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Embedded Neoliberalism within Faculty Behaviors¹

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INTRODUCTION

A number of scholars both in the U.S. and internationally (Dudley, 1998; Levin, 2007a; Levin, 2007b; Levin, Shaker, & Wagoner, 2011; Puiggros, 1999; Pusser, Kempner, Marginson, & Ordorika, 2011; Torres & Schugurensky, 2002) explain the effects of neoliberalism on higher educational institutions. Saunders (2010) claims that “throughout the past four decades, the

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economics, structure, and purpose of higher education, as well as the priorities and identities of faculty and students, have been altered to better align with neoliberal practices and ideology” (p. 42). However, there is inadequate evidence, with few exceptions, that faculty behaviors reflect neoliberal ideology, although some would contend that Slaughter and Leslie (1997) captured numerous behaviors at least for research universities, specifically disciplines and fields associated with the economic marketplace. Their work addressed full-time faculty at research universities. Yet, few have followed Slaughter and Leslie in identifying faculty behaviors, specifically, along these lines, and fewer still have addressed behaviors and actions of faculty at universities and colleges that are not research intensive or research oriented.

While Slaughter and Leslie (1997) did not use the term “neoliberal” but rather “academic capitalism” to characterize faculty behaviors, and Slaughter and Rhoades (2004) chose to add “regime” to signify inclusion of administrators and indeed policy makers, others have employed “neoliberal” to encompass “academic capitalism” and to conflate faculty behaviors with ideology (Pusser et al., 2011). The question is not whether “academic capitalism” is part of a neoliberal ideology or reflects or advances neoliberalism but rather whether faculty views and actions constitute neoliberal principles, and if so, to what extent? There are numerous claims that neoliberal ideology has not only commandeered the agenda and actions of universities and colleges (Pusser et al., 2011) but also become identified with the work of academic professionals (Seddon, Ozga, & Levin, 2013). Yet, there is little empirical evidence gleaned from observations or from the specific views of faculty, or empirical studies, to show that neoliberal principles have infiltrated the behaviors of faculty, and indeed shaped their professional work.

We suggest that this evidence may not be that obvious: that faculty are not necessarily either apologists for or proselytizers of neoliberalism. Rather, neoliberalism and neoliberal initiatives may instead be tied to faculty behaviors in a more subtle and covert way. As well, neoliberal principles may be more evident in higher education faculty behaviors that are either a result of responsiveness to markets (Crouch, 2011) and the associated behaviors of faculty in universities and colleges or conform to market behaviors related to the production and sales of goods and services (Marginson, 2007). Through analysis of collected interview data on full-time faculty at a California community college (CACC), a California State University (CSU), and a University of California (UC), we try to determine if, and the ways in which, neoliberalism is reflected in faculty behaviors.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Neoliberalism and higher education institutions

Scholars offer a variety of interpretations of neoliberalism. Some refer to neoliberalism as an ideology (Ball, 2012; Crouch, 2011; Fourcade & Healy, 2007; Puiggros, 1999; Quiggin, 2010); others treat it as a socio-economic theory (Giroux, 2004; Harvey, 2005; Saunders, 2007). Neoliberalism is also viewed as a form of “governmentality” (Foucault, Burchell, Gordon, & Miller, 1991; Mitchell, 2006; Olssen, 2006; Peters, 2009). Neoliberalism, as an ideology, is based on a belief of free market capitalism and individual rights, and associated with several behaviors: on the individual level, for example, individuals operate for personal gain; on the nation-state level, nations adopt free market and free trade practices (Olssen & Peters, 2005). The assumption in neoliberalism is that self-interested individuals are rational individuals who make optimal choices that meet their needs or interests and that a market free from government is the “best way to allocate resources and opportunities” in a society (Olssen & Peters, 2005, p. 314). Across these interpretations of neoliberalism as a socio-economic theory, central defining features include an unfettered market, increased competition, individual freedom and choice, and limited government intervention, all to advance human well-being (Giroux, 2004; Harvey, 2005; Harvey, 2007; Larner, 2005). Neoliberalism as a form of “governmentality” refers to state action, aiming “at accomplishing more through a lesser exertion of force and authority” by delegating the power to self-governed individuals to attain economic competitive advantage and national prosperity (Gordon, 1991, p. 24). In this investigation, neoliberalism is referred to as a socio-economic theory and used as a theoretical lens to analyze the data.

In higher education literature, the interpretation of neoliberalism is often conflated with academic capitalism (Gonzales, Martinez, & Ordu, 2013; Walker, 2009). Gonzales et al. (2013), in discussing academic capitalism connect the concept to neoliberalism, noted that Slaughter and Leslie (Slaughter & Leslie, 1997) “argued that neoliberalism positioned higher education as a market good” (p. 1097). Although Slaughter and Leslie used the term “globalization” extensively, they did not use the term “neoliberalism.” Walker (2009) in her extension of Slaughter and Leslie (1997), through an examination of time in the globalization of higher education, notes that academic capitalism describes “changes that are occurring in higher education due to neo-liberal capitalism” (p. 484), yet she charges that globalization is the cause of academic capitalism, in that the “academic capitalist university” is “under globalization” (p. 496). Whereas Gonzales et al. attribute faculty behaviors to neoliberal ideology and see academic capitalism as an extension or vehicle of neoliberalism, Walker sees neoliberalism as synonymous with globalization and academic capitalism as a lens or theoretical tool for

explanation of behaviors. In both cases, and indeed almost without exception in the higher education literature, globalization is aligned with the economic domain (Levin, 2001), although from time to time there is reference to what Appadurai calls “global flows” (Appadurai, 1990), suggesting that globalization might include culture, communications, and migration of people, among other behaviors.

