Twenty-second David Dodds Henry Lecture: TQM and Other Management Fads: Why Has Their Impact on Higher Education Been so Small? by James V. Koch, Ph. D.

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DAVID DODDS HENRY

President, University of Illinois
1955-71

The David Dodds Henry Lectures in Higher Education are endowed by gifts to the University of Illinois Foundation in recognition of Dr. Henry's contributions to the administration of higher education, including his career as president of the University of Illinois from 1955 until 1971. The lectures are intended to focus upon the study of the organization, structure, or administration of higher education, as well as its practice. Selection of persons to present the lecture is the responsibility of the chancellors of the three campuses of the University. Presentation of the lectures is alternated among the Chicago, Springfield, and Urbana-Champaign campuses.

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Welcome

Chancellor Ringeisen: My name is Richard Ringeisen, and I'm Chancellor here at the University of Illinois at Springfield, UIS. It's my great pleasure to welcome you to the David Dodds Henry Lecture. We feel very privileged to have the opportunity to have this lecture here today. I want to mention a couple of things to you.

First of all, the videotape going on here is being done by WSEC television and the Illinois Channel, and this will be broadcast on the Illinois Channel and WSEC at a later date that is not at this time determined.

Also, as you can imagine, a great deal of work goes into this sort of event, and I want to specifically thank the committee members who helped in our planning. That would be Professor Larry Shiner from our Philosophy Department, Dean Larry Stonecipher from the College of Education and Human Services, Joan Sestak, Director of Special Events in my office, and my Associate Chancellor, Ed Wojcicki, who does whatever we need to have done. I would also like to introduce to you our state representative from our area, in the legislature, Rich Brauer, who is here with us today. Rich, why don't you stand up so folks can say hi? (applause) I think all of us who work with him realize that he is becoming very quickly the UIS advocate within the legislature, and we really do appreciate your being here today. Also, I think I would just have to mention that my predecessor is in the audience. Naomi Lynn and her husband, Bob. (applause)

The David Dodds Henry Lecture is named after former University of Illinois President David Dodds Henry. It always deals with an issue of some importance to higher education, and it rotates among the three U of I campuses. We're fortunate that it's our turn this time and we get to host this marvelous

lecture. For you to understand the way the format is going to be, we are going to have a lecture by Dr. Koch, then we will have a response by Keith Sanders, who most of you know is the former executive director of the Illinois Board of Higher Education. And then Dr. Ron McNeil, our own dean of the UIS College of Business and Management, will have a response as well. Then we'll have discussion and questions and answers. In just a minute, President Stukel is going to formally introduce today's keynote speaker. But first I have to say what a personal pleasure it is for me as your chancellor to have Dr. Jim Koch with us. Jim was president at Old Dominion when I was dean there, and he has served in a kind of mentor role to me for quite some time, and his wife, Donna Koch, is with us. Would you stand up, Donna? (applause) We also have with us, in addition to President Stukel, Vice President Gardner from the Central Administration. Chet, we really appreciate your arrival as well. I have had the great pleasure of serving with Dr. Koch, and I know we are in for a really fun and exciting afternoon. Now let me introduce to you someone who probably no audience in Illinois would ever need a formal introduction to, and that's Jim Stukel, the president of the University of Illinois. He has been president since 1995. He's been a leader in higher education, as I think all of you know, not only in Illinois but at the national level. He's been enormously supportive of UIS. I don't really believe I can emphasize that strongly enough. I am very personally grateful to you, Jim, for that strong and warm support. President Stukel will introduce the scholar who will deliver today's David Dodds Henry Lecture. Let's welcome President Stukel. (applause)

