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ROADMAP FOR DEVELOPMENT OF A COLLEGE STUDENT-RUN AGENCY

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A Capstone Project

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the
Doctor of Education

School of Education
in the Graduate School
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CAPSTONE PROJECT APPROVAL

ROADMAP FOR DEVELOPMENT OF A COLLEGE STUDENT-RUN AGENCY

by

Bridget Lescelius

A Capstone Project Submitted in Partial

Fulfillment of the Requirements

for the Degree of

Doctor of Education

in the field of Educational Administration

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AN ABSTRACT OF THE CAPSTONE PROJECT OF

Bridget Lescelius, for the Doctor of Education degree in Educational Administration, presented on April 6, 2023, at Southern Illinois University Carbondale.

TITLE: ROADMAP FOR DEVELOPMENT OF A COLLEGE STUDENT-RUN AGENCY

MAJOR PROFESSOR: Dr. Brad Colwell

The intent of this capstone project is to create a functional roadmap for the development of a sustainable student-run advertising agency (SRA) in higher education. The project comprised of a literature review, examination of SRA work output, and interviews with faculty members from five higher education institutions. Common themes were culled from the existing data and the one-on-one interviews. These themes were further discussed and reviewed to create specific attributes that support the common themes and provide actionable tasks used to develop an SRA. The key elements for a sustainable SRA include faculty leadership, operational structure, and student involvement. The final chapter of the project presents a step-by-step plan to guide educators when establishing an SRA for their academic program.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

If you had \$345.6 billion dollars, what would you spend it on? The answer for American businesses is advertising. In fact, a thirty-second television commercial on NBC during the 2022 Superbowl cost \$7 million dollars. If the amount spent in an industry is an indicator of its value to the free market economy, these expenditures clearly prove advertising's power. Advertising budgets follow the overall economic business trends (IBISWorld, 2022). The key insight to the alignment of advertising with the economy is they are linked during times of robust economic growth as well decline. For example, advertising dollars were increasing steadily before 2009 when the recession began, and consequently, advertising expenditures fell 14.6% from \$270.7 billion in 2008 to \$231.1 billion in 2009. Thereafter, the advertising industry rebounded as the economy turned around, rising to \$274.8 billion by 2012. More importantly, the total advertising expenditure has increased every year since 2010, rising to \$345.6 billion by 2022 (IBISWorld, 2022).

Advertising is the fuel that drives not just the United States economy, but also society's culture and trends. It is the perfect blend of creativity and business. The interwoven relationship between businesses and advertising is consistently durable due to its integral relationship to the economy. As previously noted, advertising expenditures fluctuate with the economy, which consistently accounts for two percent (annually) of the United States gross domestic product (GDP) (IBISWorld, 2022). Advertising professionals are entrusted with keeping businesses healthy through the creation of campaigns that require more than healthy budgets. Goldstein, Suri, McAfee, Ekstrand-Abueg & Diaz (2014) set out to better understand the cognitive impact of annoying ads on users, and to quantify the economic cost of annoying ads for advertisers and

media publishers. The research shows the economic cost of bad ads is about .153 cents each, which works out to a \$1.53 cost per thousand (CPM), which means it costs the advertiser an additional \$1.53 per thousand people who view the ad. More than 53% of all online ads sell for between \$.10 and \$.80 CPM and media publishers earn an average of \$1.35 CPM, thus poorly executed ads can result in a negative return on investment. If advertising professionals are not equipped with the knowledge and experience required to be a responsible steward guiding how a company communicates to its market, these dollars can cause more harm than good, from ineffective messaging to ill-advised media placements. Therefore, how these professionals are trained when earning their university degrees is essential.

A successful advertising graduate should have training in both the theoretical and the practical aspects of their discipline. As with the medical profession, where a doctor requires years of residency to practice their classroom learning, likewise advertising students should be afforded significant opportunities to apply what they learn. Unfortunately, practical knowledge and skillsets are usually of secondary importance in the academic setting, namely, it is unknown how many programs offer an experiential component to their advertising students. Currently, there is no comprehensive listing of advertising, public relations, or related student-run agencies (Busch, 2013; Limoges, 2015; Bush and Miller, 2016; Busch & Struthers, 2016). What is known is that all types and sizes of student-run agencies impart valuable professional and communication skills to students (Bush et al., 2017; Haygood et al., 2019), allowing students to build experience, add to resumes, and apply classroom knowledge to real-life situations (Bush, 2009; Busch, 2013). Bush (2009) found that student agencies teach students to apply theory to practice (i.e., skills application), learn business protocols, and gain professional skills. Without

that applied experience, students are underserved and ill equipped to launch a career in advertising.

Professionals in the advertising field see the benefit of experiential learning. Specifically, advertising executives report the need for a mix of learning, including situated learning in the form of student agencies, which means teaching strategic communication rather than just teaching tactical skills. These professionals expect students to be able to write and design creatively, but they also need them to understand how creative tactics can solve real business problems. (Neill & Schauster, 2015). This connection is the ‘sweet spot’ of advertising. Knowing how to find that link between creativity and business is what students often lack, but desperately need. For example, consider the Nike slogan, “Just do it.” How did something so simple come to mean so much to so many people? In 1987, Dan Wieden, president of the agency Wieden + Kennedy, made a surprising connection between the execution of a convicted murderer and the Nike brand. In Doug Pray’s 2009 documentary about advertising, *Art & Copy*, Wieden explains the idea for the Nike tagline was sparked by the last words of convicted murderer Gary Gilmore, who said “Let’s do it!” to the firing squad before his execution. That connection in Wieden’s mind created the “Just do it” tagline which has lived on for over a quarter century.

Experiential learning opportunities provide students exposure to what the real world has in store for them and bridges the gap between university and industry. The benefit to students is they enter the job market a step ahead of their peers. Likewise, industry benefits from a better pool of entry level employees. Bush et al. (2017) said student-run agency workers who are now professionals applied their student experiences via people, organizational, and communication skills. The ability to coordinate and communicate with a diverse set of people, build client

relationships, and work within a team were important, as well as knowing how to manage a project from beginning to end.

The question facing university advertising programs today is, what are the essential components of an experiential learning opportunity? Is it a series of professional guest speakers, internships, mentorships, or extracurricular advertising clubs? This capstone project focuses on how to create an experiential learning opportunity for advertising students through the development of a formal lab-based experience by defining the required faculty commitment, financial management, organizational structure and processes, and physical requirements.

Background of the Problem

In the existing academic literature, there is limited research that explains how to develop an experiential program for a university advertising program. The idea of adding an application-based business experience to the required advertising curriculum runs contrary to the academic mindset and processes that have been in place for centuries (Greenburg, 2004).

Industry leaders report they have job requirements that are not supported by university advertising curriculum, citing the main deficiency is in the form of student experience. An often-reported problem from industry practitioners is that students enter the advertising profession ill-equipped with the necessary skills and experiences to produce high-quality work required for effective advertising outcomes. The professional skills and traits of collaboration, being organized, and the ability to apply both learning and early experiences to a professional agency are highly valued by advertising hiring decision makers. Learning agency-specific processes are important as well as “professional skills” and “real-world application.” The personality qualities of desire, resourcefulness, and the willingness to do the unglamorous administrative work are often lacking in current applicants at a time when these traits are especially highly valued. For

universities without a current student agency presence, the literature makes a strong case for doing so because of the value of experience as perceived by hiring decision makers (Haygood et al., 2019). The experiential learning opportunity has the potential to address and overcome these challenges and meet the needs of the university students, faculty, and industry practitioners. The problem facing university advertising programs is no formal guidance exists to develop and integrate this type of opportunity, resulting in a patchwork portfolio of experiential programs that do not follow a shared development process.

Bush et al. (2011) defines student-run agencies as “student-run communications agencies that mimic professional public relations and advertising agencies by providing students with a professional environment in which to work on real projects for real clients,” (p. 485). This definition is rooted in the student-run agency concept established 40 years ago at Boston University. In 1974, Boston University was the first academic institution to create a lab-based course with a PRLab, a student-run public relations agency. The following year, Boston University established the first AdLab. Their version of an AdLab is an entity that acts as a real-world agency where creativity and business in advertising is explored by working with clients culled from the Boston metropolitan area. As the first of its kind, it defined the mission of an AdLab as an experience to provide students with professional experience and exposure by applying theory and skills learned in the classroom via projects with businesses and organizations for which a fee is charged. All aspects of advertising agency services are provided, and it is structured as a business including the necessary policies, standards, and processes required for success. Organized in teams, students are assigned a client and given responsibility for project management and execution. As a multidisciplinary endeavor that combines research

and practice, this lab-based experience draws students from a wide range of majors but is required for all advertising majors. (Boston University, 2023)

Industry also provides university students experiential opportunities, primarily through the American Advertising Federation (AAF), the largest and oldest professional advertising organization. With over 200 college chapters serving approximately 5,000 students, a chapter connects students with professionals through networking and competition events. It also provides a link between industry and the university but does not completely bridge the experience gap. In fact, the AAF encourages student chapters to set up a student-run agency, but again, unfortunately, does not provide formal guidance on how to develop this experience (American Advertising Federation, 2023).

According to data from the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), there are a total of 2,832 four-year higher education institutions in the U.S. Yet, there is no comprehensive listing of how many universities have their own student-based business in operation (Busch & Struthers, 2016). The lack of available information about the number of higher education institutions that have student-run advertising agencies coupled with the lack of any guidance or plan focused on how to develop a student-run advertising agency leads one to wonder what impact this deficiency has on the implementation and proliferation of student-run advertising agencies in the university setting. Most of the published research regarding the structure of student-run agencies is narrowly focused – concentrating on only individual agencies. Due to this narrowed focus, much of the literature on student agencies is composed of case studies on single entities. These case studies often summarize successes, opportunities, and challenges during the development of a specific agency (Busch & Struthers, 2016). Without the existence of formal, collaborative, and published guidelines, higher education institutions are forced to create

these opportunities in isolation, without the benefit of insights from established programs. The available literature discusses the institution's situational needs rather than presenting data derived from best practices. As a result, there is no collaborative effort underway to assist student-run advertising agencies in the development of a sustainable program.

Statement of the Problem

Advertising students need experience. Advertising professionals demand students with experience. Businesses depend on an advertising industry that possesses higher-level creativity and business acumen that results in the maximum return on investment possible. There are recent campaigns that have failed and cost companies millions of dollars because advertising professionals did not perform at the required level. For example, in 2017, Pepsi rolled out a campaign titled "Live for Now Moments Anthem," to promote unity, diversity and social change. A popular fashion model, Kendall Jenner, was enlisted as the spokesperson for the campaign. The campaign was pulled from all media platforms within a matter of days of launch due to an extremely negative public response. With a reported production budget of \$5 million, and a media buy expenditure of an estimated \$100 million, this was a costly failure (Schwartz & Diaz, 2017).

In addition to major missteps like Pepsi, the advertising field is littered with work that also misses the mark on a smaller scale. A recent review of Superbowl bowl ads found very few included two of the most basic, required elements for effective advertising: a call to action and clear benefits to the consumer. This lack of expertise is a problem that can be ameliorated by an enhanced educational opportunity based on experience in the form of a student-run advertising agency. Bush and Miller (2011) posited that faculty advisers believe student agencies are beneficial to student learning, particularly in applying classroom learning, developing

professional skills, and learning business processes. Since literature suggests these areas may be the most difficult to teach in a traditional classroom, student agencies may indeed help fill a gap in the curriculum. Moreover, student agencies may further expose students to the continual emergence of new skills required by the profession, even more so than is currently found in university programs (Bush & Miller, 2011).

The value of a campus-based agency is recognized as a potential solution for training better prepared professionals, but a formal roadmap for development does not exist. Over the last 10 years, more universities have attempted to create lab-based student-run agencies (Daniels, 2017). The idea that creating a space for students to apply classroom theories to real client problems produces graduates that possess a solid understanding of agency life, structure, positions, operations, relationships, and skills, is an attractive proposition. But given the development of these agencies lacks any standardization based on actual performance data, it remains an elusive proposition for many advertising programs. If a published plan backed by the consensus of existing, successful student-run agencies was available to assist in the development of a student-run agency, would universities be more likely to implement the experiential learning opportunity in their curriculum?

The growth of more student-run agencies on college campuses offers the opportunity for scholarly research that examines the learning outcomes and benefits students receive because of their participation (Busch, 2013; Bush, 2009; Bush et al., 2011; Maben, 2010). Today, studies are being conducted that look at current students or recent college graduates and their experience in student agency environments (Bush, et al., 2017; Hannam et al., 2017; Ranta & Davis, 2017). Advertising managers in charge of hiring have also been the subject of recent research to determine how student-run agency experience impacts their decisions to employ a recent

graduate (Haygood, et al. 2019). These studies do not address the formal structure required for a successful experiential program, but they do describe attributes of programs where graduates were perceived as better prepared for industry.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this project is to develop a formal, development process that (a) gleans lessons learned from established university lab-based advertising and public relations experiential labs; and (b) replicates, refines, and creates an essential student-agency model for colleges and universities to follow, regardless of their geographic location. In sum, the ability to start and run a business within a university setting operated by students with faculty oversight requires a roadmap – it is the intent of this project to provide that map.

Research Question

R1: What are the elements needed to create a sustainable, student-run advertising agency in a higher education environment?

Significance of Study

Like most other universities, Southern Illinois University Carbondale’s advertising program is rooted in the traditional advertising curriculum: content literacy, grammar literacy, and structure literacy (Jeong, 2019). Two additional components are needed to further strengthen programs – “business” literacy and “creative” literacy – and the connecting of these two through experiential learning. As a result, several universities house student “AdLabs” to provide the missing experiential piece.

Unfortunately, no standard guide exists (or has been publicly shareable) that provides advertising programs the essential guidance on how to create and sustain a successful student “AdLab.” Specifically, there are no development plans, operational guides, resources guide,

internal processes manual, or performance outcomes to guide the creation of these labs. As a result, the author embarked on a journey to create a roadmap of her own to build a student-run advertising agency, which now can be shared.

Positionality

The researcher is an advertising professional with over 30 years of industry experience. Her career in advertising includes positions at advertising agencies in Boston, Washington, D.C., and Phoenix. She had the opportunity to experience both practical and theoretical training – and realizes that both should work together. For instance, she worked with clients from startups to Fortune 500 companies for over three decades, but now works with intellectually curious students that desire to embark on a career, not simply a job, in advertising. It is her position that the AdLab concept needs a roadmap with essential steps defined to allow it to be supplanted in every university advertising program across the United States. It is her goal to help add to the body of knowledge to enable the proliferation of the AdLab experience.

Delimitations

The scope of this project is based on information sourced from advertising experiential programs that have existed for 10 or more years, to ensure the program is successful and stable. In addition, programs with American Advertising Federation student chapters are included in this study.

Definitions and Acronyms

AAF: American Advertising Federation

AdLab: A physical space where students and faculty can explore the creative and business principles of advertising based on real world situations, case studies, and competitive exercises.

Client: the business or organization that engages with an agency for advertising services

CPM: Cost Per Thousand

NSAC: National Student Advertising Competition

PR: Public Relations

PRLab: A physical space where students and faculty can explore the creative and business principles of public relations based on real world situations, case studies, and competitive exercises.

