

INTRODUCTION

Santa Clara University (SCU) is a co-educational, private, Jesuit institution located in Santa Clara, California. The school was founded in 1851 and is known to be the oldest operating institution of higher learning in California. The university offers more than 8,000 students undergraduate curricula in business, the arts and sciences, and engineering, in addition to master's, Ph.D., and law degrees. In the past 158 years, SCU has emerged as one of the top educational institutions in Silicon Valley, and the Leavey School of Business received a national ranking of 32 out of the top 100 undergraduate business schools in 2008. The only way this has been possible is due to SCU's organizational structure, staff, strategy, systems, style, skills, and most importantly, its shared values. McKinsey's 7S framework has been useful to us in analyzing SCU's organizational effectiveness in both the undergraduate and graduate level programs.

SHARED VALUES

Shared values, also known as "super ordinate goals", are the core values of the university that are evidenced in the culture, behaviors, and the general work ethic throughout the university as represented by the faculty, staff, and student body. As SCU makes clear on their website, it is a university committed to "faith-inspired values and educating leaders of competence, conscience, and compassion who will help fashion a more just, humane, and sustainable world"¹. In addition to the three core values, community, as we have discussed in the classroom, ties the university together.

We interviewed Peter Knight, who has been a part-time professor at Santa Clara for two years. We asked him how he would define the shared values at SCU, and his response was, "I believe that the university tries hard to blend equipping students with tools that they need in addition to good values. I see a higher sense of that here at Santa Clara than at any other university I have taught at. We blend values with education. The three C's are not just a 'slogan' here, and I really think they are embodied in what the university does". The following question we asked was, "From your opinion, do you think the faculty and students really embody those shared values, as sent through their behavior?" In response, Professor Knight said, "Yes. Speaking of students, I don't see eyebrows to the heavens...meaning, I don't see them as students who completely ignore that the three C's exist. I do not think that the students here are insensitive, but rather I see them as open, definitely competent, curious about learning. They are compassionate about their relationships with other students and professors alike. I believe the same goes for the faculty. Everyone is quite cordial and professors enjoy discussing topics with other professors and learning as well. In regards to the university as a whole, I believe we embody Santa Clara's shared values and that they are depicted in our actions and behaviors".

From our own experience, we think that the shared values here at Santa Clara are ingrained in freshman from the very beginning of their college careers, and in faculty and staff from the day of their hiring. For example, when a new student enters the university, they are given a handbook on SCU's mission and the goals of the university. We are assuming that somewhere within all of the paperwork, that faculty and staff receive a clear outline of the school's mission as well. In terms of compassion, Santa Clara has made an effort to create immersion programs to assist the poor and less-privileged in other countries, it has also set up conferences throughout the school year such as "Compassion In Action: Today's Challenges, Tomorrow's Opportunities for End-of-Life Care", among many others. Also, students here are highly competent and