In the context of professional organizations, neoliberalism institutes market and state pressures on organizations and reduces freedom and autonomy, which are fundamentals for professionals. Neoliberalism challenges traditional conceptions of professionalism, specifically pressing faculty work toward the economic marketplace (Levin, 2007a; Slaughter & Rhoades, 2004). In higher education organizations, faculty in their role as professionals need freedom and autonomy to decide on the teaching, research, and scholarship they undertake (Altbach, 2001b; Berdahl, 1990; Currie, 2005; Schmittlein & Berdahl, 2011). Yet, market forces may pressure higher education institutions to adapt to changing economic trends and socialize or coerce their faculty to acquire research grants, in the case of research universities, and take on additional teaching or service loads, or both, in the case of universities and colleges. Within this market context, neoliberal practices, such as product specialization for market competition, are embedded in institutions; the institution is subject to and arguably shaped by the pressures of economic market forces. In the case of public higher education, the state can and does intervene to buffer institutions from these market forces (Levin, 2000). The ideology of neoliberalism is connected to higher education institutions (Pusser et al., 2011), and neoliberalism and its practices are reflected in the language and behavior of these institutions (Giroux, 2002).

Higher Education Market and Competition

Higher education in the U.S. is highly differentiated and reflects market competition (Altbach, 2001a; Johnstone, 1998; Longanecker, 2008). Institutions compete for funds, faculty, students, and national and international rankings (Dill, 2003; Weisbrod, Ballou, & Asch, 2008; Welch, 2005a). The higher education institutional field consists of institutions that struggle to remain in the market, institutions that strive for status and prestige, and institutions that exist somewhere in between. Colleges and universities with large endowments enjoy an abundant demand for admission that allows them to select students with more institutionally desirable characteristics (Weisbrod et al., 2008; Winston, 1999). Hence, academic status and prestige, rather than universal access, motivate institutional behaviors and resource allocation for four-year colleges and universities (Zumeta, Breneman, Callan, & Finney, 2012). Institutions with financial difficulties and with low status and prestige, however, attempt to augment demand and provide their services at low cost using such strategies as distance learning, adult education, and

vocational education (Winston, 1999), or in the case of community colleges, serve community needs including economic ones (Levin, 2001). This growing competition for status and prestige, or for resources, or both, which occurs within and between institutions, increases stratification of higher education institutions and affects the nature of the faculty job experience and faculty behaviors (Welch, 2005a).

The primary role of faculty members in research universities is to focus on graduate education and produce knowledge—in short, research (Zumeta et al., 2012). Faculty may have limited or no teaching responsibilities at these institutions (Welch, 2005b). In contrast, faculty focus on teaching at community colleges, which “are deeply committed to maintaining open enrollments, as their mission and philosophy are to provide opportunities for postsecondary education or training to virtually all interested local residents at low cost” (Zumeta et al., 2012, p. 136). Comprehensive universities that stand between community colleges and research universities concentrate on undergraduate education and offer master’s degrees (Henderson & Buchanan, 2007). Hence, faculty work at comprehensive universities consists of teaching, research, and administrative service. Higher education institutions establish reward systems that represent aspirations, ratings, and acknowledgements to encourage faculty members to focus on the primary goals of the institutions. In general, institutional goals are to be productive, competitive, and distinctive, as well as survive (Clark, 1993).

Theoretical Framework

We use neoliberalism as a socio-economic theory to analyze the ways neoliberal principles are reflected in the behaviors of faculty in higher education institutions. We examine faculty behaviors across three institutional types: research university, comprehensive university, and community college.

The main tenants of neoliberalism are a free-market that “introduces competition as the structuring mechanism through which resources and status are allocated efficiently and fairly” (Olssen, Godd, & O’Neil, 2004, p. 137) and individual freedoms (Harvey, 2009; Olssen & Peters, 2005). Higher education institutions, as well as industry or business organizations, participate in market competition. Higher education institutions require revenue for their mission advancement (Weisbrod et al., 2008). Hence, institutions compete for resources, and they compete for students, faculty, and revenue streams.

In order to compete successfully, institutions need to employ a variety of competitive strategies. For example, product differentiation is a competitive strategy (Clotfelter, Ehrenberg, Getz, & Siegfried, 1991). The distinctiveness of the product allows competitive advantage for its producer, and higher education institutions use this tool to differentiate their services and products from their rivals in the higher education market (Geiger, 2004). Research is an example of a highly differentiated, distinct product. Hence,

the priority for institutional leaders and faculty at the research university is given to research production (Newman, Couturier, & Scurry, 2004). There is a correlation between number of publications and prestige or reputation for faculty and their higher education institutions (Volkwein & Sweitzer, 2006). In turn, prestige or reputation is associated with wealth and the ability to attract more donations or resources and to have selective admission policies.

At the bottom of the hierarchy or status market, higher education institutions face a different form of competition. They compete for students and resources in order to secure their place or remain in the market (Marginson, 2004). Due to homogeneity of the product, which in the main is teaching, higher education institutions that are not research intensive (particularly comprehensive universities and community colleges) target specific groups of a population and market their services to them based on the availability of the resources. Lack of competitive advantage pressures these low status higher education institutions to respond to market changes both in a rapid and innovative way (Brown, 2011). However, this becomes a challenge as these institutions lack resources, both funds and time, to meet the market expectations. As Giroux (2005) states, neoliberalism leads to “massive subsidies for the rich” while the poor struggle to survive (p. 7). In the case of higher education, institutions with a competitive advantage and resources are capable of shielding themselves and their staff from market pressures. Institutional leaders organize their efforts “in response to a basic interest: protection, support, and strengthening of the environmentally dependent college or university” (Neumann, 2012, p. 306). In other words, college and university administrators attempt to shield their faculty from external forces (Gumport & Sporn, 1999; Neumann, 2012).