Student-run Advertising Agency (SRA): a business situated in the university setting run by students who are studying or are interested in an advertising career. Local, regional, and national businesses engage with the student business for the creation of advertising assets that are put into market providing real world experience for the students, and innovative creative for the clients.

PRSSA: Public Relations Student Society of America

Spend: Advertising budget

Summary

The remaining chapters will present a review of literature, research activities, survey results and interpretation of those results. Chapter 2 reviews existing academic studies concerning the development of experiential opportunities for advertising students. It is organized by commonalities of sustainable AdLab, including leadership, organizational structure, processes, and student involvement. Four more chapters follow. In Chapter 3, the topics discussed include the research design and specific details of how the study was conducted. Research results are provided in Chapter 4, followed by Chapter 5 with an interpretation of the results to develop a framework for creating a sustainable SRA in university advertising programs.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

A review of the literature uncovers a deficiency in scholarly research focused on the elements needed for a student-run advertising agency (Bush, et al. 2011). This may be because the student-run agency concept is relatively new, with the first AdLab formed at Boston University in 1975. In contrast, communications programs have historically offered student-run newspaper opportunities to students studying journalism, with the first such newspaper – formed almost 175 years earlier – at Dartmouth College in 1799 (Dartmouth College, 2022). Consequently, the student-run agency does not possess the historically rich legacy of the student-run newspaper. The student-run newspaper derives its power from the U.S. constitutional mandate of freedom of the press listed in the first amendment, which directly connects it to democracy and free speech in the United States. On the contrary, advertising is aligned more accurately to the business environment and capitalism.

Today, there are an estimated 158 “AdLabs” or student-run advertising agencies (SRA) at universities and colleges in the United States (Swanson, 2019). Student-run agencies are defined as agencies that mimic professional public relations and advertising agencies by providing students with a professional environment in which to work on real projects for real clients (Bush and Miller, 2011). The term “student-run” defines the decision-making process, even though there is usually a faculty advisor charged with guiding the students, it is the students who are the main decision makers (Maben, 2010). The following are key benefits for students: apply lessons learned in the classroom, develop professional skills, and master applicable business processes.(Bush & Miller, 2011). One of the most dominant benefits reported in current research is the positive correlation between student participation in an SRA and career success. Industry

professionals deem experience at an SRA as a key hiring variable (Neill & Schauster, 2015). The challenge or barrier to applying the AdLab concept across university communication programs is a lack of “how-to.” There is not a consistent, proven framework for academia to mirror the professional agency experience. There are programs that contain some similarities, but no consistent template for universities to follow. It is the purpose of this literature review to identify common themes from the literature and integrate them into a framework for the construction of an AdLab that can be implemented regardless of place and resources.

Search Description

A search on Google, Google Scholar, the Morris Library at Southern Illinois University, and EBSCO platforms provided the bulk of journal articles and dissertations. A variety of terms were searched for including:

- AdLab
- student advertising agency
- student-run agency
- student-run advertising agency
- student-run public relations firm
- experiential learning at universities
- best practices student-run business

From this search, articles were primarily located in prominent, peer-reviewed journals, including Public Relations Review, Journal of Public Relations Research, Journalism & Mass Communication Educator, Journal of Advertising Education, and Teaching Journalism & Mass Communication.

Conceptual Framework

Overall, scholarly research focused on student-run advertising agencies is a small universe. Most of the research has been conducted by a core group of scholars and students. In 2009, Lee Bush of Elon University produced the earliest and most consistent body of research in studying the different aspects of the AdLab and the concept of learning by doing (Bush, 2009). There are also published case studies that present very specific details about the development of individual university AdLabs. These case studies serve to provide a snapshot of what exists, but with no guidance of how to operationalize the SRA at other institutions (Bush, 2011). Researchers are aware there is a void in research focused on the efficacy of an AdLab. (Borgognoni, 2020; Maben, 2010; Bush et al., 2017; Limoges, 2015).

Bush and Miller's 2011 study provided quantitative data on agency characteristics such as structure, longevity, funding, facilities, and services. The results of this research project uncovered the following SRA characteristics:

- number of students in an agency averaged approximately 42, but varied greatly
- most agencies described themselves as full-service agencies
- about half of the schools offer credit for participation
- over half operated as part of a journalism and mass communications program or college, as opposed to as a student organization
- most do not have a dedicated workspace, or have to share a workspace
- services varied greatly, but social media was the most offered, and videography and broadcast were the least offered
- there is little uniformity in business processes and protocols such as planning templates, timesheets, billable hours, or office hours

Common Themes of Existing Research

From this literature review, the following 3 common themes were identified: faculty leadership; operational structure, processes and resources; and student involvement.

Faculty Leadership

The first common theme dominant in the literature is the presence and role of the faculty advisor and support of the department where the SRA exists (Bush & Miller, 2011). The presence of an advisor is viewed and analyzed based on his or her involvement and relationships. This includes more than skills or resources, but the intangible, emotional traits that serve to build a culture that bonds its participants. The more involved and engaged the faculty advisor is, the better the experience for students and clients. In 2009, Bush conducted a qualitative study to gather information about what made a successful student-run agency. This study found that the more involved the advisor was in the daily operations of the SRA, the better the performance of the SRA. Faculty leadership was defined as high or medium to low involvement. High involvement meant the advisor was paid, received a course release, or was simply self-determined. Medium to low functioning advisors were defined as those who helped as part of their service requirement and did not receive any benefits. Unfortunately, the study did not report how many SRAs had highly/medium/low-involved faculty advisers (Bush, 2009). Bush and Miller (2011) found almost 40% of advisers described their advising as more time-consuming than teaching other courses, and about 20% reported spending the same amount of time. Eighty percent did not receive a course release or overload pay, and their advising did not count as service for tenure and promotion. Those who received compensation generally spent more time than advisers who took on the role as faculty service (Bush, 2009).

Bush and Miller (2011) sought to further define faculty adviser involvement and compensation. The 'hourly advisory commitment' results showed that advisers who spent more

time with their agencies – more than 12 hours per week – had a more sophisticated organizational structure with a team of student leaders that managed accounts, followed business protocols, charged client fees, followed a scheduled work week, and provided skills training for students. Most of the advisors did not receive a course release, and over 90% reported that they did not receive overload pay for advising the agency (Bush & Miller, 2011). The study did not define faculty knowledge, skills, or abilities required for the role. It simply based commitment on whether the advisor was paid or served as a volunteer. Ranta et al (2021) noted that further study should shed light on the “experience, qualifications, and agency aspirations of the SRA advisers themselves. What visions do these individuals have for the growth of their agencies and what qualifications do they have to lead the agencies?”

Operational Structure, Processes, and Resources

The existing literature presents a few of the operational or structural elements utilized by existing SRAs. The more well-defined the structure and process in place, the better the chance for success. This includes mimicking industry’s operations, roles and responsibilities, team-based organization, client management and physical space (Bush 2009). AdLabs which offer titled roles for students, for example creative director or account manager, and also produce an operations manual or employee handbook realize greater success. The more an AdLab borrows from the business world and builds into the AdLab the greater the return on this investment.

Bush further found that having dedicated office space and access to technology hardware and software influenced the success of an AdLab. The more aligned with a real agency the better the student experience and the greater chance for success. The existing research brings into focus an SRA that serves as the intersection of classroom theories and business practices, which produces meaningful outcomes for students. The opportunity to apply the theories of creativity

and advertising learned in the classroom to a real client problem requires students to think beyond what they have been taught. AdLabs that serve as a mirror to their industry counterparts bring learning to life. This includes practicing business skills such as budgeting, billing, negotiating and other business tactics (Haygood et al., 2019). Bush's research concluded that the most common business processes in place were weekly meetings, client contracts and staff orientation. Most agencies also developed and instituted standard industry business practices such as well-defined job descriptions, formal project approval processes, specific reporting hierarchies, an application and interview process, and client billing (Bush & Miller, 2011; Maben, 2010).

Bush (2009) suggests that agencies with the greatest likelihood of longevity have well-established structures – with teams and job titles – and used business procedures including job applications and performance assessments. In an attempt to group SRAs based on chance for long-term survival, Bush (2009) found that SRAs can be classified into three different “agencies” depending upon their degree of accountability and structure. The first agency (type 1) had a low risk of dissolving that resulted from a concrete management structure, well-defined processes, and protocols for the students. This type of agency required work hours, meetings, and offered course credit. The students applied skills, professionalism and business processes and had a highly involved advisor. At agencies with medium risk of dissolving (type 2 agency), students attended team meetings and learned the same skills as a type 1 agency, but the success was all dependent on the advisor's involvement. The last type of agency with a high risk of dissolving (type 3) was an organization that depended solely on student leadership. Consequently, the agency had no structure and was not held accountable. In summary, agencies identified by Bush (2009) as having the greatest risk of dissolving had little student accountability, were volunteer

based with no application process, operated with few business protocols, and had no dedicated office space. These less stable student agencies functioned entirely as a student organization or club, and the quality of student leadership varied each year.

Bush and Miller (2011) found that nearly two-thirds of agencies received no university funding. Over half operated out of mass communication programs, and 40% were registered student organizations. Only 2% received funding at levels consistent with other student media, including the campus newspaper, or television and radio stations. Furthermore, only 38% of the agencies operated in a dedicated space. Finally, one university bypassed entirely the issues of sustainability and university support when it formalized the SRA as a required senior-level capstone course. It was concluded that the agencies operating in journalism/mass communication departments and schools received more support, including having dedicated office space and technology. These agencies were also more likely to charge client fees and have advisors that spent more time with the agency per week (Bush and Miller, 2011).

Student Involvement

Lastly, the issue of student accountability was identified by the researcher as a critical element for the development of an SRA. Two of the most mentioned tactics for student accountability were academic course credit for participation in the AdLab and set meeting times. Specifically, Bush and Miller (2011) found SRAs were evenly split between schools offering credit for participation and those that did not. Other possible ways the literature reported to integrate accountability ranged from paying students in leadership roles and requiring attendance at meetings to holding office hours (Bush 2009). Unfortunately, the research does not address the frequency or effectiveness of these accountability measures – only stating that students were paid, while others received course credit or nothing at all. Bush and Miller (2011) stated that

nearly 90% of agencies provide leadership opportunities for students but did not define what percentage of those positions were paid. What is clear is that accountability of students must be well-defined and enforced when working with actual clients.

Summary

According to Bush and Miller (2011), a possible avenue for increased student involvement is integration into the academic program, rather than organizing as a student group. This aligns with the concept that increased structure produces more benefits to students, as well as implies a faculty advisor is vital to growing an AdLab. These processes and designations did not exist in AdLabs that failed to thrive. The more successful agencies had students that learned and applied their knowledge and skills to all agency situations. Being in a real, professional student-led agency comes with great responsibility because the students are providing solutions for real-life problems. The more flourishing agencies held students accountable, resulting in a sustained commitment to the work through the entire semester. Student accountability was helped and supported by offering the agency as a course credit, requiring students to attend agency meetings, and requiring work hours. Agencies that were less successful had no required meetings, no required work hours and the students received no course credit or other benefit (Bush, 2009).

In conclusion, the literature presents specific commonalities that all successful AdLab programs exhibit, including strong leadership from the faculty advisor, closely mirroring actual agencies with all the required financial and operational processes and procedures, a dedicated space with up-to-date technology, and department support.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODS

“Qualitative research is best suited to address a research problem in which you do not know the variables and need to explore. The literature might yield little information about the phenomenon of study, and you need to learn more from participants through exploration.”

(Creswell, 2012 p. 16). To produce an AdLab ‘roadmap’ rooted in practical, proven experiences, a qualitative research approach allowing for an exploratory process was followed to enable the researcher to uncover the necessary operational elements, both formal and informal. The purpose of this research is to create a formal guide based on (a) lessons learned from successful university lab-based advertising and public relations opportunities; and (b) create an AdLab development plan for colleges and universities across the country, regardless of geographic location. The ability to start and run a sustainable, student-operated business within a university setting requires a ‘roadmap’. It is the intent of this project to provide that map.

Research Question

The research question developed for this project was designed to gain a deeper understanding of experiential learning in the form of an AdLab for advertising students in a university setting.

RQ1: What are the elements needed to create a sustainable, student-run advertising agency in a higher education environment?

Research Design

Quantitative and qualitative research methods both explore phenomena (Goertz & Mahoney, 2012 as cited in Basias & Pollalis, 2018). While quantitative research is the systematic investigation of phenomena through statistics and mathematics, qualitative research examines

phenomena by analyzing experiences, behaviors, and interactions without the help of statistics and mathematics (Merriam, 2009; Hennink et al., 2010; Singh, 2006 as cited in Basias & Pollalis, 2018). The differences are further defined in an examination of the research objective, questions, data collection and analysis.

The choice of method is driven by the study's use or purpose. There are three guidelines to follow that direct a researcher to the appropriate choice:

- **Problem:** The research problem dictates whether a researcher should choose quantitative or qualitative methods. If the problem requires gathering data to explain a trend or phenomena, quantitative is the better method. Qualitative is better suited to a problem that seeks to answer what, how, when or where, which requires a deep dive into the problem in order to understand the situation.
- **Audience:** Who the research is intended for is a point of difference and should be considered. For example, a report directed at university faculty members should be developed differently than for industry practitioners. Each audience possesses a unique level and knowledge concerning research methods and the subject matter being studied. They also use the resultant analysis for different purposes. An industry practitioner may seek to use the data to justify organizational or budget changes, while a faculty member needs data to expand their knowledge base and improve the student experience.
- **Researcher's Experience:** The positionality of the researcher affects the decision of which method to use. If the researcher has not been trained in mathematics and statistical analysis, it could derail the study. On the contrary, a qualitative researcher should have a good understanding of the subject matter under investigation.

(Creswell, 2012).

Qualitative methods offer a greater degree of flexibility and creativity of thought for the researcher. The qualitative approach is open-ended and exploratory to drive a greater understanding of a central phenomenon. It does not seek to prove or disprove a hypothesis, on the contrary its goal is to understand what is, rather than predict what will be (Taguchi, 2018). The method depends on inductive reasoning to uncover new insights and theories. Indeed, inductive theorizing is the foundation for conducting qualitative research. “As we face more wicked problems in our world, scholars are increasingly adopting qualitative methods to unpack these challenges.” (Bansal et al., 2018). According to Bansal, et al. (2018), over the last several years, qualitative papers submitted to the Academy of Management Journal increased by 20%.

As qualitative methods help researchers gain a deeper understanding of a problem, it does not hypothesize or consider variables. Qualitative methods focus on a central phenomenon in order to create new thinking. It is a process of continuous improvement and learning. As new insights are realized, the path forward shifts as it reconciles the new perspectives. A major difference between quantitative and qualitative is the sample or population to be studied. Qualitative methods require a purposeful sample, which draws from groups who have some experience or understanding of the problem being studied (Creswell, 2012).