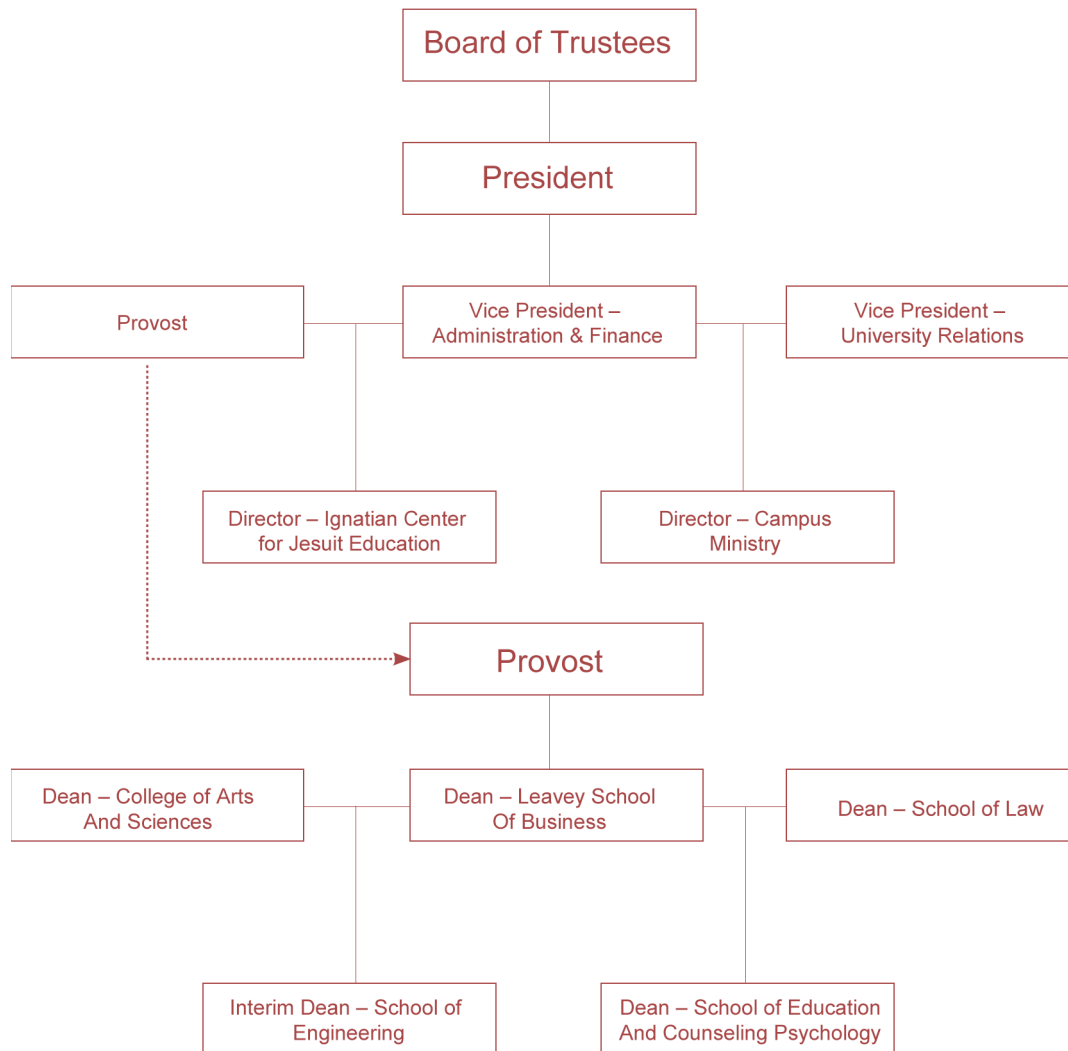
many go on to graduate/professional schools or into the professional workforce after graduation. In addition to that, students, faculty, and staff alike make a conscious effort to operate within the Santa Clara values. Hard work and dedication have become well-known university attributes, especially alongside its Jesuit roots.



STRUCTURE

Another part of the 7S model that has contributed to the success of the university is its structure. Due to Santa Clara's size and complexity, in addition to the fact that the various departments of the university sometimes need frequent interaction, we came to the conclusion that some decentralization is necessary and is evident in part of the university's structure. However, because the university has so many departments and due to the fact that all students, regardless of major, require many of the same services, centralization is necessary for other parts of the university's structure, such as in the financial aid and bursar departments.

After looking at the university's organizational map, it became evident to us that its structure is mostly mechanistic. The university is very structured, and there is little communication between the School of Arts and Sciences, the Leavey School



of Business, and the School of Engineering. Each school has its own dean, own departments divided by subject (i.e. – Chemistry, Biology, Physics), and they do not report to other schools.



We asked Professor Knight a question about Santa Clara's structure: "Do you think Santa Clara University's organizational structure is mechanistic or organic, and why"? His response was a bit surprising because we initially, before research, expected Santa Clara to be a little more organic than mechanistic due to it being located in the heart of Silicon Valley and also being in the center of a constantly changing external environment.

In response, Knight said, "I am a part time professor here, so I confess to some ignorance. A common complaint is that Walsh Hall is the executive management department of the university. Walsh gets too much control of funds brought in by the business school. I think from the definitions given of 'organic' and 'mechanistic', that the university is more mechanistic. The organization is somewhat formal and stiff. It is a conservative organization, particularly in the field of administration. In the field of teaching, there is more freedom however. I sense some frustration though with the administration in the context that it is not flexible. In regards to teaching, most professors can sort of teach in any which format or way they choose and enjoy to teach in, which makes the job not so mundane. There is room to be creative and learn from students just as much as they learn from us professors".

As our text "Organizational Theory, Design, and Change" describes, mechanistic structures are designed to induce people to behave in predictable, accountable ways. Decision-making authority is centralized, subordinates are closely supervised, and information flows mainly in a vertical direction down a clearly defined hierarchy. This definition makes it clear as to why Santa Clara is mechanistic. There are far too many departments and divisions, in addition to over 8,000 students, that need to be coordinated in some way to ensure that the university as well as the students benefit from the services offered and resources that are made available.

STRATEGY

John Ciardi once said that "a university is what a college becomes when the faculty loses interest in its students."² Fortunately, despite its recognition as being one, Santa Clara University, maintains a very closely and intimately knit environment, linking students to faculty and staff. As previously mentioned in the shared values section, the three "C's" at Santa Clara are not only taught to students, but also practiced by faculty and administration in and outside of the university. These core values also play a significant role during the development of Santa Clara's strategy.