The ability of administration to buffer their academic core depends on the type of institution and its faculty. Research universities try to protect their tenured/tenure track faculty from external invasion; hence, their faculty possess more professional autonomy or individual freedom than the faculty at comprehensive universities and community colleges. In turn, part-time faculty are not considered as “inhabitants” of the organization and are not protected by institutions from external forces (Neumann, 2012, p. 306). The importance of part-time faculty is that for public community colleges they constitute 70% of faculty and for public comprehensive universities, 50% (Levin, Shaker, & Wagoner, 2011).

Environmental or external forces lead to a shift in organizational structures of each institutional type—research university, comprehensive university, community college—and institutional leaders are obliged to work as shields to block these forces (Gumport & Sporn, 1999). For example, a changing economy and market forces encourage an increase in productivity and cost efficiency. These changes lead a research university to use large lecture classes

and teaching assistants, as well as lecturers (part-time instructors) to meet increasing enrollments. Hence, full-time faculty at research universities are able to maintain modest teaching loads—for example, four courses/year—and not sacrifice research time to teach additional students. In comparison, community college full-time faculty increase their class sizes and take on additional courses in response to student increases in enrollment (Levin, 2013). At both the comprehensive or state university and the community college, increasing numbers of part-time faculty are hired to instruct increasing student numbers. The resorting to more inexpensive labor—part-time faculty—allows these institutions to increase or maintain productivity. Other forms of instructional productivity include the use of information technology, particularly distance education, to handle more students with the same or less cost (Zumeta et al., 2012).

We suggest that faculty are shielded from external forces by administration more or less depending on the institutional type. Full-time faculty at a research university are provided some autonomy and ability to focus on research production with minor pressures from a changing environment because their research agenda contributes to institutional prestige and reputation. Full-time faculty at a community college have a weaker shield than full-time faculty at a research university because faculty do not capture external research funds. The institution's dependency on resources, particularly government resources, necessitates efficient operations and adherence to government dictates (Levin, 2001), as well as responsiveness to changing environments and accommodation of more students from diverse backgrounds (Zumeta et al., 2012). Administration at a comprehensive university provides its full-time faculty with the weakest shield from external pressures in comparison to a research university and a community college because their research agenda does not generate external research funds equivalent to research universities. Moreover, changing external environments and institutional mission suggest that faculty at comprehensive universities are "expected to have an extensive research agenda despite the high teaching load typical to these institutions" (Hendrickson, Lane, Harris, & Dorman, 2013, p. 315) in addition to service responsibilities.

Research Questions

In the scholarly literature that addresses higher education institutions, there is substantial evidence to suggest that the institutions are vehicles of neoliberal policies and initiatives, particularly responding to market forces (Clark, 1989), treating students as economic entities (Levin, 2001), and commercializing the work of universities (Bok, 2004). Yet, there is little evidence of faculty actions or behaviors that are aligned with neoliberal principles. As well, there is little to suggest that faculty work reflects neoliberal ideology. Furthermore, there is little or no articulated differentiation of neoliberal influences on faculty work across institutional types.

Three research questions guide this investigation. Is there evidence of neoliberalism's influence on the work of faculty in each of three institutional types? If so, in what ways do these influences manifest? Are there differences across institutional types?

Research Design

We set out to investigate the work of full-time faculty in three public California higher educational institutional types: research university, state comprehensive university, and community college. We chose to collect data from faculty in two major programmatic areas—Social Sciences and Natural Sciences (Biology, Chemistry, Psychology, and Sociology), traditional academic disciplines not theoretically tied to the economic marketplace in the way of Engineering and Business fields. We used purposive sampling to ensure that disciplinary differences were not critical variables as well as to contextualize faculty in disciplines common to all three institutions. We chose three institutions not only in the same state but also in close proximity to each other, in part to account for state and local conditions. For this reason, we chose three classification types most prevalent in this state. Our intent was to determine the presence of and the extent to which neoliberal policies and practices influenced and shaped faculty professional work.

The specific characteristics of the faculty sample (N= 43), out of a total of 57 full-time and part-time faculty from the initial investigation where we interviewed both full-time and part-time faculty, are described in the table below (Table 1). Our sample consists of assistant, associate, and full professors, male and female faculty, who volunteered to participate in an interview with one of the researchers. Invitations to participate in the study were sent via email to all full-time faculty members in four departments at each institution. Efforts were made to recruit and interview a diverse pool of faculty, even though there is a paucity of faculty of color who are full-time at the three institutions. All faculty who agreed to participate were interviewed. Nine faculty interviewed were faculty of color. This number constitutes 25% of the total of full-time faculty, which is in line with the state's faculty makeup. In reporting our investigation, we adhered to an agreement both with the institutional participants and our institution's research review board on protecting human subjects. Thus, we use pseudonyms for all faculty noted in this report, and we use generic terms for their institution.