Richard Ringeisen
Chancellor
University of Illinois, Springfield

Preface

President Stukel: Good afternoon. My voice is almost non-existent, so I apologize. Thank you, Rich. It's nice to be here. It's always nice to have guests come and be with us and have the opportunity to learn from their wisdom and the things that they have to say. As the years speed by, we get further and further away from the life and times of David Dodds Henry, who was a leader, a visionary and a model, I think, for the modern university president. This lecture series, established by our Board of Trustees to honor Dave Henry, gives us reason to celebrate and honor the 12th president who served the University of Illinois in many, many ways. Because of his stature and his academic standing at the University of Illinois, those who are selected to deliver the David Dodds Henry Lecture must be distinguished and have something interesting to say. Today's guest, I have no doubt, will meet those standards at this 22nd David Dodds Henry Lecture. Professor Koch is the President Emeritus and Professor of Economics at Old Dominion University in Norfolk, Virginia. Just parenthetically, it was nice to have lunch with him and get some wisdom of his in terms of things that he has experienced as president. He also has held teaching and research positions at Illinois State, California State, Brown University, University of Hawaii, University of Grenoble in France, and the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology in Melbourne, Australia. For all his academic travels, Dr. Koch will tell you that he has a special affinity for this part of the country. After all, he was born right here in Springfield. He has published seven books and some 60 articles in journals, primarily in applied areas of microeconomics. These areas include the economics of intercollegiate athletics, the economics of discrimination and affirmative action, Total Quality Management, and the economics of education. James Koch's current interests are in the economics of e-commerce. More than 50 legal firms, corporations, and universities have used his expertise as an expert witness or as a consultant in these areas. His

e-commerce cases have included issues such as the ordering and sale of wine via the Internet and the value of intellectual property stolen by means of the Internet. It should be clear that Professor Koch lives at the edge of the present and is rushing into the future. Even more germane today is his work with more than two dozen universities seeking to evaluate their strategic positions. His 1996 book, *Presidential Leadership*, which he coauthored with James L. Fisher, is a standard reference and textbook for universities and leadership institutes. He and Fisher are at work on *The Entrepreneurial College President*, which Praeger and the American Council on Education will publish. Dr. Koch is a graduate of Illinois State University, where he met his lovely wife, and he earned his Ph.D. in economics at Northwestern University. That is a university in northern Illinois. (laughter) He served as president of Old Dominion from 1990 to 2001 and before that he was the president of University of Montana. Please join me, in my hoarse voice, in welcoming James B. Koch, the 22nd David Dodds Henry lecturer. (applause). Welcome.

Jim Stukel

President

University of Illinois

TQM and Other Management Fads: Why Has Their Impact on Higher Education Been so Small?

You can resist an invading army;
you cannot resist an idea whose time has come.

Victor Hugo

Resisting an invading army is a lot easier
than getting rid of well-entrenched, outmoded ideas
whose time has come and gone.

James V. Koch,
with apologies to Victor Hugo

Good afternoon. President Stukel, Chancellor Ringeisen and Chancellor Emerita Lynn. It's a wonderful treat for me to return to Springfield, my native city. I was a "War Baby" born in Memorial Hospital in 1942 and spent the first few years of my life on Matheny Avenue in the shadow of the Pillsbury Mill. Since then, I've lived many places, but there has always been a very soft spot in my heart for Springfield and the Land of Lincoln. The Midwest is the heart of our nation and Illinois is the heart of the Midwest. Springfield, in turn, is the heart of Illinois and hence with a tiny bit of extrapolation might be considered to be the centerpiece of the United States, if not the universe! How's that for a recruiting pitch for Springfield and the Prairie State?

One of the things I do with my life these days is to work with colleges and universities that have problems. Over the past few years, I've been on about two dozen campuses in this capacity and have shared their problems and challenges. Not surprisingly, campus problems often are self-imposed. That is, universities make unwise choices and figuratively shoot themselves in the foot. Of course, a multitude of ways exists for campuses to get into trouble. However, a frequent cause of problems is the tendency for universities (and

their presidents or chancellors) to adopt a "silver bullet" approach to their operations. They seize upon an idea that typically contains several attractive, even laudable, kernels of elemental truth and thereafter attempt to decide nearly all issues in terms of that idea. Unfortunately, this often leads to unforeseen difficulties.