Qualitative studies depend on access to multiple sources of data where open-ended questions can be explored, and ideas shared among participants. Consequently, the researcher’s perspective is allowed for use as a key instrument for collection and interpretation (Creswell & Creswell 2018). The ability to shift and pivot as the researcher learns and interprets the data is a key difference between qualitative and quantitative methods. Given this project deals with a creative field that itself pivots as it learns, qualitative methods provide the optimum fit.

The work produced by any advertising agency is a creative-based endeavor. Qualitative research allows for more creativity and alternative thinking than quantitative methods. Martin Heidegger, a German philosopher known for his work in phenomenology and existentialism, constructed Heidegger's Theory of Truth (Huttunen & Kakkori, 2020). According to Huttunen and Kakkori (2020), "Qualitative research is generally close to what Heidegger considers the essence of poetry, in that the poem's task is not to make an exact copy out of something original but to uncover a new world or open up a new horizon—to bring about a new way of seeing and thinking." It is an elegant perspective that provides an appropriate lens to view curriculum for a creative field. According to Heidegger's Theory of Truth, qualitative research does not focus on reproducing what is, on the contrary, it sparks new "kinds of thinking and seeing." In this sense, qualitative research serves to evoke new knowledge (Heikkinen et al., 2012, p. 8 as cited in Huttunen & Kakkori, 2020).

Although qualitative design proved most appropriate and used for this project, it is not without challenges. Turner and Crane (2016) reported students face a qualitative research bias in academia and doctoral committees have a greater degree of trouble understanding and approving dissertations that deal with subjects that are not easily quantifiable. This insight is an additional point of validation that understanding the phenomenon of experiential learning via an AdLab is more complex and nuanced, requiring reflection from participants and the researcher as qualitative analysis allows.

This capstone project is rooted in a constructivist worldview. The philosophy states information will be gleaned from the "meaning of a phenomenon from the view of the participants" (Creswell, 2018, p. 17). Key to this view is that the research captures the participants' view of the situation being studied (Creswell, 2018).

Research Methods

Of the different types of qualitative methods available to researchers, five types have been identified as dominant: narrative, phenomenology, ethnography, case study and grounded theory (Creswell, 2009). A narrative research method is applied when the researcher studies the lives of individuals over a period of time. The results are reported as a narrative chronology. A phenomenological research study requires the researcher to identify the human experiences about a phenomenon through the eyes of the participants. An ethnographic approach enables the researcher to study an intact cultural group in a natural setting over a prolonged period of time by collecting primarily observational and interview data with the goal of uncovering themes or issues. Grounded theory is a strategy where the researcher constructs a general abstract theory of a process, action or interaction grounded in the views of the participants in a study.

For this project, the researcher implemented the basic design of qualitative research based on the collection of interviews, digital content, and reflection. A phenomenological lens was used to assist in understanding the essence of what is required to develop a sustainable SRA. For example, the experiential learning opportunity was explored through interviews with individuals who had experience with this phenomenon. The method also recommends soliciting experience from a group of three to 15 individuals who have intimate knowledge about the phenomenon. The forms of data collected in a phenomenological study can include one-on-one interviews and a review of supporting materials, from digital artwork to websites (Creswell, 2016).

Site Selection and Population/Sample

To best construct the ‘roadmap,’ the researcher focused on diverse models of student-run agencies on campuses in the United States. These university environments provided the study’s setting, which is the natural locale for college students and faculty to interact (Creswell, 2018).

In addition, qualitative methods require a population who intimately understands the topic to be studied and have the experience and knowledge in order to share information that is considered “rich” (Creswell, 2012). The sample selection may be one of the most important decisions a researcher faces when developing a qualitative study, because the sample and setting provide the information needed for a full understanding of the phenomenon under study. If the sample does not fully understand the situation, the data will not fully provide the information for understanding the phenomenon. Research reported by Moser and Korstjens (2018) identified three guidelines for developing a sample for qualitative methods. First, participants are sampled deliberately. Second, the sample size is small. Third, the sample may change during the study based on further questions raised in the process of data collection and analysis.

Following these guidelines for sampling, the researcher employed the principles of purposive sampling to develop the group of study participants. Leveraging the researcher’s professional judgment, a list of criteria was developed for selection of the sample and is listed below. During the interviews, the researcher asked each participant if they had a recommendation for additional interviewees, drawing from the model of snowball sampling. By selecting a sample that is informed and carefully chosen, it also gives the researcher entrée into a participating student-run agency’s network and group affiliations which leads to an opportunity to access even more expertise and insights (Moser & Korstjens, 2018). Further, qualitative research approaches are often used to analyze and evaluate: (a) technology, and (b) business issues (Baskerville et al., 2010 as cited in Basias & Pollalis, 2018) as an in-depth study in their natural environment is required for deeper understanding (Basias & Pollalis, 2018). Study participants were selected from their natural environment based on four predefined qualities. These include:

- Agency is active with a current roster of local, regional, or national clients.
- Agency has a website that describes their mission, services, and portfolio of work.
- Agency has a dedicated student executive team and faculty advisor with current names and contact information.
- Agency has an affiliation with American Advertising Federation (AAF).

As a result, the researcher arrived at an initial sample size of five student-run agencies. The researcher collected the following descriptive information on each sample agency: the size of the university and the department where the agency is located, date agency was started, average number of student members, services offered by the agency, financial structure of agency, and types of clients.

This group of five SRAs represented private and public institutions with varying student enrollment and geographical locations. The graphic presented on the following page represents the attributes of each institution (see Figure 1).

University 1 is a private, coeducational research institution with 200 majors and 200 advanced degree programs across the 13 academic units located in the northeast United States. The advertising degree program is housed in the School of Communication with approximately 250 undergraduates majoring in advertising. Student enrollment is 22,000. Their student-run agency was established in 2006. University 2 is a public, coeducational research institution located in the southwest with 156 majors and 237 advanced degree programs across the 18 colleges. The advertising degree program is housed in the School of Communication with approximately 500 advertising students. With a student enrollment of 52,000, the student-run experiential program was developed in 2012, with the formal “lab” established in 2021. University 3 has a student enrollment of approximately 12,500. It is a private, coeducational

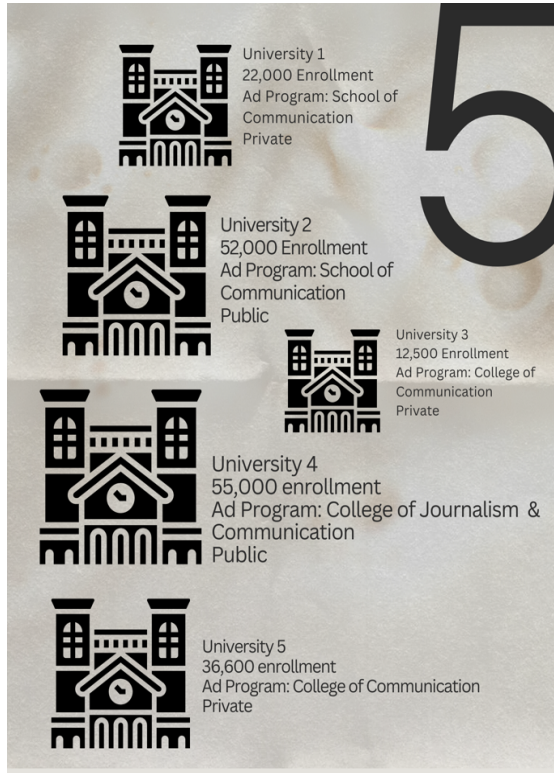


Figure 1

Study Participants

Institution in the southwest with 116 undergraduate, 65 master's level and 38 doctoral programs. The advertising program has 400 students and is housed in the College of Communication. The student experiential program was initiated in 2012. University 4 is the academic home to over 55,000 students, with over 300 undergraduate and graduate degree options. It is a southern public, coeducational research institution with 16 academic colleges. The advertising specialization has about 650 students and is in the College of Journalism and Communications. The student-run agency was established in 2013. University 5 is a private, non-profit, four-year research institution located in the northeast with more than 300 undergraduate and graduate degree options. Student enrollment is estimated at 36,600. The advertising program, which is in the College of Communication, has about 300 students and was established in 1975.

From the list of five SRAs, the researcher identified each organization's faculty advisor,

including their name, position, and e-mail. All five faculty members chosen for the interview were full-time educators charged with teaching advertising to undergraduates. The characteristics of the faculty members included common traits as well as individualized areas of expertise. Those interviewed included, one associate professor, one professor emeritus, one executive director with a Ph.D., one lecturer, and one instructor. One faculty had secured academic tenure, while the other four were on a non-tenure track. The group was represented by two women and three men and ranged in age from early 40s to 70s. All five individuals had spent at least 10 years working in the advertising industry before joining academia. Further, while their experience varied from strategy to creative development, all five had prior work experience in a professional advertising agency environment.

Instrumentation

The researcher used a predetermined protocol to guide the interviews with the participants. A panel of experts reviewed the protocol and offered the following modifications, which were incorporated into the final draft (see Appendix A). They provided three key points for the development of the interview questions: (1) begin the interview with questions about the participant's history, (2) allow participants ample time to describe that history, and (3) afford them the opportunity to comment on any topic that was not discussed. Furthermore, they advised the researcher to not just direct the interview, but to probe the answers when necessary. Probing questions increase the depth of the dialogue and allows the researcher to further explore elements of the participants' response. For the researcher, the key benefit of probing was that it solicited information not previously considered, which is a significant benefit of qualitative research (Reynolds, 2017).

Data Collection

Approval to query human subjects was sought and secured from the Institutional Review Board (IRB) at Southern Illinois University (see Appendix B). A combination of interviews with open-ended questions and an examination of each student-run agency's website were utilized to collect data for this capstone project.

Interviews

The researcher invited faculty advisers from the five selected student-run agencies to participate in the study. The researcher constructed and sent an email that explained the purpose of the study, guaranteed anonymity, and requested their voluntary participation via recorded virtual interviews (see Appendix C). A consent document was provided to and signed by each individual prior to the interview (see Appendix D). The researcher approached the participants being studied with respect and provided introductory information that included (1) the purpose and processes of the study to participants, (2) their rights in writing and verbally, (3) deceptive or misleading practices, (4) confidentiality standards, (5) ethical interview practices, and (6) the role of the researcher (Creswell, 2013).

The researcher scheduled virtual 30-minute interview sessions with each of the five advisors to administer the interview protocol. The interviews were conducted via Zoom and email, with four interviews conducted and recorded using the Zoom platform, while one participant provided answers via email and followed-up with a Zoom discussion. The Zoom calls lasted longer than the planned 30 minutes, averaging about 45 minutes in length with the camera turned on. After each interview session was concluded, the researcher took copious field notes and recorded all insights in a researcher's journal. At the conclusion of each interview, the researcher transcribed the recordings via Zoom's audio transcription service, with the researcher conducting a manual review for accuracy and clarity.

Data Analysis

The researcher reviewed the qualitative data by implementing each step of the analysis chronologically. First, a simultaneous overview of the interview transcripts uncovered connections and was recorded in the form of a brief summary (Creswell, 2018). This initial step is critical to connect the experiences and information culled from each agency to understand and define commonalities for success. Second, a background description of each agency was developed including: (1) role of a faculty advisor, (2) dedicated physical space, (3) positive attitude and support of department and college, and (4) bonding nature of the group and other positive attributes. Then data were winnowed to include only those behaviors that contributed to the success and growth of the agency. From those behaviors, the researcher identified those attributes reported by all five participants. These attributes were reported by the participants via an unaided query, which was interpreted by the researcher as having greater value than behaviors that were unique to the participant's setting. Consequently, the researcher highlighted key points in the transcript that aligned with faculty leadership, operations and processes, and student involvement. At the conclusion of the last interview, these key points were culled from the transcripts and compared for connections or commonalities. This exercise revealed shared experiences and insights which were extrapolated as common themes reported by each institution that dealt with faculty, operations, and the students.

Content Analysis of the Data

To assist in promoting an in-depth analysis, the researcher focused on organizing the data in an orderly manner. The researcher performed a content analysis, based on the following methodology. First, the researcher organized and prepared data by sources: interviews and agency digital presence. The researcher housed the information for each student-run agency

under a separate file. Next, the researcher read and examined all interview data to gain a full understanding and identify any general ideas or themes. A journal was maintained to record researcher reactions and reflections to data to identify commonalities or themes. The researcher created separate electronic files for the interview transcriptions and researcher journal entries. After the review, data were coded by bracketing chunks of information under common themes. Finally, the data were represented narratively to communicate the findings of the analysis. This employed an approach depicted in visual figures and descriptive information about each participant to construct a formal roadmap for development of a student-run advertising agency (Creswell, 2018).

Trustworthiness

Data analysis requires the researcher to ensure the results will be perceived as trustworthy. According to Yin (2014), trustworthiness requires maintaining a chain of evidence. Yin said that having multiple data sources helps capture a broader range of perspectives, behaviors, and attitudes. Research credibility refers to the degree the research accurately presents participants' perceptions, feelings, and actions. The use of open-ended interview questions targeting agency advisers (a sample population that has intimate and informed knowledge) supports the credibility of this research effort. Credibility also stems from the researcher being aware of any personal biases that might impact the research, as defined for this study in the discussion concerning the researcher's positionality.

Achieving trustworthiness not only requires a relevant, expert sample and researcher transparency, it needs to define how biases will be mitigated. In qualitative research, confirmability involves researcher reflexivity as well as an audit trail that links data to results. The researcher mitigated bias through reflexivity with the development of a thick, rich

description of the data, which included the researchers' reflections during the interviews. The researcher, an advertising professional herself, was transparent about her background to further mitigate any potential bias.

Conclusion

The goal of this chapter was to outline the research method chosen to answer the research question. A discussion of the research design, setting and sample, positionality of the researcher, data collection and data analysis presents how the study was conducted and who was chosen to participate in the study. A qualitative design was used to capture data from successful university AdLabs, in order to create a well-defined organizational model. Study participants contributed to this roadmap by sharing their experiences managing a student-run ad agency, including what they believed enabled long-term growth and sustainability. The goal of Chapter 4 is to provide the study results based on the methodology described in Chapter 3.

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS

This chapter contains the results of a qualitative research study using a methodology consisting of a literature review, subject matter interviews, and document examination conducted to answer this research question:

RQ1: What are the elements needed to create a sustainable, student-run advertising agency in a higher education environment?

In addition, this chapter includes a discussion of the coding process that was used to analyze the transcripts of the five interviews conducted with university faculty familiar with the student-run agency model at their respective universities. The researcher used an open coding process to review the qualitative data obtained from the interviews. The responses were compared and winnowed until the researcher identified common themes. The key themes are visually depicted with supporting graphics to present the data in a creative, communicative, and rich context.

Presentation of Findings

In this section, the researcher addresses the three themes that were culled from the interviews: faculty leadership, operations, and student involvement. After further reflection, specific theme attributes were identified as common among all the respondents.

Theme 1: Faculty Leadership Constitutes the Heart and Soul of any SRA

The professional experience and behavior that provided the foundation for the growth and sustainability of the SRA stemmed from the faculty advisors. Their contribution is by far the most valuable and critical to the success of their SRAs.

Attribute 1: Industry Experience

Each interview started with the faculty recounting his or her path to their current position, with all of them beginning their career working in the advertising industry (see Figure 2).