Data collection involved semi-structured interviews (Dewalt & Dewalt, 2002; Hester & Francis, 1994; Opie, 2004; Pawson, 1996), supplemented with a review of documents for the purposes of clarification of interview data and as a contextual basis for data analysis (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992; Holbrook, 1997; Luke, 1995). The interview protocol entailed the exploration of seven broad categories, which included personal and professional background, work description, perception of the profession, relationship with others (col-

TABLE 1
FULL-TIME FACULTY INTERVIEW MATRIX

<i>Institution</i>	<i>Department</i>				<i>Total</i>
	<i>Biology</i>	<i>Chemistry</i>	<i>Psychology</i>	<i>Sociology</i>	
<i>California Community College</i>	4	2	0	3	9
<i>California State University</i>	6	2	5	1	14
<i>University of California</i>	5	4	7	4	20
<i>Total</i>	13	8	15	5	43

leagues and students), relationship to the institution, self-perception, and future plans. We drew these categories from scholarly literature on faculty work (Austin, 2002; Gappa, Austin, & Trice, 2007; Rhoades, 1998; Schuster & Finkelstein, 2006) and on cultural identity and agency (Holland, Lachicotte, Skinner, & Cain, 1998) that addressed educational background and career path (i.e., origins), self-definition (i.e., emphasis on identity claims), work description (i.e., features and priorities), relation to the institution (i.e., identification and commitment), relationships with others (i.e., relevance of a specific relationship/purpose), positionality (i.e., comparison with other groups and organizational position); and future plans (i.e., imagined self).

Interviews took place in faculty offices and lasted between 1–2 hours, until there was saturation of collected interview data for each interviewee, as there was no set timeline for the length of the interviews. Mason (2002) suggests 1–1:30 hours for qualitative interviewing. Documents for review consisted of system-wide and district-wide faculty collective bargaining agreements and faculty handbooks: the collective agreement for the community college faculty and its college district, the state-wide bargaining agreement for the California State University faculty association, and the University of California faculty handbook. In addition, institution specific policy documents were reviewed, particularly academic personnel documents. These documents detailed policies and expectations for faculty workload and outcomes, particularly in reference to performance review, promotion, and tenure. These documents establish normative expectations for faculty behaviors and actions. In this investigation, they serve as background data for the interpretation and understanding of interview data. All three institutions require teaching, service, and some form of professional activity. Teaching is outlined in detail at the community college and is defined broadly at the other two types of institutions. Service is defined broadly at all three institutions.

The types of professional activity required differ at the three institutions, falling on a spectrum ranging from reading about the discipline to attending events to improve their professional competency (either teaching or disciplinary) to engaging in creative and scholarly production. For example, at the community college (CACC), in addition to teaching, faculty are required to “complete the balance of their regular assignment through the performance of other duties that include, but are not limited to, program development; professional activities; committee assignments; department and faculty meetings; serving on selection and evaluation committees” (Collective agreement). At the state comprehensive university (CSU), in addition to classroom instruction, faculty are expected to engage in “such activities as: preparation for class, evaluation of student performance, syllabus preparation and revision, and review of current literature and research in the subject area, including instructional methodology” (Academic personnel policies). Additionally, expectations include “Research, scholarship and creative activity in the faculty member’s field of expertise. . . . Mentoring students and colleagues is another responsibility that faculty members are frequently expected to perform” (Academic personnel policies). At the research university (UC), in research, “[t]here should be evidence that the candidate is continuously and effectively engaged in creative activity of high quality and significance” (Academic personnel policies). As well, service at numerous levels—department, university, and nationally—is expected, as is a high level of teaching expertise. In teaching, “clearly demonstrated evidence of high quality in teaching is an essential criterion for appointment, advancement, or promotion,” including the expectation to participate in graduate programs, as is specified in every faculty job description (Academic personnel policies). Such expectations at the three institutional types served as a foundation for not only our interview questions but also for our understanding of interview data.

We analyzed the verbatim interview transcripts from our sample of 43 full-time faculty at three institutions. The analysis of empirical data at the three institutions was based on a comparative approach that includes the use of a similar time period and data sources (Asselin & Parkins, 2009). We also maintained an understanding of the original contexts from which data were obtained and the characteristics of the participants in each research site (Miles, Huberman, & Saldaña, 2014; West & Oldfather, 1995).

We followed an interpretive/phenomenological tradition, “concerned with how the social world is interpreted, understood, experienced, produced or constituted” (Mason, 2002, p. 31). We address phenomena described and lived by participants (Creswell, 2009). Specifically, we conducted a narrative analysis of each of the forty-three transcripts. Narrative analysis addresses the stories constructed by individuals, stories that explain experiences and present-day conditions. In the performance of the stories, in their telling,

the actors construct and project their self-understandings (Riessman, 2002). We read interview transcripts to select specific narratives in which faculty members talked about critical aspects of themselves and their work practices (Labov, 1999), in particular evidence of influences on their professional work in each of three institutional types. We were mindful of Riessman's (2002) explanation of narrative analysis, including narrative created by the interviewer and participant. Our analysis identified both individual and collective self-representations and understandings (Laslett, 1999).

In data collection, one principal researcher conducted interviews and one research assistant produced transcripts. In data analysis, there were two distinct phases. The first entailed the two principal researchers and the research assistant. In this phase, there were three separate efforts toward data analysis, using preliminary coding—with each of the three researchers assigned to a single institutional type; and, after one of the researchers combined the separate sets of analyzed data and then carried out narrative analysis of the data set, a second researcher reviewed the analysis and provided modifications. This process of data analysis, that is, the use of multiple analysts—consistent with the recommendations of Miles et al. (2014)—enhanced the trustworthiness of findings.