Recently, a strategic planning meeting between the board of trustees, alumni and reagents, outlined topics which Santa Clara University should address in formulating and revising its strategy as a response to the rapidly changing environment. The most relevant topics that were covered, addressed SCU's necessity to focus on issues of globalization, environment, technology and ethics with respect to structuring the university's strategy to accommodate them.

The issue of globalization and internationalization focused on developing university programs that allowed to not only send

students and faculty to be educated abroad, but to bring the “world into the campus.” To achieve this “internationalization” strategy, it was suggested that SCU should develop a stronger international presence in the educational community, as well as attract foreign intellect to the Santa Clara campus. Other proposals included the expansion of the El Salvador program to other countries and forming alliances with other Jesuit universities to develop student exchange programs.

Furthermore the strategy addresses the need for sustainable and environmentally friendly education; creating and developing a responsible and eco-friendly student body, who would later move on to continue this practice with their careers in the business world. To achieve this, SCU’s strategy is to “lead by example” with expanding its campus using “green building standards” and promoting conservation and re-cycling practices both internally as well as to the rest of the community.

Technology plays a very significant part in today’s world. With Santa Clara positioned at the heart of Silicon Valley, where new technologies are being constantly developed, it is important for the university to recognize the need to be ahead of the curve, and to bring the most current technological advances into the classrooms. The proposed strategy is to begin anticipating where the technology will be heading and instead of “catching up” to it, predict its movements and be the leader in its innovation. Other suggestions included a creation of an SCU student-faculty program where new innovations would be brought into developing countries.

The ethical and political issues were also discussed when planning the future development for Santa Clara. Some of the proposed topics included involving politically active alumni to give talks to students, developing the RLC to address political issues in their curriculum as well as having alumni and reagents to provide politically driven internship opportunities to students. On the ethical side of this discussion, the members of the board acknowledged that the current ethical standards are in good standing and should be kept and practiced with no change.

Finally the most recent strategic change, that took place within Santa Clara University in response to the global financial crisis, was the reduction in monetary spending. Most of the administrative and faculty salaries were frozen until further notice and investments in extracurricular activities were significantly reduced. In an interview with Professor David Caldwell, we asked the question of whether or not there were any significant changes or problems that arose in response to the salary freeze. His calm response was that everyone pretty much unanimously understood the current issue that the university was facing, and there was no resistance or negative repercussion to the freeze. Furthermore the university has not yet announced any layoffs and will continue to operate as normal.

SYSTEMS

Considered a “hard element” of the organizational model, systems can be defined as the processes and flows that show how an organization gets things done from day to day. A “hard element” can be described as the areas of the organization that management can directly influence³. Examples of this can be found within the information systems, manufacturing processes, and performance measurement systems of an organization. These processes and routines are used to manage

the organization and characterize how central tasks are to be done. Tasked with using Santa Clara University as the template for analyzing the 7 S organizational model, we took a look into the systems and style associated with operating the undergraduate business office located in the lobby of Lucas Hall.

A Leadership Development Fellow for the Business School Undergraduate Business Programs, we chose to interview Tonja Brown. The interview with Ms. Brown revealed how she felt about the various systems in place within the university's organization, but also how she felt about the undergraduate business programs' contribution to the university. We asked Ms. Brown what she would consider the main control systems are that contribute to running the undergraduate business office. Her response was that "The University is a very well organized organization in which employees are given autonomy over their own projects. We have bi-monthly meetings among staff members where progress is shared and performance is evaluated." She went further into detail about how she is free to do her job while maintaining a good relationship with administration. The systems in place to monitor employees give them the freedom to openly communicate and share their thoughts with each other; an aspect of Santa Clara University Ms. Brown said her previous job did not allow for at Seattle University. We looked deeper into the control aspect of the undergraduate business office and asked Ms. Brown what internal rules and processes are unique to this division of the organization. Her response was, "Each year we undertake in assessment planning, where employees must set goals. It is a very standardized system that is measured accordingly by Jo-Anne Shibles (Associate Dean LSB)." The benchmarks or milestones are assessed and later evaluated by administration. She also went on to add that their office is constantly rewarding each other as to positively reinforce one another. The systems in place to control the office keep such programs like Accelerated Cooperative Education (ACE), Study Abroad, Internships, and Leavey Scholars Program operate effectively and efficiently.