Academia came later, after they felt they had something to share. One after another, all five shared a similar journey to working in higher education. Though their specific expertise varied, their academic goal was the same – to recreate the professional world they had left behind. From the youngest respondent to the oldest, they told their stories with great fondness and passion for their chosen careers in advertising.

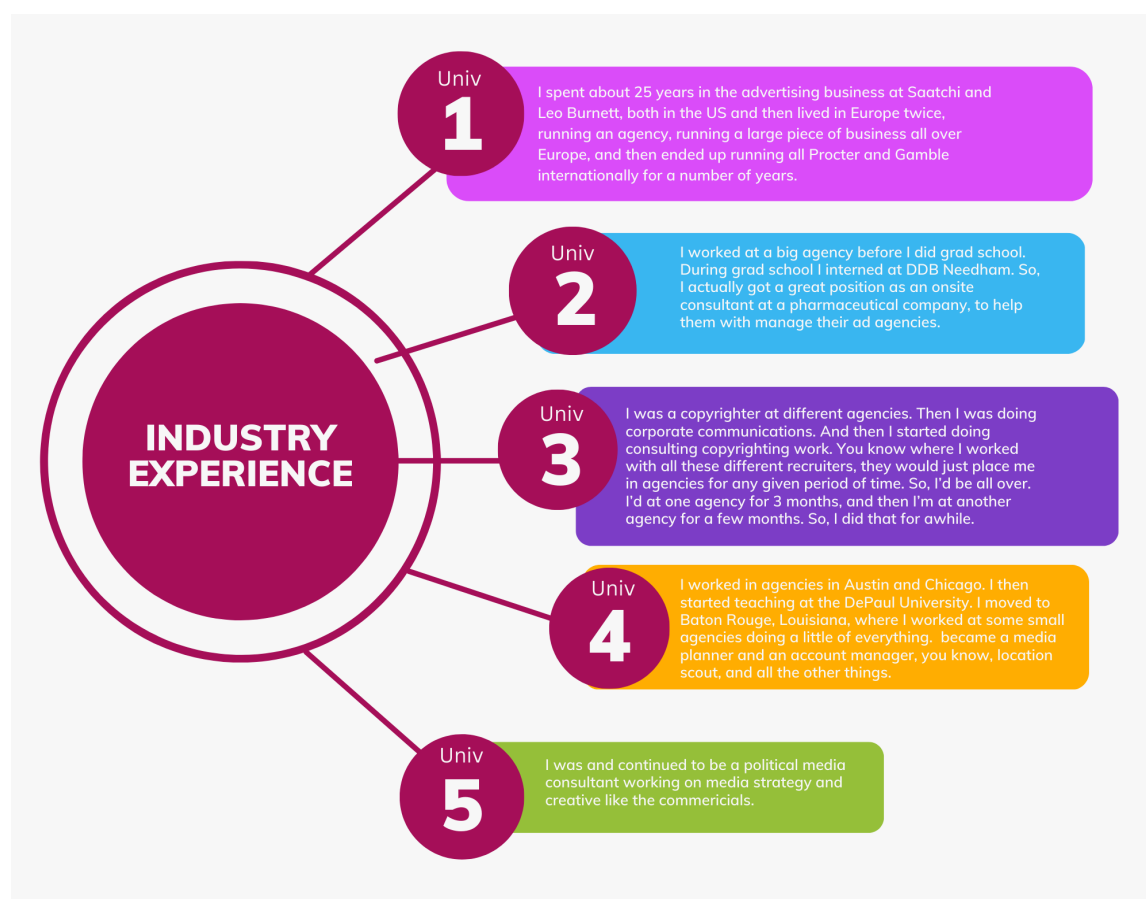


Figure 2

Participant Comments about Industry Experience

Attribute 2: Departmental Relationships

Faculty collegiality was an essential factor to each respondent. These professional

relationships foster the necessary support and sustainability of the SRA. Even though the level of the camaraderie varied, all five participants understood the importance of creating a team-based environment (see Figure 3). Each articulated their appreciation for their colleagues and felt supported and respected by them. More importantly, the participants reported the students were aware of the department climate, which made it all the more important to strive for productive, supportive, collegial relationships, whether formal or informal. The faculty member from University 1 described how the entire faculty comes together to support the SRA's end-of-semester presentations of all their client work and "...they watch, listen and applaud the teams."

While the faculty member from University 3 recalled the unenviable task of convincing the entire faculty to change the way they taught advertising for the last 20 years, it ended with all of them committed to embracing the student-run agency experience.

Unfortunately, not every SRA enjoyed the same university support at its inception. Specifically, the professor from University 1 described being forced to "covertly" develop their student-run agency, after he was directed not to proceed by university administration.

I ran the agency for about three years with our dean not even knowing it existed. We were already you know, 150 people or something. After he figured out that I'd done it, he called me into his office. He goes, did I tell you not to do that? I said, yeah, you did. And he said, why did you do it? I said, because I just said I'd rather get fired than shortchange the kids. I said, you know if that's what I'm here for, go ahead. He said no, you did a good thing. (University 1)

In sum, after three years of success and due to his positive relationship with the dean, the SRA was allowed to continue, and the faculty was not punished due to his clandestine operation.

This is also an example many of these faculty members exhibited, which was to beg for forgiveness rather than ask for permission.

Attribute 3: Professional Culture must be More than a Simulation

Operating a for-profit business in a university environment is incongruent with the mission of higher education and was not lost on the survey participants. Each faculty member expressed a commitment to offering a balance of theory and practice in their programs, but the practice component had traditionally been missing. Consequently, the creation of a professional culture within their program was an integral part of the experiential learning. Without it, the SRA would only serve as a simulation. As one faculty member concluded, "...the agency was created because of a demand for the professional experience."

The participants created a professional culture based on their style of leadership (see Figure 4). While there were minor variations in style, overall, all five participants were committed to a transparent, authentic environment with clear expectations of behavior between students, faculty, and clients.

We have servant driven leadership - empathy, client service. I teach a lot about empathy. How can we give that to our colleagues in the classroom? How can we get that to our clients? How does creating an empathetic, learning environment improve outcomes? (University 3)

Attribute 4: Faculty Perseverance is an Absolute Requirement

This refers to the tenacity and grit exhibited by all five of the participants during the development of their respective SRA (see Figure 5). The establishment of an SRA is not an easy endeavor and besides a strong foundation of industry experience, the faculty member in charge must possess and weather the myriad of barriers and obstacles to building a sustainable SRA. It's

not easy and is not for the faint of heart. University 2 stated, “It was a complete experiment for me, I didn't know how it would go, it was my first time doing it.” All five participants grappled

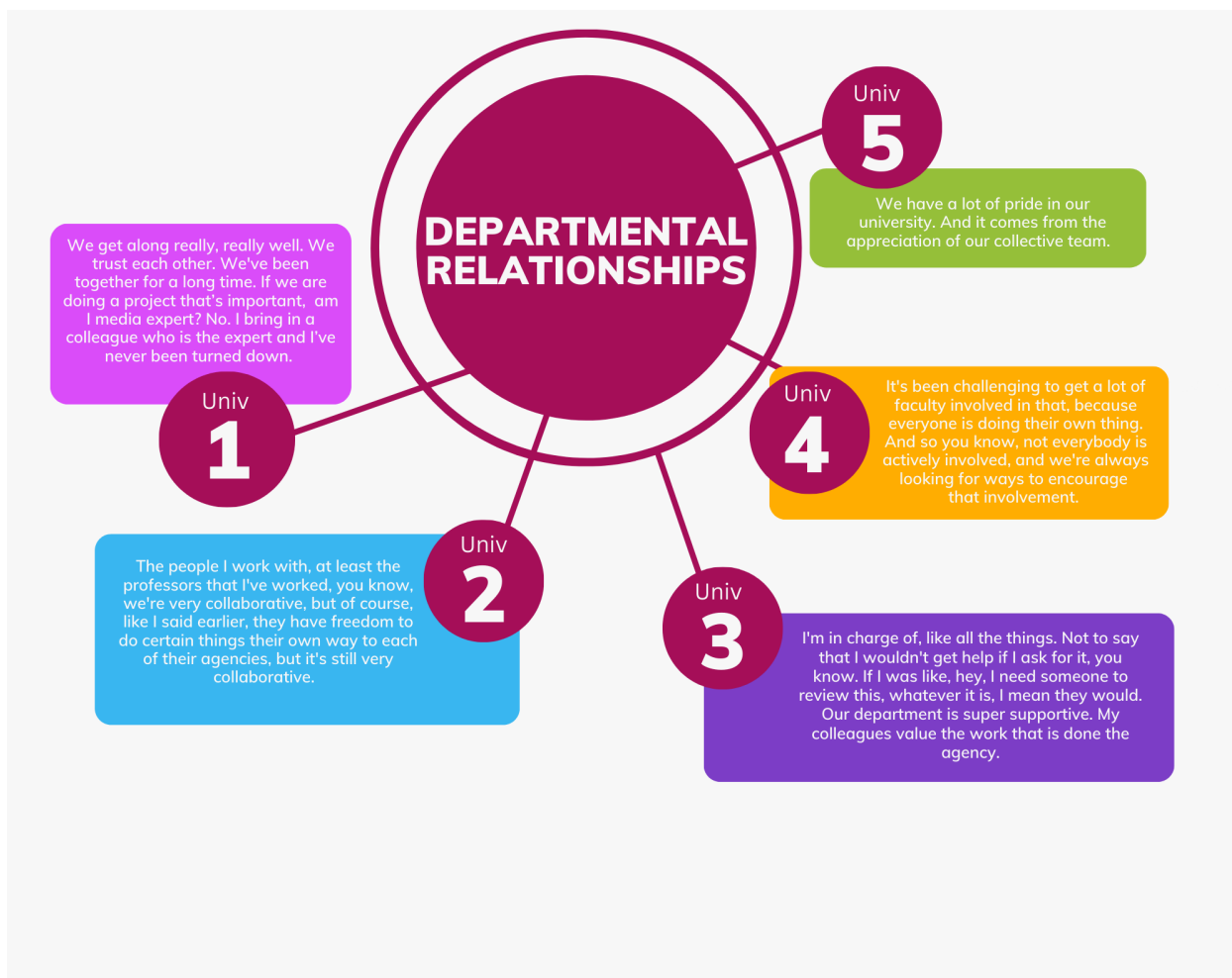


Figure 3

Participant Comments about Departmental Relationships

with issues ranging from the construction of the SRA as a separate, autonomous organization or part of the program curriculum. They faced university bureaucracy and had to adjust their expectations of streamlined decision making to the longer more laborious nature of institutional change in higher education.

Theme 2: Operational Processes

The second theme focuses on the organizational infrastructure, including the location of

the SRA and the processes that provide the construct for daily operations. Informal or formal guidelines for operating the agency must be intentionally defined and, more importantly, understood and executed by the student team. Without this framework, there is no sense of order or confidence of the SRA member in the organization.



Figure 4

Participant Comments about Professional Culture

Attribute 1: Physical Space

The need for a place to gather and create was reported as essential by all respondents. Even though the size/condition of the physical space may vary, it was key to have a dedicated

office space for the SRA students to conduct business. (See Figure 6.) However, in this study, all

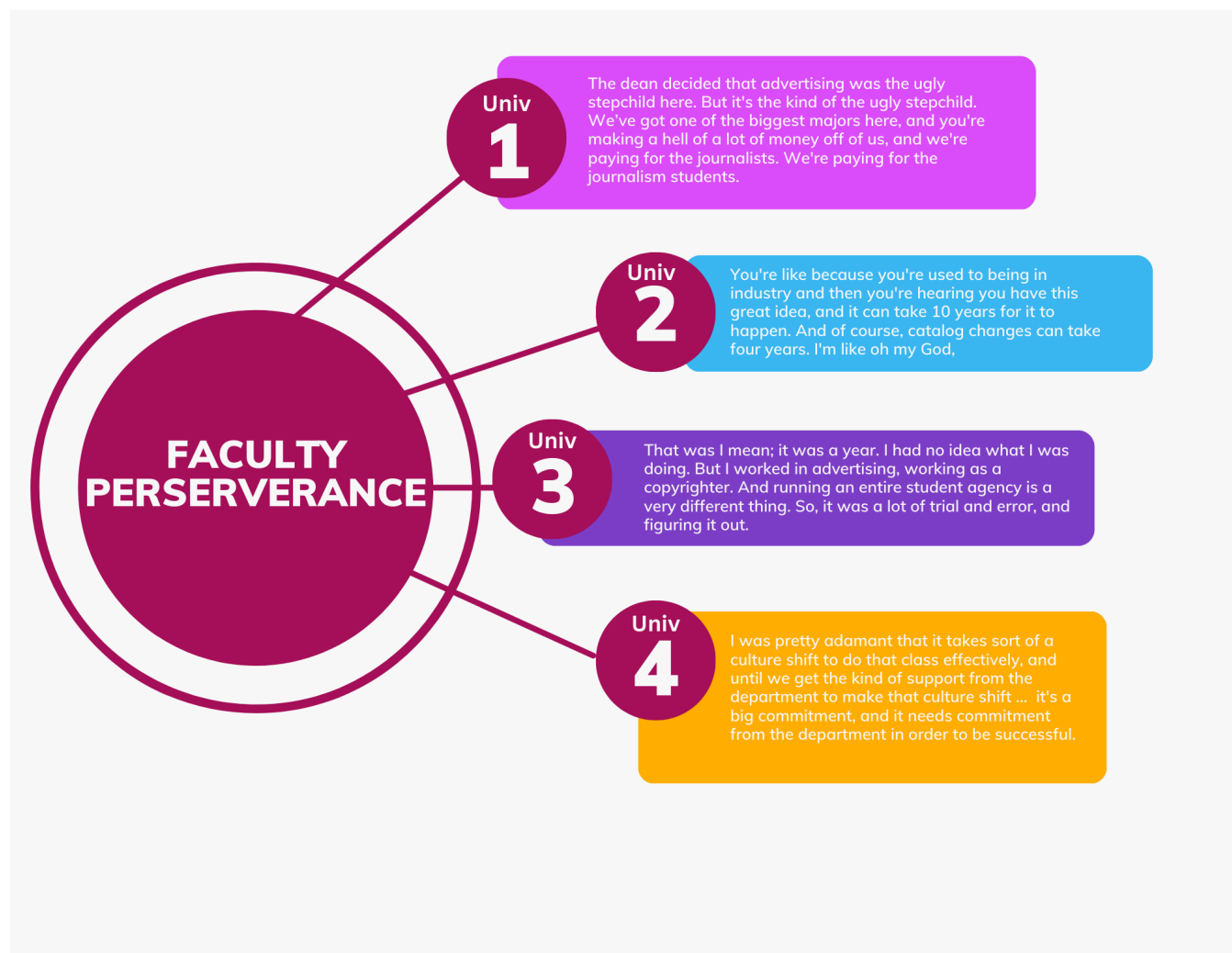


Figure 5

Participant Comments about Faculty Perseverance

five institutions were fortunate to have long-standing, generous financial support from multiple sources that afforded them the opportunity over time to develop a creative, inspiring facility. For instance, University 1 received a private donation of almost \$2 million one-time gift to build an office-like space for the advertising students to operate the agency.