In the second phase, one of the principal researchers and another research assistant worked together to develop new codes to attach to the transcript data. Initially in the second phase, we organized and labeled empirical data through the use of a coding scheme. Based on the qualitative data analysis techniques suggested by Bogdan and Biklen (1992), we developed a coding scheme shaped by concepts drawn from the scholarly literature on neoliberalism (Ball, 2012; Crouch, 2011; Quiggin, 2010) and neoliberalism applied to faculty work (Levin, Shaker, & Wagoner, 2011). Thus, this phase of analysis can be construed as deductive. Concepts included competition (C); individual autonomy or freedom (IA); individual benefits (IB); privatization (P); free market (FM); reduced government responsibility (RG); individual economic worth (IW); individual productivity (IP); and individual merit (IM). As a result, we produced secondary level coded interview data, which we used as evidence of substantial references to behaviors that were aligned with neoliberalism. We then conducted narrative analysis of each interview, relying primarily on Holland et al.'s (1998) cultural identity and agency analytical framework (see Levin & Shaker, 2011, for an explicit example of this framework in use), given the connection between faculty work and faculty professional identity. Subsequently, we fit the faculty narratives into the neoliberal narrative evident in the scholarly literature that emphasized the importance of economic market forces upon higher education and the implied effects upon faculty work, as well as the productive function of higher education institutions and the value of faculty in this process, including the

competitive environment for faculty. Finally, we used the narratives to identify faculty values and preferences, which we labeled “autonomy,” a central feature of both professions (Brint, 1994) and the concept of individualism in neoliberalism. This concept incorporates both the competitive individual (Giroux, 2004) and the self-managing individual (Ball, 2012).

Findings

Based upon the narratives of the faculty at three institutional types, the major role of the institution—whether teaching (in a community college), research (in a research university), or a combination of both (in a comprehensive university)—is both shaped by and responsive to market force demands. Institutional production, largely sustained by faculty productivity, is fueled by competition. This competition influences faculty behaviors, which, if they do not embrace, then embed, neoliberalism. At UC, the primary role of full-time faculty is both oriented toward and articulated as research. In turn, research provides the production of knowledge, which is in demand in the economic marketplace, as is the university’s development of a highly skilled workforce (e.g., research scientists, bio-engineers, and school psychologists). The role of researcher allows faculty to differentiate themselves, individually, from others, to compete as socialized in graduate school and encouraged in professional settings. Yet, UC is not the same as CSU or CACC, and the three institutions differ in the ways in which they embed and then manifest neoliberalism.

Institutional type and structure shape behaviors of the academic workforce at the institution (see Table 2). UC prioritizes research, and faculty at the UC focus primarily on their research productivity, their research agenda, and their ability to generate research grants. CSU expects faculty to juggle the areas of teaching, research, and service, with tensions between their job responsibilities in all three. CACC faces a highly diverse student population and attempts to accommodate students through increasing class sizes with static or diminishing financial resources.

Economic market forces

The market influences institutional and faculty behaviors. Faculty discuss market pressures as competition, which, depending on the institution, entails competition among individuals or institutions, or both. Faculty members at both UC and CSU accentuate their economic worth and talk about their grant/fund generating activities. At UC, faculty focus on the research activities that contribute to their distinctiveness among other faculty members at the institution. Faculty at CSU express the increasing emphasis at their institution upon research and grant funding, but they also note their responsibilities for managing multiple activities simultaneously—teaching, research, and service. As a result, market changes affect all of their activities. They articulate,

TABLE 2
FULL-TIME FACULTY COMPARISONS ACROSS THREE INSTITUTIONS

<i>Category (Main Topics)</i>	<i>Full-time faculty</i>		
	<i>UC</i>	<i>CSU</i>	<i>CACC</i>
<i>Main Job Function</i>	Research	Research, teaching and service	Teaching
<i>Market forces</i>	Grant funding	Grant funding Teaching: preparing a professional workforce	Teaching: Efficiency and productivity Professional productivity
<i>Main Achievements, Productivity Factors</i>	Research production; Grants and publications; Unique contribution Specialty products	Teaching excellence (Awards); Some research production (Grants) Commodity and specialty products	Professional growth; Work effort; Teaching accomplishments Commodity products
<i>Competition</i>	Resources and recognition	Resources and recognition	Students

more so than research university faculty or community college faculty, the pressures from decreased government funding, increased teaching loads, and increased expectations from administration to do more for less. Catherine, Chemistry faculty at CSU, points out that “we get less money per student than anybody, than the community colleges, and the UCs. So we’re doing a whole lot with very little. And that’s frustrating.”

In the process of research production and workforce development, UC faculty are shielded from market influences in order to provide faculty with professional autonomy to carry out their work. Thus, full-time faculty at UC have a modest teaching load compared to faculty at comprehensive universities and community colleges. Oswald, UC Psychology faculty, underscores the emphasis on research by the university, stating that “research is what the institution most values, what will most strongly rewarded” and only “some element of teaching is . . . required.”

In comparison, the nature of work for full-time faculty at CACC is primarily teaching. The main expectation of the institution for faculty is to “do a good job teaching” (Tomas, Chemistry, CACC). The domain of teaching and institutional expectations for faculty to focus on teaching and administrative service are the boundary for community college faculty to differentiate themselves from others. Thus, CACC faculty emphasize a “personal touch,” bringing their own backgrounds, experiences, and personal approaches for interactions with and the teaching of students. Trent, CACC Sociology faculty, advises other faculty to be transparent with students and share with them their own personal successes and failures. Tomas, Chemistry faculty at CACC, points out that faculty need to teach students “real-life experiences.”

CACC is pressured by market forces, particularly through the state government and its agencies, to focus on efficiency and productivity, parallel to community colleges nationally (Levin, 2001). Funding behaviors from the state as well as accreditation oversight require faculty to perform according to norms that are tied to efficiency and productivity (e.g., class sizes, outcomes measures). Faculty are well aware of demands from the state. Tomas, in Chemistry at CACC, rejects the performance requirements as part of his value system.

[W]e seem to get more and more involved in stuff which is from the state level . . . more and more assessment, more and more having to exactly justify what we do down to test[ing]. . . . And I think that just is counterproductive because it starts to affect how you teach in your classroom.