One institution I know well advertised itself as "the learning university" and then attempted to make all personnel and resource decisions on the basis of how they contributed to student learning. Maximizing student learning is a laudable goal, but precisely what is student learning and how can we measure it? Are we interested in value added learning, or something else? Are student evaluations of teaching less important in a world where only learning counts? What does one do about students who drop courses or those who transfer into the institution? Does a learning emphasis mean that research and public service, the other two traditional parts of the higher education triad, are less important and, if so, how much less important? There are numerous other questions one could pose. The point is that this institutional commitment only brushed the surface of what is a very complicated subject. Yes, it's nearly always a good thing for a university and its leaders to possess an attractive, captivating vision. Nonetheless, that vision becomes much less useful, even destructive, if the institution has not considered all of the ramifications of the vision and/or becomes single minded in terms of its behavior.

In my experience, an egregious source of what I will call "distorted vision problems" in higher education is the adoption of management fads and nostrums. I must tread carefully here, because some in the audience may be in love with one of them: program budgeting, zero based budgeting, management by objectives, Theory Z, PERT, business process reengineering, strategic planning or total quality management (TQM). Each of these notions was once the "hot

thing" in higher education. And, each contains many sensible, attractive elements. Yet, each also contains the seeds of its own downfall—not infrequently because zealots attempt to interpret and reorder the entire world in terms of that idea. That is the subject of my remarks this afternoon. To give my remarks focus, I'll concentrate on TQM, whose time has come and gone, but nonetheless is hanging tough in a surprisingly large number of academic precincts.

THE POWER OF IDEAS

Victor Hugo's observation about the power of ideas ("...you cannot resist an idea whose time has come") frequently has been utilized in discussions of political movements. For example, Marxism is an oft-cited set of ideas whose power once seemed overwhelming. With the benefit of hindsight, however, we know Marxism subsequently was found wanting in its practical earthly economic forms, by all but a few, isolated governments such as North Korea and Cuba. When President Ronald Reagan famously consigned Marxism to the "dustbin of history," he reflected what later came to be a consensus view, namely, that Marxism's time had passed, even though at the time numerous Marxist governments still existed.

Which brings me to TQM, an idea whose time also has passed, though its manifestations have not. TQM, or Total Quality Management, is dedicated to the principle of continuous quality improvement. The notion is that nearly any important process can be refined and improved if the individuals connected to it thoroughly analyze its constituent parts and then act to remove problems and errors. The emphasis is upon errors that creep into the design of a process—how things relate to each other—rather than the errors committed by an individual, who only does what he/she is told to do. W. Edwards Deming is the "Father of TQM" and he developed statistical sampling and control procedures at Ball Laboratories as a means to track quality and eliminate error.

Lawler, Mohrman, and Ledford (1998) reported that 76 percent of Fortune 1000 companies were using some form of TQM in the mid-1990s and El-Khawas estimated that 70 percent of all colleges and universities were using TQM about the same time. Speaker of the House Newt Gingrich asserted (and presumably with a straight face) that TQM was one of the five pillars of Western civilization (Birnbaum, 2000b, at 92). This immediately depreciated the other four. Statistically, the mid-1990s probably were TQM's high tide; its usage by companies, governments, and organizations of all types since has receded and now TQM often is labeled a "fad" (Zbaracki, 1998; van der Wiele and Brown, 2000, Birnbaum, 2000a,b), or even a "dirty word" (Bohan, 1998) by its detractors. The truth is that TQM became stale, overdrawn, and doctrinaire. Its proponents lost their revolutionary fervor and now find themselves on the defensive. Perhaps this was inevitable. When fads such as TQM lose their missionary appeal and become co-opted rhetorical tools of the establishment, this is a sign that they have been dissected, mutated, and deconstructed so many times that they have lost their usefulness.

Why, then, have TQM and its running mate, Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI), not disappeared? After all, TQM has resisted empirical evidence and a host of intellectual floggings [Allen and Chafee (1981), Koch and Fisher (1998), and Birnbaum (2000a, 2000b)]. Birnbaum (2000a) flatly states that TQM and other management fads "have uniformly failed," while Webber (1997) asserts that they have triggered "a spiral of stupidity."

