its regulations governing materials of this type. I further agree that quoting, photocopying, or other reproduction of this document is allowed for private study, scholarship (including teaching) and research purposes of a nonprofit nature. No copying which involves potential financial gain will be allowed without written permission of the author.

Anita M. Burkhalter  
Signature of Author

August 7, 1992  
Date

**Defining the activities and effectiveness  
of a university personnel department  
using the perspectives of multiple  
constituencies.**

Title of Thesis/Research Project

Doug Cooper  
Signature of Graduate Office Staff  
Member

Aug 24, 1992  
Date Received

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