With the intrusion of the state, according to Tomas, then, teaching methods lose their unique “personal touch” becoming more homogenized. As a result, faculty autonomy is circumscribed by external controls, yet idiosyncratic behaviors in teaching are the norm given that the practice cannot be regulated.

Yet, teaching at the community college has a productive function as well in that students are prepared for the workforce (Levin, 2001).

Accreditation bodies for community colleges serve as extensions of the State, ensuring that colleges conform to State policies. Toni, Biology faculty at CACC, conflates the accrediting association with state government, noting that her college has been given warnings for deficits. "At the moment, strategic planning is the big thing because we've been wrapped on the knuckles by the state for not having transparency and not having a mission."

Placed between CACC and UC is CSU, where, while teaching is the dominant role of faculty, research and teaching are carried out, in part buffered from the economic marketplace by institutional policies and by the low prestige of CSU research outside the institution (Henderson & Buchanan, 2007). However, teaching here has an economic outcome as the mid-level workforce, the outcomes of CSU instruction, such as health care workers, teachers, and business and engineering professionals, become the supply for the local, regional, and national economy. Nate, Chemistry faculty at CSU, acknowledges that while some of their students move on to further education, others move into the workforce.

[W]e try to be realistic since we are training people permanently to work. A lot of our better students go to grad schools and got to professional schools, but a lot of students are just going to go out and get jobs and work the rest of their lives.

Even those who pursue further education become professionals and supply the economy with a workforce.

Productivity

In market terminology, CACC produces commodity products, products that are similar to their competitors; and teaching represents a commodity product (Hax & Majluf, 1982; Zahra & Covin, 1993). UC produces specialty products along with commodity products. Specialty products are unique products distinct from those of competitors (Hax & Majluf, 1982; Zahra & Covin, 1993). Research at a university represents a specialty product, which is unique and expected to be distinct from other research. In turn, CSU produces both—teaching and research—where the objective is predominately teaching or the production of the commodity product.

The production of - faculty's services is coordinated by the administration of the institution. In a research university, faculty are given autonomy and incentives to focus on production of research, which is of primary value for the university, and the administration provides a protective shield from external forces to ensure research production. Alan, UC Biology faculty, amplifies these behaviors. "[W]e're usually shielded from too onerous of teaching and

service requirements . . . so that you're spending a larger proportion of time on research." UC faculty are expected to focus on research and research grants while administration (and the apparatus of the research process, including funding agencies who collaborate with the university) supplies research and teaching assistants, and makes hiring decisions for more part-time faculty (or lecturers or teaching assistants) to cover teaching loads. Alan notes that the university administration provides faculty with graduate students for teaching assistance: "[T]hey try to help you to make sure that you get graduate students if you want them early on."

In CACC, "personal touch," the product that allows faculty to differentiate themselves from others, is not of monetary value for the institution as in research production. "It's like I want to help people. I want to guide people through life. I don't want to just watch them wander around in oblivion not knowing what they're going to do" (Eloise, Chemistry, CACC). For CACC faculty, an individual's teaching approach cannot be measured in grant dollars as can research projects. As a result, college administration do not buffer their faculty from external market pressures and expect faculty to adapt to the changing environment—that is, increasing numbers of students and decreasing government funds. There is an institutional push for online education to accommodate a growing student body in community colleges, but as Oliver, CACC Sociology faculty, states, the technology is not advanced and equipment is "cumbersome." "[W]e're going to have to do more with less, but the technology is going to have to be state of the art." Thus, administration set the goals but do not provide the means to meet these goals, and this accelerates the pressures on the faculty.

Competition

UC and CSU, but not CACC, faculty discuss their individual merit, their distinctiveness, their ability to acquire funds and recognition. Brian, CSU Biology faculty, relates his national and international stature. "[W]here I've put my efforts have been acknowledged nationally, internationally." Belinda, Biology faculty at CSU, points to her recent gain of a "big grant," which garners her institutional prestige and privilege. Harvey in Sociology notes that "here [UC], we worry about our national reputation of our professional schools and whether we're getting the big federal grants and contracts and whether we're rated high in the NRC, National Research Council, ratings."

CSU faculty are pressured to publish, yet they have heavy teaching loads—approximately four courses a semester (with potential for time release from a course). As a result, faculty express a condition of being overwhelmed with multiple responsibilities that affect their productivity. Nate, in Chemistry at CSU, laments inadequate performance: "I feel like I never do my best at anything that I do. Whether it's teaching or the research or anything, none of it is the best that I can possibly do."

While research is viewed as part of the requirements of CSU, as noted by Brian, in Biology, who insists that faculty are “expected to do teaching well, research well, and service well, [and not] . . . concentrate on one and not the other two,” Tanya, CSU Sociology faculty, sees that teaching, not research, is the essential component of the university’s purposes.

Our mission statement says that we want to educate the populous, you know, the working class students of [the city] and the surrounding communities. . . . The Cal State system is a teaching institution. It’s not research. It’s not anything but teaching.

This contrast in views suggests that CSU’s mission is not static, but a product of multiple demands including the market, the state, and the institutional field of higher education, consistent with the view from Wendy in Biology: “I think this institution probably started out more as a teaching institution, but it’s evolved over time into more of a balanced teaching and research institution.” Indeed, this view is consistent with the historical accounts of CSU (Gerth, 2010). The mission of higher education institutions dictate the services produced.