Additionally, SRA offices were constructed/located in highly trafficked, public spaces. Consequently, as two participants observed, their office space was used as a student recruitment

tool – both for the program as well as the university. Yet, as one respondent stated, their highly visible space put a greater onus on them to deliver a better student experience:

If you build that, they will come. If you brag about it, you better deliver, right? It's a big, bright, shiny object that our student ambassadors stop by on tours to alumni, donors, parents and potential students. Here's the experimental learning that is going to prepare you for a career in marketing or communications, so it's bragged about at every turn. (University 4)

Attribute 2: Funding Sources

As was previously noted regarding physical space, all five faculty members reported funding as a critical part of their ability to provide students with a robust and rich experience. (see Figure 7a and 7b). The sources of funding varied by institution, but all reported a commitment to ensuring the agency or lab was as self-sustaining as possible in order to deliver an experience that closely aligned with industry. Profit was not the motive. The prime motivator was sustainability, quality of experience, and program outcomes. One respondent claimed, "...the goal is not to make money. The goal is just not to lose money" (University 4). This does not mean the SRAs do not make money, but the prime reason for billing clients or seeking donors was to enrich the student experience and provide more autonomy for the program. Indeed, one participant reported the university was more financially supportive because the program was a revenue generator: "Obviously, we're bringing in funding as well. So, they are very supportive" (University 2).

Attribute 3: Curriculum Alignment

All faculty members described their mission was to position the agency as the center stone of their curriculum (see Figure 8). For the faculty member from university 2, there is no line

between the agency and the classroom experience. She effectively evolved the SRA into a

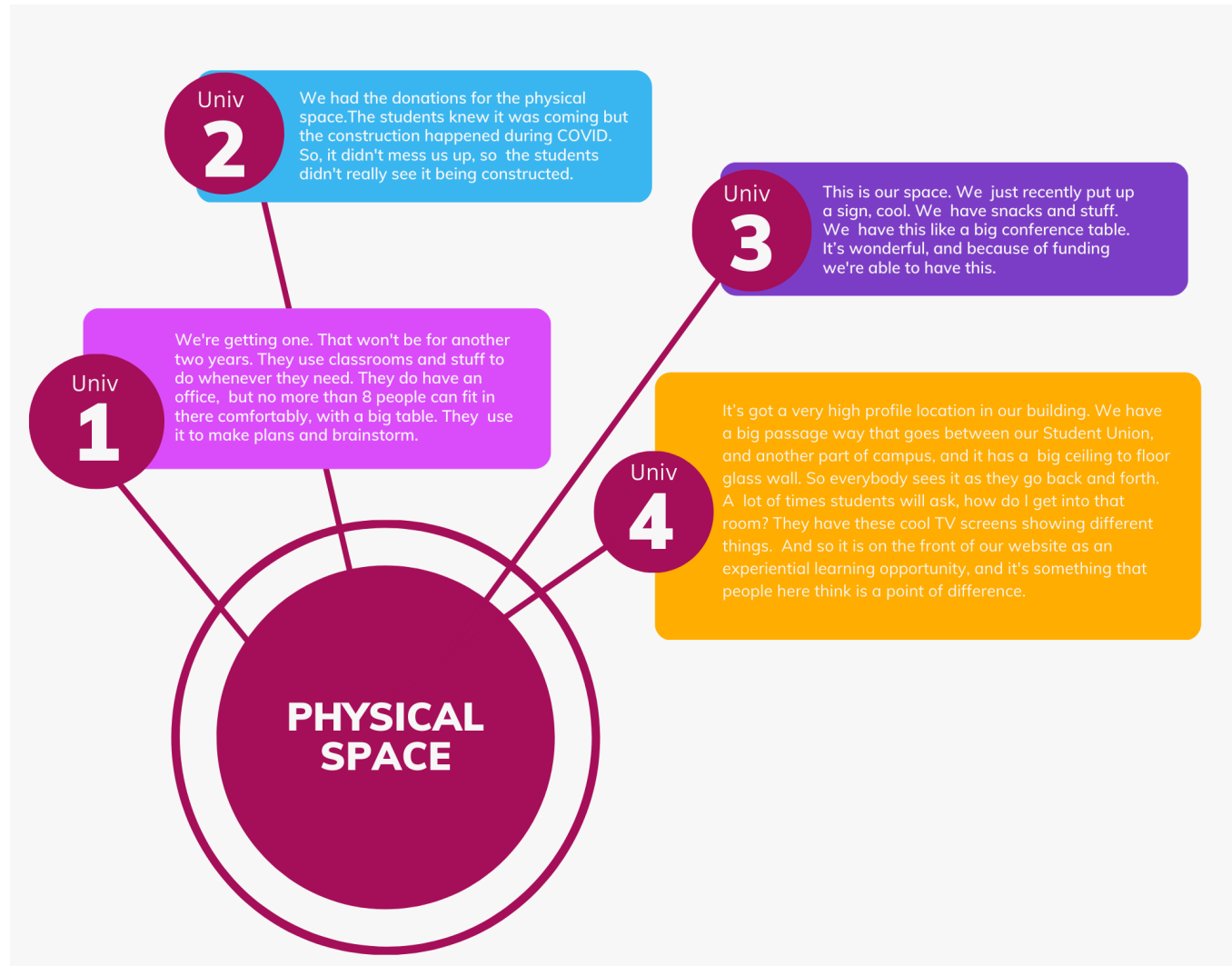


Figure 6

Participant Comments about Physical Space

new form of student learning where the classroom becomes the experiential opportunity by establishing multiple mini agencies as part of the curriculum for every student. This major change in the program was requested by a new department chairperson, who told a participant:

You know, before we're just in classrooms. And I want you to convince the faculty who teaches that we're all going to teach it the way you teach it and it's just going to be the experience we get in the lab. So, the agency experience is really woven

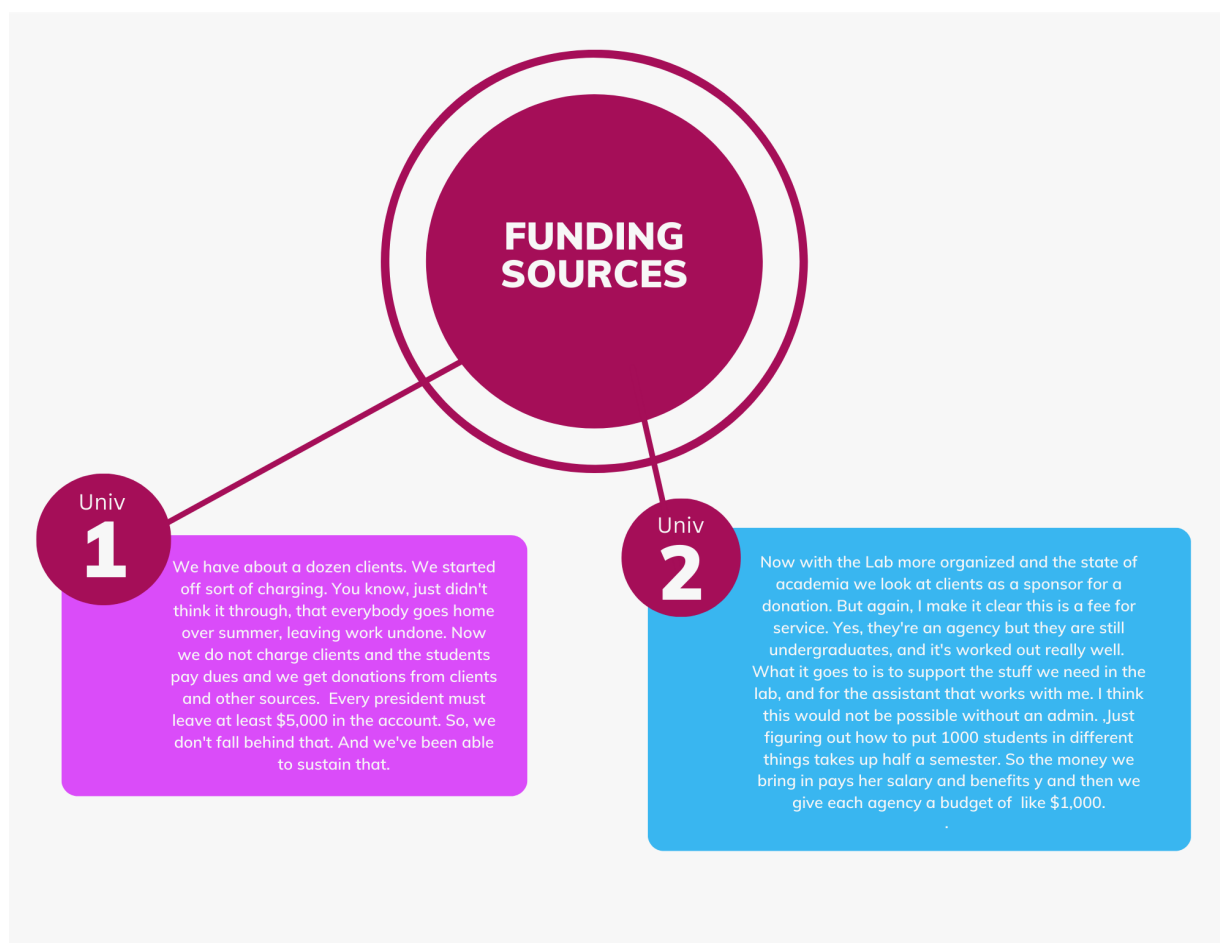


Figure 7a

Participant Comments about Funding Sources

into the academic experience. Everyone goes through this process. That's our degree plan. Students don't have a choice. If students want their degree, they go through the lab. (University 2)

However, not every institution will have the capacity to align agency practice into the curriculum. One such example is the issue of participation in the National Student Advertising Competition (NSAC). The annual competition requires an enormous amount of time, resources, and talent. Three of the faculty learned through experience that their SRA did not have the capacity or resources to service clients as well as simultaneously competing in the NSAC. Every institution created a solution that best fit their needs –

with none of the five participants choosing to participate in the NSAC, but rather

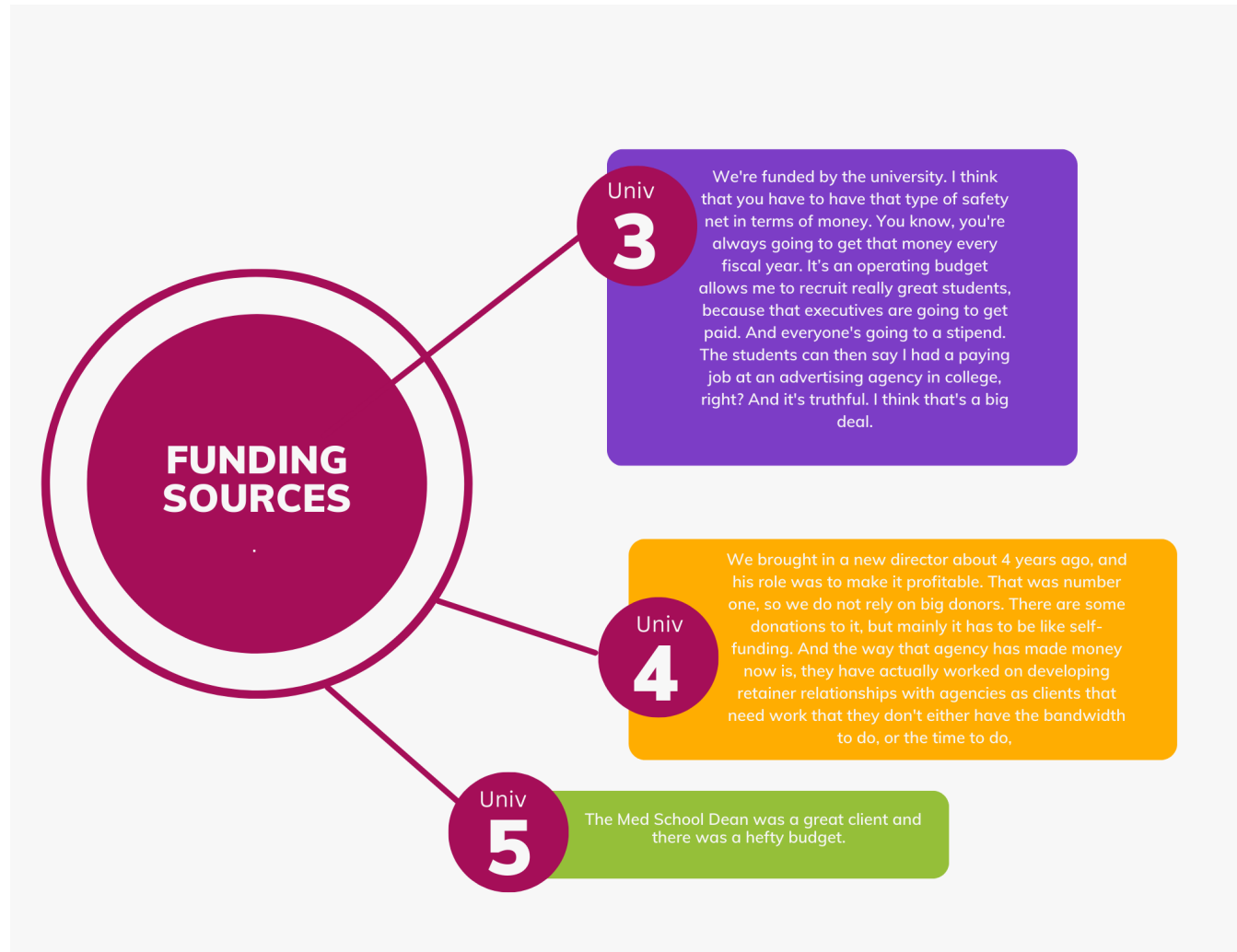


Figure 7b

Participant Comments about Funding Sources

focusing solely on the client work. One instructor shared that when a choice had to be made between the two, they chose the SRA: “We have a campaigns class, and that was where you would slot that (NSAC) in. But we don’t do it. Right now, the focus is on the agency” (University 4).

Theme 3: Student Involvement Requires Structure

This final theme that was identified was the need for a high level of student involvement,

which required leadership structure, accountability, and autonomy (see Figure 9). The five participants agreed that without sound student leadership there is no student involvement.