Nevertheless, the notion of TQM continues to infest numerous strategic plans by one name or another. In the last month, I have worked with two universities that are constructing strategic plans parroting the phraseology of TQM. Further, several refereed scholarly journals still exist that are devoted solely to TQM and they pump out dozens of articles each year. In my more sanguine

moments, I wonder if administrators such as me are partially to blame for this. Do we place excessive pressure on our colleagues to publish—something, anything—even if it is intellectual trash?

ORGANIZATIONAL INERTIA AND RESISTANCE TO EVIDENCE

Let's explore the reasons why rumors of TQM's demise have been greatly exaggerated, at least in a practical sense. An endemic condition in many organizations is the existence of managerial inertia. Internal change often is resisted, even inside organizations that regard themselves as revolutionary. Managers who may be boat rockers and radicals in many arenas frequently are hesitant, conservative, and even reactionary when confronted with ideas or people who seek to invoke major change on their home turf. Even the Bolsheviks exhibited this behavior once they assumed power. Further, the interest of managers may diverge from that of their organization, as Berle and Means (1932) first pointed out more than 70 years ago. Hence, managers (and college presidents) often resist changes that might be of benefit to their organization, but discomfort them (Gummer, 2000). Consequently, new paradigms, however powerful, often are not adopted (or discarded) for decades. In his well-known treatise, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, Kuhn (1962) noted that some scientific revolutions require an entire century before they are fully assimilated and the new knowledge almost universally adopted. If that's true, then TQM could still be with us in 2080.

In the most typical situation, TQM and its postulates were not accepted immediately. However, once accepted, it became part of the generally accepted managerial canon and became very difficult to dislodge. van der Wiele and Brown (2000) concluded that, "...there are still companies where despite [the] criticism, the quality management philosophy continues to be a central focus of the business and a mechanism for contributing to better performances."

This is manifestly true in higher education, where TQM terminology still is ubiquitous, even if its reality has dissipated.

Even TQM's promoters confess that "...organizations have not found it so easy to implement and to achieve the expected benefits." (Kirk, 2000, at 14). More critically, Dar-El (1997, at 5) has reported that "...experience indicates that three out of four [TQM] implementations are economic disasters," while Zbaracki (1998) found only one in six TQM programs to be successful. In fairness, I must tell you that if you are interested in the rather short listing of TQM programs that are alleged to have worked, see Seymour (1993), Giroux and Landry (1998), and Engelkemeyer (1998).

Chatterji and Davidson (2001, at 10) comment that, "It is fair to say, in hindsight, that many TQM programs did indeed suffer from being overreaching, poorly focused, or implemented without true commitment to the underlying principles." Numerous critics have noted TQM's tendency to produce incessant meetings, generate tremendous amounts of paper, and delay or avoid critical decision-making (Koch and Fisher, 1998).

Zbaracki's (1998) excellent survey of the rhetoric and reality surrounding TQM notes that its use has been characterized by "rhetorical excess" (at 604) and, while TQM is not without its successes, managers typically encourage "distorted perceptions of the efficacy of TQM" (at 627).

There is a strong tendency for managers to invest themselves and their organizations in the TQM notion, once they adopt it. Rather than admit to the paucity of its achievements, they subsequently trumpet its successes, even when there is little or no evidence to support that conclusion. They become what Bank (1992, at 47) labels "Messiahs of Quality" and talk incessantly of quality crusades, revolutions in outlook, commitment to quality, and even personal witness. The atmosphere is almost revival-like. This inspired Webb

(1995, at 108) to observe caustically, "No doubt vows of poverty and chastity will follow shortly!" The bottom line is there is a tendency for self-interested opinions and surveys to generate reinforcing conclusions that are substantially divorced from any empirical evidence, the end result being a stylish bandwagon mythology (Bemowski, 1995).