Such distinctiveness supports universities’ competitiveness with other like institutions. Brian, Biology faculty at CSU, points out the competitiveness of their department within their institution. “It’s one of the exceptional departments, both in terms of productivity, where our graduates go. It’s highly thought of both off campus and on campus.” In turn, Clarissa, Psychology faculty at CSU, praises her department as one of the best departments at the university. Harvey, Sociology faculty at UC, expands on this competition, noting how this competitive environment spills over into graduate students. “It’s very clear that the profession is highly competitive. Graduate students do not cooperate with other graduate students; they compete with other graduate students to rise in the status order.”

Competition occurs not just for resources but as well for recognition. Norbert, UC Sociology faculty, discusses his work and refers to it as “the first study that’s been able to look at this in a national context.” Moreover, the UC merit, promotion, and tenure system encourages the championing, indeed selling, of individual achievements. Sam, Psychology faculty at UC, discusses the merit, promotion, and tenure system as an incentive to “put yourself out,” to show one’s achievements and uniqueness.

Not only do research institutions emphasize research production and a competitive environment, but also government encourages and incentivizes research as well. Hearn and Lacy (2009) note that state policies are directed toward research production, and “by incentivizing certain kinds of research activity by faculty, notably activity that may help stimulate economic development, states contribute to academic capitalism’s growth and its embedding in institutional norms and values” (p. 947).

Community colleges compete for students, largely as a consequence of two determinants—state funding based upon full-time equivalency students and an historical model and value of growth (Levin, 2001; Meier, 2013). Thus, competition that yields increasing numbers of students in a college, and within that college in particular areas results in productivity, gains in the form of more students/faculty members. In the case of CACC, along with community colleges nationally, increasing numbers of students tied to increased productivity results in the hiring of part-time faculty (Wagoner, Levin, & Kater, 2010) an outcome paralleled by CSU (Levin, Wagoner, & Shaker, 2010). These part-time faculty enable community colleges to accommodate more students, and this action leads to gains in productivity.

Arguably, reductions over time of state funding have led to more competitive behaviors of universities and colleges (Marginson, 2004; Slaughter & Rhoades, 2004). For research universities, such as UC, this has meant competition for research grants; for comprehensive universities, such as CSU, this has led to pressures for external funding as well as the hiring of part-time faculty to replace retired faculty and to teach increased student numbers; for community colleges, such as CACC, this has led to larger teaching loads, with increased numbers of students, and the hiring of more part-time faculty (Levin, Kater, & Wagoner, 2011; Levin, Shaker, & Wagoner, 2011).

Competition between institutions is both shaped by and responsive to market forces, including, for example, the supply of students. Instead of activities directed to the generation of resources in the institution, community college faculty discuss student backgrounds, increased enrollments, and a decreased government role in supporting higher education. Douglas points out that budget cuts affect community colleges' hiring full-time faculty members and lead to an increased ratio of part-time to full-time faculty. "We haven't hired any new full-time faculty members now for almost two years" (Douglas, Sociology, CACC). These are a direct reflection of the market on this institution, and community college faculty adjust their activities and behaviors to these changes.

The college administration at a community college protect faculty only marginally in the performance of their duties from the pressures of market forces. As a result, market forces directly affect the instructional role of community college faculty, for example, changes in student demographics and local economic needs, particularly evident in an open access institution (Meier, 2013). Douglas, another Sociology faculty at CACC, elaborates on changing student demographics and increasing student enrollments.

More students . . . are coming in less prepared. . . . And now there's a switch in the last couple of years because of the economy. We are impacted because many students who would maybe normally go to Cal State or University of California or somewhere else, the economy is precluding them from doing

that because a lot of those school have reduced their enrollments. They have increased the bar. So we're getting many of them.

Thus, faculty are obligated to adjust their "personal touch" in response to these changes. However, the market has less pressure on faculty in community colleges than on faculty in the comprehensive university, because faculty in the comprehensive university are responsible for producing multiple outputs—research, teaching, and service. For comprehensive university faculty, changes in the market create pressure on faculty to react and adjust their ways of production of all three activities. That is, their primary role is split in three domains and thus they are obligated to demonstrate proficiency in teaching, research, and service, proficiency that satisfies market needs. Clarisa, in Psychology at CSU, outlines the work expectations.

You have a component which is teaching; you have a component which is research; and, you have a component which is service. . . . [T]oo much teaching makes just too many tasks. It's very time consuming, and then you can't do research. . . . Then for research, there's no expectation. At the minimum, you should publish one article per year. . . . Then for service, you serve on different committees, and you serve on committees at the department level, the college level, and the university level.

All three institutions produce, but the less valued the product, in this case teaching and service, the greater the need for the institution and its members to respond to market changes in order to remain competitive for funds and students in the environment of constrained resources. Within the context of market liberalism (Quiggin, 2010), then, community colleges and comprehensive universities are shaped by local markets, and research universities are shaped by national and international markets.

Autonomy

Neoliberal ideology is reflected in faculty's recognition of their individual autonomy across institutional types. Full-time faculty gain personal benefits from their institutional positions. They acknowledge that the nature of their job allows them to have flexibility and freedom. Simon, Biology faculty at CSU, refers to his autonomy as a form of work-life balance. "I can complain about a lot of things, but academics remains a very flexible lifestyle." Adam, Biology faculty at UC, elevates his condition of privilege based upon his personal control. "I'm kind of like the king of my own little country. . . . I have a lot of control over my own life and my work life. And so I can kind of balance it as I see fit." Eloise, Chemistry faculty at CACC, elaborates that a faculty job at a community college provides not only financial benefits but also more time to spend with a family, and "more freedom with the job" in general. Autonomy, here, is more aligned with personal choices over work and life outside work, rather than with matters of academic freedom.