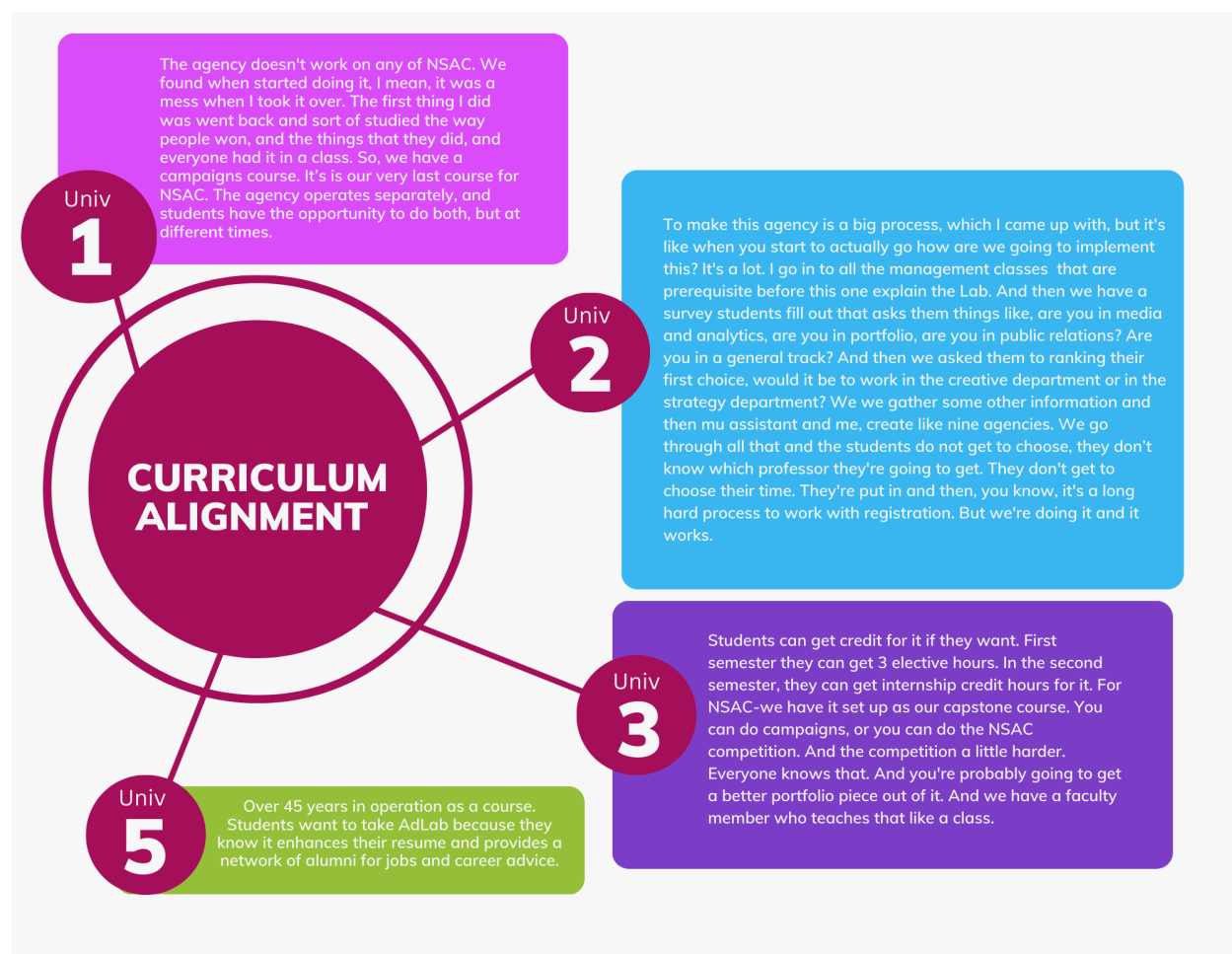


Figure 8

Participant Comments about Curriculum Alignment

Each participant reported they did not start with a formal guidebook for managing students, who are essentially acting as employees of the SRA. Unfortunately, all admitted it was a process of trial-and-error, failing, and pivoting until they found the optimum way for them to provide a process to solicit the level of student involvement necessary to run the SRA as a business. For example, one respondent shared how their experience with the NSAC project

helped create a formal structure for student involvement:

So, we didn't compete for quite a while because the professor who was passionate about that retired, and nobody wanted to take it. I finally gave in, but said I'm doing it my way, leave me alone! I decided to experiment with it. Instead of just getting 5 or 6 top students to be in it, I looked for one creative student, one media student, etc. Let me run this [the NSAC project] like an agency. Have [student] departments, have student leadership, and a VP, directors. ... It was the genesis for the agency. (University 2)

Attribute 1: Student Leadership Structure

A well-structured leadership team gives advertising students a platform and place to excel. All respondents reported that attracting highly motivated, ambitious students is not difficult. What was challenging was to provide those students with work that challenged them, while also motivating students who exhibited less commitment and were not as engaged in the process. Structure was of utmost importance and ranged from well-defined leadership roles to specific job descriptions for the student teams.

Key to their stability is they have a president, vice president, managing director head of strategy, head of creative, head of media, the head of Greenhouse, and then the pitch team. And so those are, you know, a lot of different officers. It's actually very funny because we run like a business and not a club at the university. You have to elect your president for a club. We said no, the agency president needs to be hired. And so, we threw away all of that and said we're going to run this as much like a business as we can. (University 1)

Beyond those elements, a formal transfer of knowledge from upper classman to the new students through a formal mentorship program proved a vital structure to ensure the longevity and sustainability of the SRA. As one professor noted, the students created a formal structure for mentoring new members of the SRA:

The students decided that freshmen and sophomores would go to something they called Greenhouse to teach them. It was brilliant, students teaching the young students. Here's how you develop a campaign. Here's how you present a campaign. We have juniors and seniors teaching freshmen or sophomores. It's fantastic. And I couldn't believe they came up with that. (University 1)

Attribute 2: Student Accountability

Those of us who have worked in academia may have an intimate relationship with the term “herding sheep,” where students come and go without regard for their colleagues, the work, or themselves. One of the keys to creating an SRA, which is necessary for the development of all elements of advertising from strategy to creative, is accountability (see Figure 10). Noting that not all students are born with a built-in accountability function, three respondents recognized the need to integrate the sense that work matters, and a student’s performance affects more than just his or her experience. Every respondent praised the intelligence and ambition of their student teams, and all had attempted to weave a culture of accountability into their organizations. One instructor realized that Gen Z (those students born between 1997 and 2012) required a different approach from generations past:

I worked really hard on creating a culture that Gen Z likes and wants to operate in. And so that's been, I think, a really pivotal thing – refining, understanding that, and always being really flexible ... and acknowledging that I don't know everything,

and I'm very open to change – open to different ideas. (University 3)

The idea of students' failing forward was embraced by one respondent, who said failing

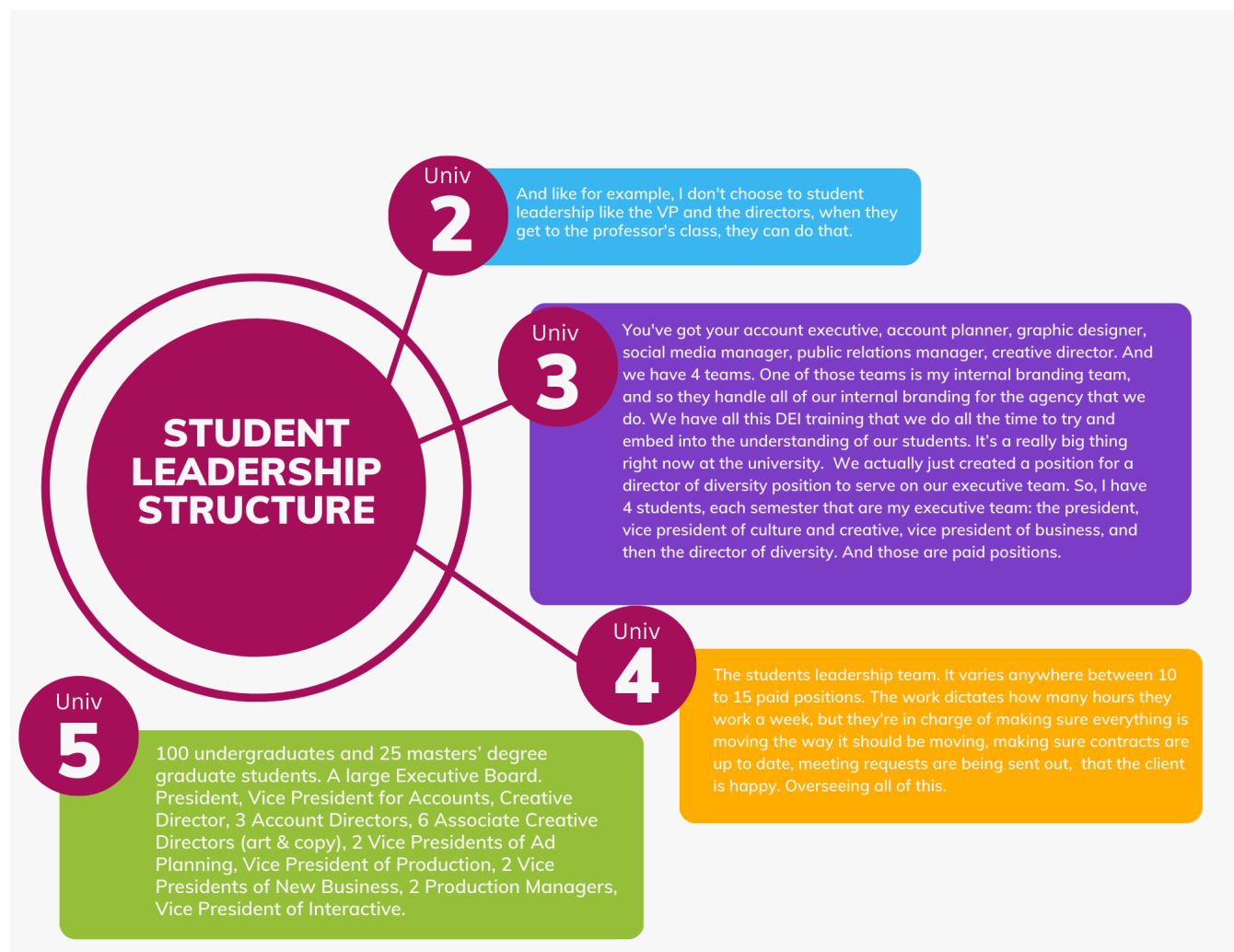


Figure 9

Participant Comments about Student Leadership Structure

makes the group stronger, especially when the faculty member models accountability when admitting their own failures.

Yeah, sometimes I get it wrong, you know. Sometimes I get it right, and sometimes

I get it wrong, and so each semester it's like you have a new group of employees.

And we have some that come back for a second semester, which I love. But a lot of

brand-new people. So, each semester is very different. I try to talk about a lot of my own failures, you know, I'm like I'm not going to give you a bad grade or be upset at you for failing or taking a risk. (University 3)

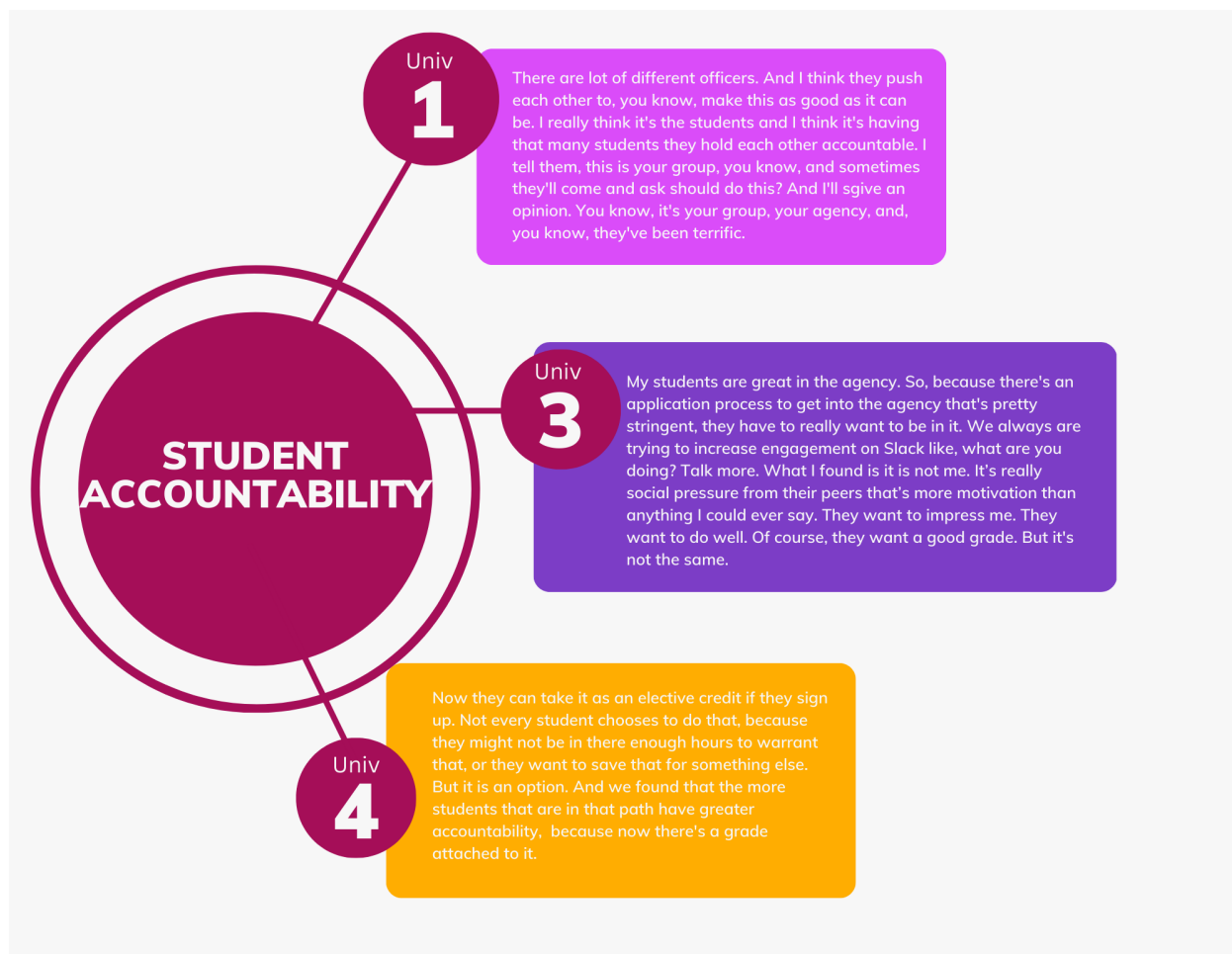


Figure 10

Participant Comments about Student Accountability

Attribute 3: Agency Autonomy

Without exception, all faculty members promoted a “hands-off approach” to running their agencies. Building a sustainable agency requires the students to commit and manage the operations (see Figure 11). The purpose of the agency is to fully engage students in the real-world experience of working at an agency, and “not being a member of a club.” It is critical that

the development of the agency integrates the autonomous nature of the organization into any processes, procedures or training. Likewise, the faculty are there to guide, opine, and spark ideas and solutions. An instructor defined their role as a “sherpa”:

The students have access to all the different touch points, and we’re there to help, guide and make sure that things are moving smoothly. But the students are the ones who do most of the day-to-day operations. (University 4)