In the realm of higher education, one cannot resist recording surprise at how little concrete empirical evidence has been generated concerning TQM. Academic paeans in support of TQM seldom are based upon the statistical and sampling roots that originally propelled quality prophets such as Deming (1982, *inter alia*) and the well-known "six sigma" approach to quality by firms such as General Electric and Motorola. A tip off is the tendency of some evidence-shy TQM proponents to talk about TQM as a culture (Herguner and Reeves, 2000), or as a philosophy, or even as an approach to life. However, when feelings are substituted for evidence and reality, this is a strong sign that an idea has become passé.

Yet, this "Isn't it wonderful?" phenomenon should not surprise us. Why shouldn't managers talk the TQM talk, even if they cannot actually walk that walk? After all, shouldn't everyone be a proponent of increased quality, eliminating defects, and making processes more efficient? Of course, all managers and leaders *should* be vitally interested in the quality of the outputs of their organization. Who dare argue against "the relentless pursuit of continuous improvement?" (Chaffee and Sherr, 1992, at 3). Nonetheless, pity the manager who suggests that this intellectual emperor has no clothes; he/she is likely to be stamped as "anti-quality." The mid-level corporate manager who emits doubts about the efficacy of a quality campaign likely will find him/herself regarded as a fly in the ointment. And, this could be career fatal, especially if that manager's superiors are one of Bank's "Quality Messiahs" (1992).

If college presidents seem uninterested in quality (that is, notions such as TQM), their governing boards may conclude that they must not be very good managers. Who at the Ford Motor Company would have been brave enough to question the efficacy of the "Quality is Job One" campaign? Hence, it is in presidents' self interest to pepper their speeches and strategic plans with references to quality and periodically to declare victories. Some of the reported successes of TQM, then, are preordained and entirely predictable, though empty.

None of the preceding suggests either that all TQM projects have been failures, or that TQM only consists of rhetoric. Even the most ardent critics of TQM agree that it has produced a limited number of legitimate successes. More importantly, these are concentrated in manufacturing industries or relate to processes where organizational goals are clear, inventory and production processes well defined, and measurement both appropriate and easy. An occasionally disputed example is Motorola, which claims to have saved $3.2 billion between 1987 and 1992 utilizing TQM (Micklethwait and Woolridge, 1996). (However, if this really did occur, it did not save Motorola from precipitous declines in its market share, profitability and share price over the past few years.)

Giroux and Landry (1998) provide a good recent discussion of sources that provide similar evidence, while Wilkinson *et. al.* (1998) review both American and British business sector evidence and conclude that TQM can result in significant and verifiable organizational improvements. For example, Hendricks and Singhal (1997) found that firms engaged in TQM have greater sales growth and control costs better than those with no connection to TQM. This correlation, however, does not demonstrate that TQM is responsible for these attributes. Easton and Jarrell (1999) recently have summarized this and similar evidence.

Yet, one need not subscribe to Dar-El's (1997) caustic assessment that a significant majority of TQM efforts have been failures to conclude that there is only sparse empirical evidence in favor of TQM, despite the hundreds of thousands of pages that have been written about it and the millions of hours that have been devoted to its discussion and implementation. Accordingly, Larson (1999, at 32) notes that many individuals who deal with quality issues regard TQM as "an embarrassing failure," while Micklethwait and Woolridge (1996), in a book appropriately named, *The Witch Doctors*, frankly label TQM and similar management nostrums as "99 percent b.s." Like zero based budgeting, reengineering, management by objectives and ISO 9000, all too often TQM is the "flavor of the month" (van der Wiele and Brown, 2000, at 777) and nothing more empirically than an attractive fad whose key language ("quality") is intrinsically attractive.

RECENT EVIDENCE FROM HIGHER EDUCATION

Early in the 1990s, at least partially in response to the corporate interest of firms such as IBM that had invested considerable time and resources in promoting the use of TQM in higher education, several attempts were made to summarize its collegiate impact. Particularly notable were reviews by the American Association for Higher Education (1993, 1994), Seymour's (1993) widely read book, *On Q*, and an entire issue of the journal *Total Quality Management* (1996). A perusal of these publications reveals they are notable for their focus on TQM processes and implementation rather than upon evidence. Little actual empirical evidence is included, unless one is interested in the fact that perhaps 50 percent of all institutions of higher education had established some sort of quality-oriented council by the middle of the decade (Burkhalter, 1996).