SKILLS

Santa Clara University is a collective organization that utilizes its expertise and skills in each of its departmentalized schools. Within Santa Clara University, there are four main departments: College of Arts and Sciences, Leavey School of Business, School of Engineering, and the School of Law. From looking at the organizational chart, you can see that each large department has specialized sub units. For example, in the business school, there is a dean that manages the department as a whole and within that department there are individuals that are in charge of each sub unit (majors). With this structure, it is easy to distribute the appropriate skill within departments. Specific sub units and departments have the appropriate professors or leaders that have the associated skills and credentials that go with that specific department/sub-unit. The distribution of skill within departments creates excellent synergy within the university. Students take advantage of the experience and knowledge that professors have, especially within their majors. Upper division classes harbor professors that are knowledgeable and experienced within that certain sub-unit. These individuals have understanding of the work environment and the subject being taught. Students have the opportunity to progress their knowledge of their major because of the specialization of skill within these departments.

The head of each department makes sure that the specific sub-units have the proper individuals with the coinciding skills. The specialization of skills within departments and sub-units is what creates great knowledge and education within Santa

Clara University. There is a minute downside to hiring such specialized professors for each specific department. As students, we are learning the material and usually come into a subject with a clean slate. Most professors carry some sort of graduate school or a PhD degree. They also usually have legitimate long term work experience. Their knowledge and expertise on the subject is much stronger than the student, creating a knowledge gap. Some professors forget that they are teaching students, their expectation on how much students should know is set sometimes higher than it should be. Sometimes the material presented in classes are above the knowledge level of the students and hard to comprehend. This is the only downside to the specialization of professors within department. Other than the knowledge gap, the distribution of skills within departments and sub units creates excellent synergy and an excellent learning environment.

STAFF

Stated previously, the structure of Santa Clara is mechanistic and authority and power trickles downward through the organization. One interesting aspect of the structure is the demographic within the organization and how it relates to one another. Within the upper parts of the structure, we rarely see diversity within the organization. White males mostly control higher power within the organization. As you move down the structure, we see more diversity along the lines of sex, not necessarily race. We only see diversity within race and sex when we get to lower ends of the structure. The most diversity is within the service departments of the organization and the lowest diversity is within the educational departments. I do not necessarily believe that Santa Clara tries to distribute the diversity in this way but as a student it would be nice to see some diversity upon the higher ends of the organization. I would love to women and races other than white in high power positions. I believe that this certain demographic would bring better insight to the organization and allow for better decision-making processes.

STYLE

Another aspect of Santa Clara's organizational model that it has become known for is the style at which professors, alumni, and current students conduct themselves. A style which is exuded through the behavior and actions of members of the Santa Clara University extended family. Style can be defined as the tangible evidence of what management considers important by the way it collectively spends time and attention and uses symbolic behavior. "It is not what management says is important, it is the way management behaves"⁴ Unlike the systems of an organization which is considered a "hard element", style is considered a "soft element" due to the fact that it is less tangible and more influenced by culture rather than organizational norms. It has been said that there are two essentials of organizational style; personal style and symbolic actions⁵. An example of this would be a Santa Clara University employee relying on personal outlook or approach to make a decision. My personal experiences with most professors in the business school is that when approached by a student with a problem they do whatever they can to help a student. It is my firm belief that professors here themselves embody the 3 C's competence, conscience, and compassion. It is here, where "practice what you preach" comes to mind as a way to illustrate organizational goals. Although management may say one thing, it is their actions that define their character.

As we spoke with Ms. Brown and began to talk about organizational style her comparisons between her current job at Santa

Clara and her old job at Seattle University, the differences became more and more evident.

When asked how participative the administrative style was within the undergraduate business office she responded, “We have an open-door policy in effect for all employees. Often times Dean Posner will walk throughout the office with suggestions and a friendly smile.” This can be compared equivalently to a CEO walking around an office with suggestions and ideas to employees. Also, the open channels of communication allow for concerns to be voiced and feedback to be given. What we really wanted to know however was in terms of style, how would she thought Santa Clara would rank among the Jesuit Community for Higher Learning. “Leadership and ethics.” Although a very quick response, she made it very clear that Santa Clara prides itself on instilling students with leadership and ethics. She went on further to say that “The application of real-world business scenarios with professors who come from the Silicon Valley is an asset of ours. From the start of your freshman year to your last quarter as a senior we strive to leave students with a lasting impression of leadership and ethics in the real-world.” I feel as if we belong to a very unique university where tradition has met with technology to form a synergy within the organization, Santa Clara University, as a whole not just the Leavey School of Business. We are fortunate to belong to a university with such diverse individuals who share in a strong sense of community.

SOURCES

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2. Ciardi, John., Forbes Magazine, September 15, 2008. pg. 164.
3. The McKinsey 7S Framework, http://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/newSTR_91.htm., February 28, 2009.
4. Robert H. Waterman, Jr.
5. Bengt Karlof translated by Allan J. Gilderson

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