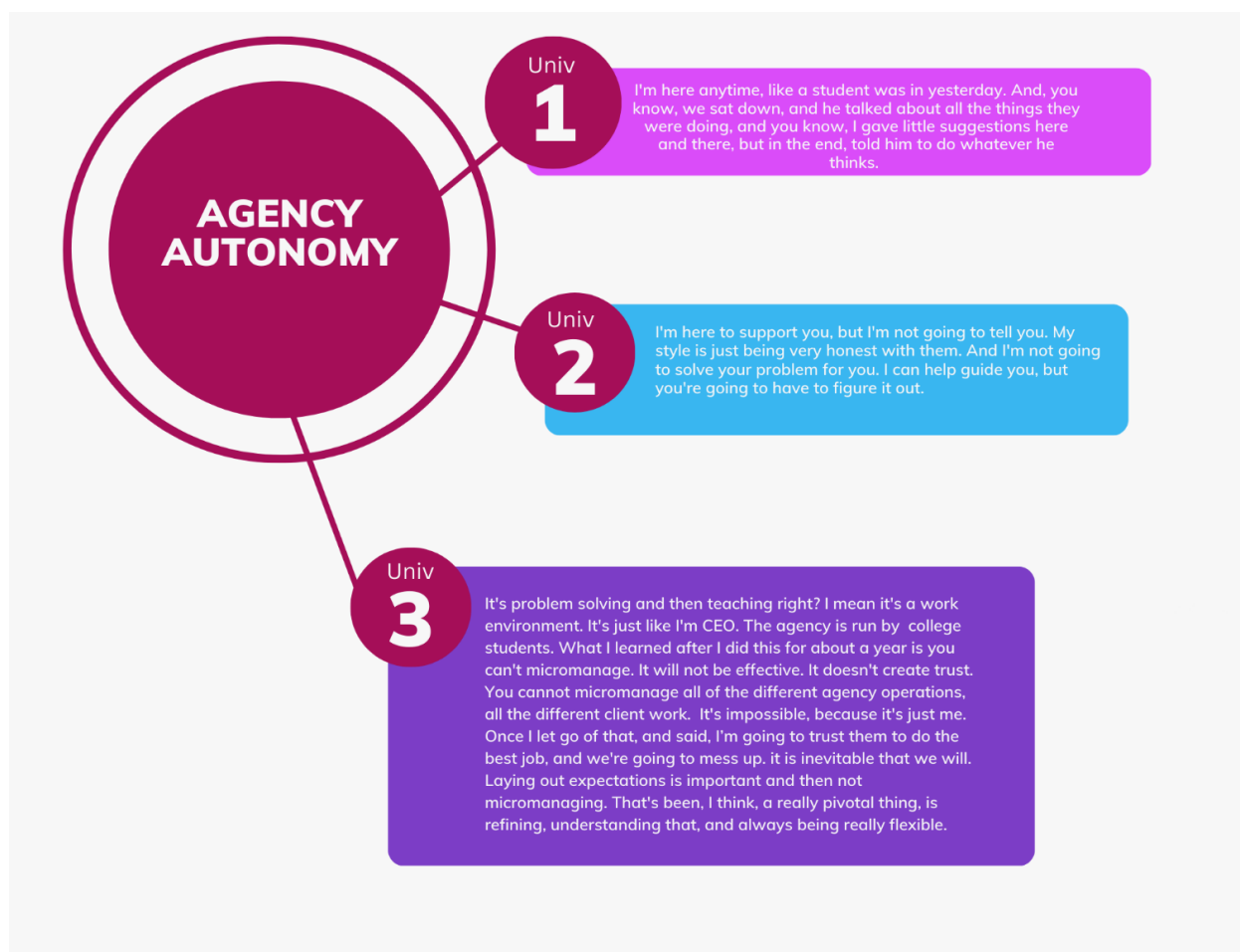


Figure 11

Participant Comments about Agency Autonomy

Conclusion

This chapter presents the results of an analysis and its connection with the research question. It was based on a qualitative approach, where themes and attributes were recognized and coded from the interview data. The attributes were selected as the common elements for developing a student-run agency based on the responses of 5 institutions that currently offer a well-founded, operational SRA opportunity to undergraduates. Each faculty member recounted similar experiences and solutions which were aligned to form the attributes that supported each theme. Chapter 5 presents the operational plan for establishing a student-run advertising agency at a higher education institution.

CHAPTER 5
CONCLUSIONS
“THE ROADMAP”

Introduction

This chapter presents a practical, detailed approach to developing a student-run ad agency (SRA) in a higher education institution. The intent of this study was to provide an executable plan to assist any university or college in establishing this type of experiential learning program. The purpose of the student-run agency is to provide students with professional experience and exposure by applying the skills and theory from the classroom to benefit local, regional, and national organizations and businesses as well as strengthen university-community relations.

Research Question

RQ1: What are the elements needed to create a sustainable, student-run advertising agency in a higher education environment?

This study uncovered common themes inherent to a sustainable and operational student-run advertising agencies. The key takeaways that were used to develop the following practical plan were:

- Faculty director should have industry experience and stay connected with industry professionals, drive collaboration with departmental colleagues, and create a professional agency culture within the higher education setting.
- Operations must be well-defined and include a physical space, funding strategy, and aligned with the program curriculum.
- Student involvement needs to be nurtured by developing a strong, hierarchical leadership structure; well defined job roles; a culture of individual accountability; and

agency autonomy.

The Student-Run Advertising Agency Roadmap

The SRA exists as a comprehensive, functioning advertising and marketing agency, which provides all aspects of agency services. It should be organized and structured as a business and include all the necessary policies and processes required for a successful for-profit entity, which requires a ‘roadmap.’ The SRA should be department agnostic, drawing students from across a wide swath of disciplines. These include, but are not limited to, advertising, marketing, management, English, psychology, sociology, information systems, art and design, public relations, industrial design, photography, computer science, radio-TV, cinema, and any other program that relates to the specific advertising needs of clients that engage with the SRA.

Mission

The mission of a student-run advertising agency is to provide students with professional experience where they can apply the skills and theories gained from the classroom learning. The SRA is a business responsible for client-focused work. It is open to all students; however, its main focus is to provide advertising students an experience that will ensure they enter the job market equipped with the necessary skills and a ‘portfolio of work.’ The following eight steps comprise the ‘roadmap’ to fulfilling this mission.

Step 1 - Faculty Director

The selection of the faculty director is perhaps the most pivotal decision when developing an SRA. The director is the “heart and soul” of the SRA because he or she will be responsible for not just the work output, but the organization’s culture, which must fit and nurture the needs of students by driving trust, confidence, risk-taking, failing forward, and transparency into the DNA of the SRA.

The SRA will have a permanent director, reporting directly to the dean of the college/school. The director should be a faculty member from the department where the SRA is located and teaches classes related to advertising. Further, the director should have significant professional experience in an advertising agency and/or in-house marketing services department working directly with clients. Lastly, creative experience is required, while business management experience, such as an MBA, is preferred.

In sum, the director is responsible for building a culture of mutual respect, individual accountability, and innovation. When students walk into the SRA, they leave behind academic life and enter a team-based professional environment where they will work on building campaigns for actual clients. The following are six of the typical duties that a faculty director can expect in this position:

- The director will oversee the planning and execution of the daily operations of the SRA, including, but not limited to, client service and development, staff management and training, planning, university and community outreach, fundraising, collaborative initiatives, website development, and other necessary functions. The director will provide leadership in developing the field of advertising and marketing for the SRA and the university in which it exists.
- The director should strive to create the SRA's autonomy by working toward a hands-off management style. Micromanaging does not reflect the industry standard and could stunt student development. The director should carve out a position for him or herself as an overseer, who provides guidance and opinions, but not decisions. The director should also encourage risk taking and not punish failures, but rather focus on the reaction to the failure. This ensures students do not become risk averse and

- strengthens their resilience and grit in order to learn from the experience and move on to the next challenge.
- The director will ensure the SRA’s projects align with the interests of the faculty and students across the college.
 - The director will interact with the university as follows:
 - build and maintain client relationships with other colleges and programs within the university, as well as with community, civic and business organizations in order to further the work of the SRA,
 - seek and respond to interdisciplinary opportunities within the university, focusing on projects that require expertise from multiple departments to provide students with industry experience which requires collaboration and innovation.
 - The director will have the authority and responsibility to approve all projects and events developed by the SRA.

Step 2 - Physical Space and Resources

A physical space should be dedicated to the operation of the agency. The purpose is twofold: (1) to provide students with a professional environment with the necessary tools and technology for creative development, and (2) to serve as a point of pride to drive enrollment and recruitment of new students to the college. Factors to consider when developing and structuring the SRA environment are:

- Windows for optimum visual access
- 1 or 2 large conference tables
- Creative “pit” [lounge] with couches and comfortable chairs

- SRA brand signage
- Displays of SRA work output
- White boards/wall chalkboards for ideation
- Food and beverage area, including refrigerator, coffee maker, microwave and cabinets for storage.

In addition, these resources should be made available:

- Technology hardware assets: Apple desktops and laptops, color printers, TV/video screens, sound system, digital cameras for video production
- Technology software assets: Adobe Creative Suite, Adobe Stock Photo subscription, Hootsuite social media management, Microsoft Office, Slack team project management tool

Step 3 - Financial Management

A financial plan should be ‘mapped out’ prior to engaging with clients. While external support and fundraising efforts should not be rejected, the SRA should strive to be self-sustaining. The SRA should invoice for all work, based on a project scope of work that outlines expectations from the SRA and the client with a mutually agreed upon fee. The fee structure can be based on the specific university’s requirements and rules. The main sources of funding to consider are:

- Client retainer: This consists of a monthly or semester-based fee, which the SRA will invoice with payment terms.
- Project-based fees: Payment is based on a pay for performance model, where the SRA bills one project at a time based on the approved scope of work estimate.
- Client donation per project: Projects are not billed or invoiced, but at the completion

of the work the client makes a donation to the SRA for an amount they deem appropriate.

- University support: University provides the SRA an annual payment to cover operating expenses. This provides a financial “safety net” for the agency.

Step 4 - Staffing Requirements

At least two current faculty members, selected by the dean in consultation with the director of the SRA, should be enlisted as advisors to the SRA, based on their areas of expertise. These faculty should have experience in operations of an ad agency or in-house marketing department. A degree in business or communications is also preferred. They could be full-time non-tenure track faculty or professors of practice, who currently teach full time and be compensated through a work-load reduction and/or stipend.

Step 5 - Students’ Roles and Involvement

Students comprise the body of the organization that provides the services. Students may hold more than one position and work on multiple teams. Therefore, it is essential to provide well-defined job roles in order to build industry-aligned account teams, while also enabling increased accountability of the individual students (see Figure 12). These roles should be flexible and be modified at the director’s discretion. Students are required to submit a professional resume for the position and will go through a formal interview process. The director is responsible for all final hiring decisions.

The positions below should be considered when developing the SRA job functions. They represent the different disciplines required to operate an ad agency. While not every position may be applicable to every SRA, it provides a comprehensive list to base the specific SRA's staffing plan. A detailed job description should provide required knowledge, skills, abilities and

other attributes required for each job. These positions include the following:

- President
- Vice President
- Finance Manager
- Traffic Manager
- Creative Director
- Account Director
- Copywriter(s)
- Art Director(s)
- Graphic Designer(s)
- Account Executive(s)
- Account Planner(s)/Strategist(s)
- New Business Development Coordinator
- Media Planner
- Social Media Manager(s)
- Web Developer
- Web Designer
- Photographer(s)
- Videographer(s)

SRAs should consider offering student employees some form of compensation, including but not limited to a salary or stipend. The executive board (leadership team) – which often includes the SRA president, vice president, creative director, and account director – typically receives a salary. It serves as a financial incentive and offers students a legitimate employment

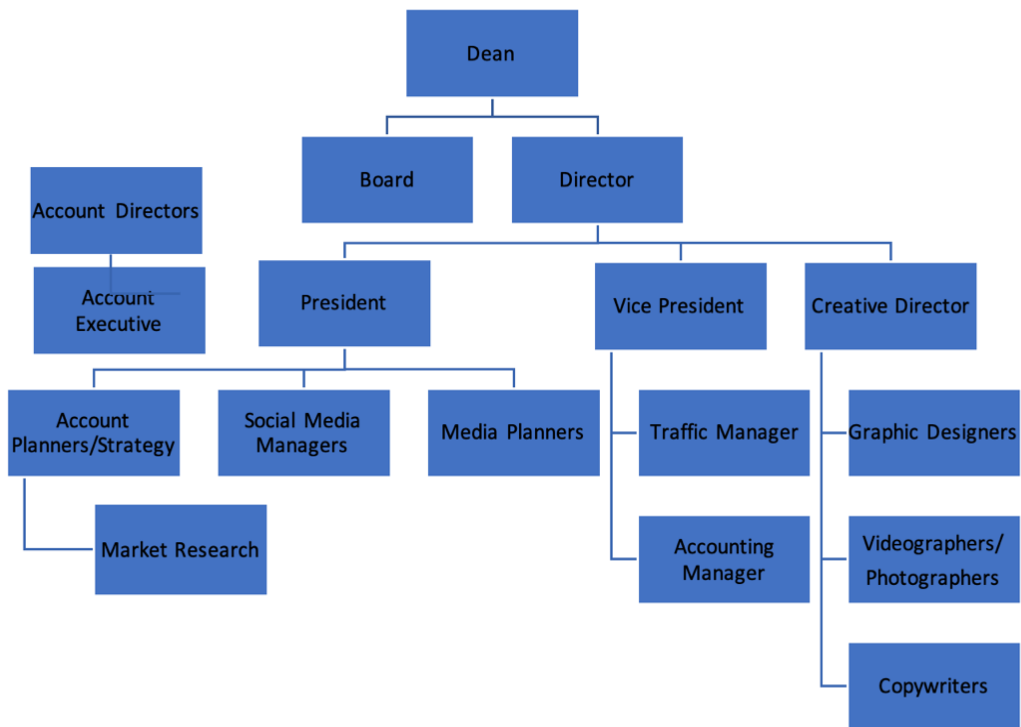


Figure 12

Sample SRA Organizational Chart

experience to list on their resumes. While some SRAs may choose not to pay the students, it is critical that some type of incentive system be in place.

A final component of student employment is the review of individual student progress. The primary purpose is to support the learning process and to also build a strong sense of accountability. The director should conduct such review at least once a semester. See Figure 13 below for a sample progress review form.

Step 6 - SRA Advisory Committee

Best practice would strongly encourage each SRA to establish an advisory board consisting of faculty/alumni/industry representatives. The board's primary roles include engaging with the students of the SRA, reviewing their work, providing guidance, and establishing agency goals with the director. The board will be a working committee and may be

convened in-person or virtually on a quarterly basis or anytime at the director’s discretion. At the

PROGRESS REVIEW

Progress reviews will be performed once a semester.

A progress review is not to be used as a salary compensation discussion. The progress review is a joint communication and analysis, not a one-sided critique.

The review is an open agenda, comfortable discussion between the parties in a relaxed atmosphere. It will result in: a statement of expected results; recognition of good work; suggestions for improvement (both parties); agreement on new priorities, assistance and improvements necessary; clarification of responsibilities and authorities; verification or correction of rumors; clarification of personal and team mission; personal and team goal setting; definition of self-development, education and training needs. The results of the review should be a mutually beneficial plan to improve personal and team productivity.

Knowledge is power. With this in mind, please feel free to schedule a review as needed. Allow two weeks notice and two to three hours for the discussion. Have a plan together on when, where and what you want to communicate in order to make it a successful review.