Nearly all the recent empirical evidence on TQM in higher education prototypically involves a non-academic process such as bill collection, check writing,

admissions applications, and physical plant inventory and job scheduling. That is, the reported implementations of TQM focused primarily on the efficiency of non-academic processes and issues [see the roundtable discussion in *TQM in Higher Education* (1994) as yet another example of this tendency] . Indeed, Owlia and Aspinwall (1996), writing in *Total Quality Management*, which is the "true believers" journal, observed that the focus of TQM always has been on the non-academic sides of institutions of higher education, a conclusion reiterated more recently by Barnard (1999).[1]

That said, when academic issues are posed as a part of TQM, they nearly always focus upon variables such as student and consumer satisfaction because quality is so difficult to define (Owlia, 1996; Owlia and Aspinall, 1998; Barnard, 1999; Kanji and Bin Al Tambi, 1999a,b), Kanji, Bin Al Tambi, and Wallace (1999), Long, *et. al.* (1999). Exemplary here is Lozier and Teeter (1996), who reported that the use of TQM methods in an undergraduate statistics class resulted in higher student satisfaction. Student satisfaction is a relevant consideration; however, it would be a mistake to conclude that satisfied, comfortable students also are students who have learned and whose intellectual frontiers have been shifted. We also can produce increased student satisfaction by placing microwave ovens in dormitories, but such an act would have little to do with increased educational quality or accelerated learning.

Lozier and Teeter also reported on the use of TQM at several other institutions (Drexel, Samford, Belmont, Penn State and Georgia Tech), where attention was given to the introduction of specific academic innovations such as collaborative work groups whose performances were then compared to those generated by conventional instructional methods. This approach comes closer to the mark of relevance. Nonetheless, a variety of well-known non-TQM statistical

[1] On the other hand, Kanji and Bin Al Tambi (1999a) suggest that U.K. institutions of higher education have been much more likely to focus their TQM efforts on academic departments.

methodologies are available to assess the effectiveness of various instructional approaches. Such experiments have been going on for decades and there is nothing earth-shaking about TQM here.

WHY HASN'T TQM BEEN MORE SUCCESSFUL IN HIGHER EDUCATION?

The easiest answer to this question might seem to be, "Well, TQM simply doesn't work as advertised." And, this is fundamentally true. Yet, the more interesting response would be—why is this so? Why did almost two-thirds of collegiate institutions using TQM in 1991 abandon it by the end of the decade? (Klocinski, 1999). There are three major classes of reasons and they hold true for virtually all management fads, including TQM.

ONE: Failure to Focus on the Big Questions

As I've noted, the vast majority of TQM efforts in colleges and universities have focused upon the non-academic facets of these institutions' operations (American Association for Higher Education, 1993, 1994) and the April 1996 issue of *Total Quality Management* (1996). These implementations usually have far more to do with an institution's physical plant and bursar's office than with teaching, research and public service.

Improvements in processes such as check writing and office maintenance are valuable to any institution of higher education, for they have the potential to release badly needed resources for the academic enterprises which are the *raison d'etre* of colleges and universities (Koch and Fisher, 1998). Yet, I can't resist echoing Frank Sinatra—"Is that all there is?" The most important challenges facing institutions of higher education today relate to larger questions of curriculum and what should be taught, the viability of faculty tenure, the use of faculty time, the propriety of technological innovations in instruction, the impact and validity of distance learning, whether students actually learn in any situation, the division of resources and attention between undergradu-

ate and graduate education, the extent to which institutions should become involved in economic development ventures, tuition and fee levels, campus diversity, alcohol and drug abuse, and so forth.

The brutal truth is that management fads have had very little of consequence to say about any of these issues. All of which is to say, TQM and the other management fads have missed the mark on the most important higher education questions of the day. Literally, they focus on how students register rather than what they register for, or what actually happens in the courses for which they register.