CONCLUSIONS: NEOLIBERALISM AND PROFESSIONAL WORK

Our findings suggest that neoliberalism influences professional work and self-representations of faculty in all three institutions. Faculty discuss their everyday activities and their choices that reflect their personal gains and needs. For example, Wendy, a Biology faculty at CSU, states that she gives priority to teaching because it is easier and less demanding in comparison to research. “I used to be more attracted to the research. And I still like it. It’s easier to do the teaching, especially if you teach summer school, and you make a little extra money.” Although research is required and Wendy conducts research, she prefers to invest more in teaching because it is less demanding. Here, personal preferences and personal rewards are favored and pursued, in line with tenets of neoliberalism.

While faculty acknowledge their individual freedom or autonomy, interview data reveal administrative pressure to focus on research and scholarship because research production increases fund raising opportunities and institutional prestige at CSU and UC. Faculty discuss the pressures to acquire grants. Simon, Biology faculty at CSU, asserts that “there’s more and more pressure for faculty to get grants with indirect money to come to the university.” Selena, Biology faculty at UC, expresses the pressure for generating research grants, “I love what I do, but I do wish that the research funding wasn’t such a concern.” Although she is capable of acquiring funding to support her research, she experiences continual concern over funding. CACC faculty do not have this pressure of research production. Interview data support that faculty at a community college have more time and benefits in comparison to faculty at a comprehensive university. Gregory, Biology faculty at CACC, refers to his job as “a really great job” with “great benefits.” Thus, while faculty at the three institutions rationalize their professional work from the perspective of personal choice and preferences, they adhere to several neoliberal principles (e.g., competition for grants/funds, self-interests or personal rewards, and individual freedoms), which, although they do not actively promote, they enact. Missing from the faculty narratives are rationales based upon the public or social benefits of faculty work, as well as the professional cause for conducting research, teaching, and providing service.

The argument in the scholarly literature is that actions of institutions are guided by their mission; actions of faculty are guided by their identity, value system or norms, and incentives. Yet, the context is the market, and for California higher education in the late 20th and early 21st centuries, the market is a liberal market (Quiggin, 2010). One result of the neoliberal project during this period has been “to place more or less all institutions in society—universities, hospitals, charities as well as governments—under an obligation to behave as though they were business corporations (Crouch, 2011, p. 167). Faculty, while adhering to institutional mission, responded

to incentives and behavioral norms, make themselves more competitive, accentuate their distinctiveness, and maintain their individual autonomy, which included personal returns.

Academic capitalism (Slaughter & Leslie, 1997) suggests that university faculty (and perhaps other stakeholders such as executive administrators, government officials, and policy makers in a supportive role) are the responsible parties for the marketization and commercialization of higher education. Others (Levin, 2001; Slaughter & Rhoades, 2004) suggest that community college faculty, too, are implicated. But, this does not necessarily hold true for all faculty and for all institutions. Academic capitalism was and is a component of neoliberalism and the neoliberal project; yet, it pertains largely to a specialized population of research university faculty whose research products are in high demand in the economic marketplace. The neoliberal project and neoliberalism are both more complex and at the same time more subtle than academics and their partners' following the money or shaped by profit making.

Faculty at the three institutions refrain from extolling the virtues of neoliberalism, or its components. Yet, they adhere to neoliberal values, particularly those that privilege the market and market competition. They highlight their distinctiveness; they engage in competition, especially at CSU and UC; and they produce goods that are valued in the market, whether local, national, or international. They acknowledge that one major reward is their autonomy: personal choices about their work schedules in the main. They point out their individual productivity and the recognition that they bring to their respective institutions through one or more of research grants and revenue generation, teaching excellence, and institutional service commitments. Their views in part reflect neoliberal policies, but to the extent that neoliberal policies reward these faculty, both economically and symbolically, faculty behaviors are contingent upon sources outside of their personal values—in their institutions, in the local, national, and global markets, in those agencies (e.g., government, accrediting bodies), and in businesses and industries that in turn depend upon higher education institutions for their goals.

Whether or not these patterns will continue is unclear, although the Great Recession of 2008 did not impede the neoliberal project (Crouch, 2011; Quiggin, 2010). Increasing costs of higher education, public reluctance to support these increases, and changing labor market needs may curtail demand for higher education. One outcome may be more institutional competition for students, another may be greater emphasis upon the practical arts and career-technical education, with resulting reductions in research and even service. If the economic market continues to influence faculty employment and results, for example, in the growth of contingent labor—part-time and full-time nontenure track faculty—then there is likely to be continuing al-

teration to the work of academic faculty, as well as their identity as academic professionals.

Although this investigation did not address, directly, the professional identity of faculty, the need to clarify neoliberalism within academic institutions, and the use of three different institutional types, professional identity is implied both in our argument and in the narratives of faculty. Future research will bring the two strands – neoliberalism and professional identity – together. The pervasiveness of the neoliberal critique (Stern, 2012) in the scholarly literature suggests that there is no escape for faculty from the influences of neoliberal initiatives and policies – from responsibilities by faculty groups (e.g., departments) for financing their instructional and research projects to productive work valued as the number of students taught, completed in a course, and graduated. Performativity is the term in the neoliberal critique that captures evaluated behaviors of faculty in all higher education institutional types, a key mechanism to produce “a self-managing productive unit operating in a market of performance” (Ball, 2012, p. 25). Thus, faculty’s relevance in a neoliberal regime is defined by the market. This condition has significant implications for professional identity and the extent to which faculty accept or reject this definition. Future research that includes more academic areas (e.g., professional schools, humanities, and fine arts) might show either more overt manifestations or an absence of neoliberal practices in the work of faculty, or, indeed, different understandings of the connections between faculty work and neoliberalism.

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