Thank you

Employee: _____
Status: _____
Semester: _____ Date: _____

1. Areas of Success: _____

2. Areas to Build On: _____

3. Special Objectives: _____

4. Assistance Needed: _____
From Whom: _____
How: _____

5. Suggestions | Processes: _____

Completed by: _____ Accepted by: _____

Figure 13

Student Progress Review Form

director's discretion, the board may recruit members directly or issue a call for nominations. Prospective board members may be self-nominated or nominated by the director or members of the board. Board members should not be tenured academics, but rather should have creative or practical interest and/or expertise in some area of advertising, design, media production, marketing, or business.

Step 7 - Operations

The operational structure of the SRA represents the minimum operational elements necessary for sustainable workflow. Such policies/practices range from client recruitment, client services, and student employee management, and would minimally include the following business processes:

- New business development: each SRA must establish its own list of accounts. Its initial decision is whether the SRA will solicit work from the local, regional or national market, which is primarily driven by the SRA's urban or rural setting. Specifically, those SRAs located in major metropolitan areas have a large population of businesses to choose from, while SRAs in more remote or rural areas need to consider a mix of small business accounts while also securing larger regional or national accounts in order to provide the students with a more realistic and challenging project. The director and the SRA president should be responsible for attracting clients. In smaller markets, it is essential for the SRA to understand their local business environment and the state of their relationship with local ad agencies. The SRA must be extremely cautious not to be perceived as competing against local agencies, especially in smaller markets where new business opportunities are not as robust.

Once the client is secured, the next phase of the operation focuses on servicing the needs of the client.

- Client marketing communications questionnaire provided to the client to capture their campaign needs and expectations (see Appendix E).
- Client proposal or scope of work, consisting of goals and objectives, specific tactics, expectations, timeline, and a cost estimate.
- New project request form to use for the internal account team for management of expectations, deadlines, and budget. This form is created after the client approves the scope of work (see Appendix E).
- Client billing/invoices, as defined by the funding source, prepared on a monthly basis.

Finally, the SRA must adopt formal policies regarding the human resources function, primarily those focused on securing and managing the student employees:

- Application and interview process will be executed for each student role.
- Job descriptions for each student role should consist of the knowledge, skills, abilities, and other attributes needed to perform that function.
- Staff orientation and mentoring, including a new student training shadow program to allow the current SRA students to teach the new students both the formal and cultural requirements of working at the agency.
- Time tracking/billable hours serve as a lesson for how agencies sell their services.

While the tracked time may not affect the project fees, it serves as an industry experience that entry level advertising professionals must understand (see Appendix E).

- Approval and reporting hierarchies, including a well-defined leadership structure, will

help empower the students and give them the ability to manage the SRA team.

Step 8 - SRA brand development

Once these structures are established, the faculty director and student team should undertake the creative process to develop a strong brand identity for the SRA in order to promote and advertise its services.

The brand should reflect the personality, tone, and culture the team wants the SRA to represent. Just as the SRA provides these types of services for clients, it must do the same for self-promotion. While the director should guide the development, it must reflect the vision and voice of the students. The brand should embody traits that appeal to multiple stakeholders, including present students, future students, the advertising industry, and potential clients. The brand will evolve as the SRA grows, but it is essential to have the following elements produced when launching the SRA:

- Visual identity: logo and branding guidelines
- Key messages: tagline
- Website: minimally one page and it must present the brand and contact information
- Social media executions: the most impactful and efficient vehicles for self-promotion should include Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, LinkedIn, TikTok, Twitter
- Physical signage at office location
- Branded promotional items, for example t-shirts, hats, cell phone pocket wallets
- University press release issued to announce the launch of the SRA to send to external media and internal university communication vehicles.

Conclusion

The choice of faculty director is the most important decision when developing the SRA. Their experience and leadership provide the “muscle” needed to build the agency. The steps described above are needed to deliver a student opportunity that will propel them into industry with the confidence that comes from having real world experience, a portfolio of client work to supplement coursework, and professional relationships. By following this roadmap to building a SRA, the advertising industry will be assured an abundance of smart, creative minds to fuel the future. Secondly, the data validated the operations of SRA developed and managed by the researcher. This validation serves to motivate and drive this researcher to continue the growth of the SRA, as a training ground for emerging advertising professionals.

Implications for the Profession

- Faculty advisor is a professional and educator hybrid
- Support of upper administration, while may be difficult to secure, fuels SRA growth
- Collaboration with departmental colleagues requires finding common ground between theory and practice
- Define funding sources prior to launch of SRA
- Allow students to fail, in order to learn accountability

Recommendations for Future Study

- Determine the best path for succession planning to enable long-term sustainability.
- Explore the differences of SRA student work between private and public institutions.
- Define optimum number of students to client ratio for an SRA
- Solicit the experiences of SRA clients

A final thought, in advertising, we develop creative executions of key messages derived from strategy. If the findings of this study were distilled into one advertisement that

communicated what is required for the development of an agency experiential opportunity, it would look like the ad in Figure 14. Now it is time for you to create your own design.



If you build it will they come?

It all starts with a strong foundation.
Now pick up that hammer & make a difference.

Student Run Ad Agency Punch List

- Forward thinking faculty**
- Crazy colloabration**
- Money, money, money**
- Cool space & stuff**
- Trust in the kids**
- Defined structures**
- Can do Culture**
- ...and lots of Clients**

Visit www.sraroadmaps.com

Figure 14

Advertisement: What it takes to build an SRA

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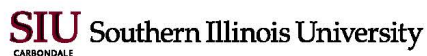
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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Interview Questions

1. Please describe your educational and professional background.
2. How many years have you served as the faculty advisor for the student run ad agency and how would you summarize the experience so far?
3. What school or department is the advertising program part of, and do you feel it is a good fit? Why or why not?
4. How many students participate each semester, and can you explain why or why not this is an optimum number?
5. Do you have a leadership team? Are they paid? Please describe the leadership structure.
6. How do you find clients to work with? Please explain your new business development process.
7. What do you spend most of your time doing as faculty advisor?
8. What is the one resource or attribute that is essential to the AdLab's stability? Why?
9. What do you think are the primary reasons for the sustainability of your SRA?
10. What, if any, operational processes do you have in place? Please describe each one.
11. Please describe the group's physical space, including details such as technology, furniture, location, and any other elements you think are notable.
12. Please describe one of your SRA's most successful projects, including why you think it succeeded.
13. How would you portray the organization's relationship with upper administration?
14. How would you characterize your relationship with your departmental colleagues?
15. How would you describe the culture of your student run ad agency?
16. Is there anything you would like to add that I haven't covered?

APPENDIX B**IRB Approval Form**

INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD
OFFICE OF RESEARCH COMPLIANCE
WOODY HALL - MAIL CODE 4344
900 SOUTH NORMAL AVENUE
CARBONDALE, ILLINOIS 62901

siuhsc@siu.edu
618/453-4534
FAX 618/453-4573

To: Bridget Lescelius
From: M. Daniel Becque
Chair, Institutional Review Board

Date: February 13, 2023

Title: *Road Map for Development of a College Student-Run AdLab*

Protocol Number: 23031

The SIUC Institutional Review Board has approved the above-referenced study. The study is determined to be exempt according to 45 CFR 46.104. This approval does not have an expiration date. However, this approval is valid only for as long as you are a student or employee of SIUC. Additionally, any future modifications to your protocol must be submitted to the IRB for review and approval before implementation.

The IRB requests updates on exempted studies every three years. Failure to file a project update report may lead to the premature closure of your protocol.

When your study is complete, please fill out and return a study close-out form. A study is considered complete when you are no longer enrolling new participants, collecting or analyzing data.

Best wishes for a successful study.

This institution has an Assurance on file with the USDHHS Office of Human Research Protection. The Assurance number is FWA00005334.

MDB:eb

cc: Brad Colwell

APPENDIX C

Participant Invitation Email

Good morning,

My name is Bridget Lescelius, and I am a doctoral student at the School of Education at Southern Illinois University in Carbondale, Illinois. I am working on a capstone project that focuses on how to best develop a college student-run advertising agency.

You are invited to participate in a recorded 30-minute interview via Zoom. This participation is completely voluntary and there is not penalty for not participating or withdrawing.

There will be no future e-mails or an opt-out messages. If you do not respond to this survey or return the opt-out message, you will be contacted again with this request one time during the next two weeks. The minimum age for participation is 18 years.

Participants should be a current faculty advisor of a university student-run advertising agency or AdLab, and also affiliated with the American Advertising Federation.

If you have any questions about this study please contact Bridget Lescelius, 6024925780 or blescelius@siu.edu. Or Brad Colwell, J.D Ph.D., 618.536-4434, bcolwell@siu.edu

Please respond directly to this email if you agree to be interviewed for this study. Upon receipt of your email, you will be contacted to set up a time for a recorded 30-minute Zoom meeting.

Thank you for your attention. I look forward to hearing from you,

Bridget Lescelius

APPENDIX D

Consent Form

My name is Bridget Lescelius, and I am a doctoral student at the School of Education at Southern Illinois University in Carbondale, Illinois. I am working on a capstone project that focuses on how to best develop a college student-run advertising agency.

As part of this project, I am interviewing Faculty Advisors for student-run ad agencies at U.S. universities. The interview will take place via Zoom and will last no more than 30 minutes. Participation in this study is voluntary, with no penalty for withdrawing or not participating. If at any time you wish to withdraw, please send me an email at blescelius@siu.edu and you will be removed from the study.

Responses and records will be confidential. Your name and university will not be identified in this project. You will be identified as University 1, 2, 3 etc. A document that matches the number with identifying information and the data will be kept in separate and secure locations and will be destroyed after completion of the study. The researcher will be the only entity with access. We will take all reasonable steps to protect your identity. Interview questions may be skipped if the participant so chooses.

The minimum age for participation is 18. There are no foreseeable risks or discomforts to you as a participant of this study. Your participation benefits the field of advertising because of your expertise in managing a student-run AdLab and will enable more universities to establish this type of experiential learning.

If you have any questions about this study please contact Bridget Lescelius, 6024925780 or blescelius@siu.edu. Or Brad Colwell, J.D Ph.D., 618.536-4434, bcolwell@siu.edu

This project has been reviewed and approved by the SIUC Institutional Review Board. Questions concerning your rights as a participant in this research may be addressed to the Institutional Review Board Chair, Office of Research Compliance, Southern Illinois University, Carbondale, IL 62901-4709. Phone (618) 453-4534. E-mail siuhsc@siu.edu

The interview will be recorded via Zoom. It is up to each participant if they want to turn on their camera. If they do not want to identify themselves with their name, they can use “participant”. Participants should not use the names of nonparticipant to protect their privacy. If a participant does not want to be recorded, the researcher will not record the session but will take in-depth notes of all participant responses. These recordings and notes will be destroyed following the completion of this study.

Please check the appropriate box below and sign.

I agree ___ I disagree ___ to participate in this activity and know that my responses will be audio/video recorded.

I agree ___ I disagree ___ that Bridget Lescelius may directly quote me using a pseudonym in their paper.

I have read the material above, and any questions I asked have been answered to my satisfaction. I understand a copy of this form will be made available to me for the relevant information and phone numbers. I realize that I may withdraw without prejudice at any time.

Name and Signature:

APPENDIX E

SRA Operational Forms

MARKETING | COMMUNICATIONS QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Please provide a brief description of your company, including general corporate and industry descriptions:

2. Please list three words that describe your company:

3. How do you find clients now?

Website Advertising Direct Mail Newsletters Word of mouth Social Media Sales
 Other _____

4. Who are your competitors?

5. What is your company known for?

6. Describe your target audience (age, profession, etc.):

7. List three goals the marketing materials should communicate, in content and visual context:

8. Please list any campaigns in the market today that you think are effective:

9. What is the best thing about your existing materials?

10. The worst?

11. Are there any specific websites you like and why? (List & explain.)



12. What primary benefits will the users get from your social media pages or websites? (List in order of importance.)

- a. _____
- b. _____
- c. _____

13. What top three messages does the your brand need to convey to your customers/potential clients? (List in order of importance.)

- a. _____
- b. _____
- c. _____

14. What are your short-term marketing goals?

15. What are your long-term marketing goals?

16. Describe specific marketing needs in order of priority:

NEW JOB REQUEST FORM

Project: _____

Client: _____ Division: _____

Type: Print | Digital Video Social Media Web Design Logo Graphics Other

Contact Name: _____ Title: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

E-mail: _____ Phone: _____ Fax: _____

Lead SRA Account Executive: _____

Date Opened: _____ First Looks Due: _____ Total Looks: _____

Files Due to Printer: _____ Completed Job Due to Client: _____

Estimate Needed Yes No Estimate Due to Client: _____

ESTIMATED HOURS

Concept | Design: _____ Production: _____

Copy | Proofing _____ Photography: _____

Mailing & Fulfillment: _____ Printing: _____

Shipping: _____ Postage: _____

Miscellaneous Costs: _____

PRINT SPECS - If needed

Flat Size: _____ Finished Sizes: _____

Paper: _____ Ink, Bleed, and Varnish: _____

Binding Options: _____ Quantity: _____

Desired Printers: _____ Special Instructions: _____

TO BE FILLED IN AFTER FORM IS HANDED IN

Received: _____ Job Number: _____

Designer(s): _____

TIME SHEET

NAME: _____ DATE: _____

Job #	Client	Project	Description	Start Time	Finish Time	Total Hours *

***SPECIFY TYPE OF HOURS**
D=Design | P=Production | CW=Copywriting | PR=Programming | PH=Photography | PF=Proofreading | SM=Social Media | PRO=Proposals | SW=Scope of Work | V=Video | Or Other

VITA

Graduate School
Southern Illinois University

Bridget Lescelius

bridget@groupeclover.com

Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University
MBA, 1996

Boston University
M.S. Public Relations, 1985

Southern Illinois University
B.S. Radio-TV, 1983

Special Honors and Awards:

2015	Telly Award
2014	MIT's Alfred P. Sloan Workplace Flexibility Award
2011	<i>AZ Business Magazine</i> Who's Who in Business Top Ten Women in Marketing and Graphic Design firms.
2008	MIT's Alfred P. Sloan Workplace Flexibility Award
2001-04	Avnet, Inc. Marketing and Advertising Competition (MAC) Awards
2005	Davey Awards
2005	American Advertising Federation, Gold Addy Award, Phoenix Ad Club
2005	<i>AZ Business Magazine</i> #10 Ranked Graphic Design Firm
2005	<i>Electronic Business Magazine</i> Advertisement Excellence Award
2006	<i>AZ Business Magazine</i> #1 ranked Mid-Size Advertising Agency
2006	Spectrum Awards, American Marketing Association Phoenix
2005	Placed #1 in <i>Ranking AZ</i> Advertising Agency
2005-15	Listed on the <i>Phoenix Business Journal</i> Book of Lists, Top 25 Advertising Agency
2003	Placed #1 in <i>Ranking AZ</i> Advertising Agency
2001	AZSoft.net's Innovation Awards: Start-Up of the Year

Capstone Project Title:

Roadmap for a College Student-Run Ad Agency

Major Professor: Dr. Brad Colwell