Thus, the most important reason why TQM has fallen short in academe is that it simply has not spoken to the most important issues facing colleges and universities. Many, if not most, of the most pressing issues involve questions of value—what should institutions do and to what purposes do they extend themselves? TQM has proven substantially irrelevant to addressing such questions. TQM conceivably could assist colleges and universities in determining its success in answering these questions, for example, how well it serves distance-learning students or how efficient its interlibrary loan program is. However, a fair reading of the received evidence on TQM in higher education reveals not just a paucity of TQM contributions in these essential areas, but a virtual absence of contributions. We can all agree that efficient operation of an institution's physical plant is important, and I readily concur that administrative tasks in areas such as registration and bill paying must be performed efficiently. Indeed, institutions that ignore such processes soon regret their decision. Even so, such issues do not pierce the heart of a modern university and, more so than any other reason, that is why TQM's relevance to higher education has been so disappointingly small.

TWO: Academic Culture Is Not Receptive to TQM

It's been said more than once that it's easier to move a cemetery than a university. Many elements of modern university culture make it difficult for TQM actually to be implemented (Youssef *et. al.*, 1998). Perhaps the most important element in academic culture that frustrates the introduction of conventional TQM procedures is the doctrine of academic freedom as it plays out in individual classrooms and faculty lives. Faculty members traditionally have had the right to profess their disciplines as they see fit and to seek truth, wherever that search leads them. The content of their courses, the nature of their research, and their professional values over the years have been subsumed under the umbrella of academic freedom. Consequently, faculty feel free (and perhaps well justified) to reject evaluative processes such as TQM that might result in satisfaction or productivity measures that could be used to influence how they do their teaching and research. "Don't you ever try to tell me what to teach on the basis of popularity polls," asserted a faculty member to me after she had been asked by her department to consider TQM-oriented techniques in her classroom.

Related to this are the academic institutions of tenure and confidentiality. While tenure originally was designed as a protection of the academic freedom of threatened faculty, it has morphed into an employment security mechanism and is seen as such by most faculty. Hence, in contrast to the situation in a business firm, where a manager might order those who report to her to cooperate with TQM efforts, and penalize or even discharge those who do not do so, such action is virtually impossible in higher education if the presumed target is a faculty member who holds academic tenure. In addition, the very strong academic tradition of confidentiality of evaluation, promotion, tenure, and salary activities usually means that the "managers" in higher education (administrators) cannot utilize or publicize the circumstances of an individual

faculty member. Thus, incentives and disincentives frequently are less strong and even invisible. In any case, the prevalence in academe of "across the board," automatic salary increments (especially at unionized institutions) implies that the range of behavior modification tools available to academic managers is surprisingly small.

It also is true that faculty members tend to work alone more often than together (Youssef, *et. al.*, 1998). Team teaching is rare and professorial research in many disciplines (though certainly not all) tends to be a solitary activity. Indeed, teamwork and group approaches in general are less common in higher education than in many other segments of society. Yet, teamwork is one of the keystones of TQM. Academic institutions dote upon committees and this suggests teamwork; however, academic committees frequently seem designed to frustrate or delay action and usually are heavily process oriented. They are less an example of faculty members working together and more one of adminis-trative structure and process being utilized to protect and insulate individual faculty members, thus reinforcing the interpretations of academic freedom and individual work that were noted above. Zbaracki (1998) noted that one of the effects of TQM is, if anything, to reinforce the penchant of faculty for committees, meetings, and paper-oriented, process-driven activity.[2] Committees are not a way to get things done; often they are a way not to get things done.

Academic committees are consistent with the time-honored notion of "shared governance," which posits that governing boards, administrators, and faculty should share the responsibility of governing and operating institutions of higher education. This phenomenon frequently occurs via joint governing board / administrator / faculty committee membership, or even outright ceding

[2] Birnbaum (2000b, at 103) reports that the application form for the Baldridge National Quality Program was so lengthy (23 pages) and so excessively focused on generating paper that only 16 of more than 16,000 organizations requesting application forms actually completed the application. None was a college or university!

of authority to faculty by boards and administrators, of the essential right to make decisions in areas such as curriculum, evaluation, and promotion and tenure. This may cloud lines of authority and, from the standpoint of managerial theory, frequently separates authority from accountability. Faculty members in a shared governance situation can behave in a manner that some might call irresponsible, but not bear a significant burden for what they say or do, or don't say or do. For example, a faculty member will seldom be penalized for failing to attend meetings, whether or not the meetings are important, and whether or not they have anything to do with TQM. This does not suggest that shared governance is a bankrupt notion; far from it. It is one of the cornerstones of modern American higher education and generally has served institutions well. It does suggest, nonetheless, that the ability of a college or university to implement TQM or any other management process easily can be frustrated by shared governance mechanisms that non-academics find arcane and a matter of wonderment. It is one thing for a college president to announce that she is going to implement a TQM program; it is quite another for her to be able to accomplish what she has announced.

One consequence is that the reluctant professorate is not heavily invested in most campus TQM programs. Carey (1998) reported that faculty were not involved at all in TQM efforts in approximately one-half of the 60 institutions whose efforts he analyzed.[3] An important reason why many faculty shy away from TQM programs is that such programs are viewed as "corporate" intrusions whose presence is inappropriate on campuses. Thorstein Veblen (1918) would be proud of these academics. In addition, many faculty are repelled by the idea that might force them to pre- and post-test the students in their

[3] It is interesting to note that one apparent result of TQM on college campuses has been its tendency to centralize authority. This has followed from the need of TQMers to standardize, measure and control work processes in an attempt to measure progress. Department chairs, deans and vice presidents become more important, faculty less important as directives flow from on high.

courses, or administer student satisfaction surveys on a weekly or even daily basis, in order to gauge faculty effectiveness.

Truth be told, there is a remarkable lack of consensus on many college campuses why colleges and universities exist. The introduction of TQM programs, which clearly emanate from the corporate sector, and the notion of continuous measurement, are antagonistic actions to many faculty. The usual faculty member is accustomed to measurement such as teacher evaluations occurring once a semester, at the end of a semester, and to exams that occur several times during the semester (Youssef et. al., 1998). Yet, TQM posits continuous measurement, perhaps after each lecture. Many faculty are turned off by this idea and hence reject TQM.

Finally, the process of evaluation and measurement in higher education is bi-directional, at least where faculty and students are concerned (Youssef *et. al.*, 1998). In a garden-variety corporate TQM situation, customers provide feedback on products, services, and personnel. Rare is the corporation that evaluates its customers and provides feedback to them. ("You're not a very good customer, Mary.") But, that is exactly what occurs in higher education. Yes, students evaluate faculty and courses, but faculty also evaluate students—who are customers—by means of grades, letters of recommendations, subsequent admissions decisions, and so forth. The bi-directional nature of evaluation in higher education subtly changes the sociology of the situation. Will either students or faculty "tell the truth" when they know that there could be retribution later? The evaluation channel, then, suffers from more contamination in higher education than in corporate settings.

All of these reasons help explain both why TQM has never taken off in higher education and why TQM efforts that have been undertaken have tended to examine the non-academic activities of colleges and universities. While higher

education has always generated substantial volumes of rhetoric about TQM, and some faculty have been among its foremost proponents, the truth is that the groves of academe have never been a fertile ground for substantive TQM projects. Nor will they ever. The intrinsic nature of higher education and its distinctive culture militate against TQM ever acquiring a significant, real foothold in colleges and universities.

THREE: The Customer and Product Problem

The third major class of reasons why management fads usually fail in higher education is what I call "the customer and product problem." One of several potential benefits that can accrue from TQM is a clarification of who the organization is and what it actually does. One cannot talk about quality or measure it unless one has a defined notion of what one is doing and who is being served. It is generally agreed that in order to do useful TQM, one must know who one's customers are. In the case of the Ford Motor Company, the answer is reasonably clear—it is primarily the individuals who purchase their automobiles, financing, parts, and service from Ford. However, the customers of higher education are much more diverse and not so easily defined. They variously include students, faculty, parents, alumni, sports fans and fine arts supporters, professional sports teams, business firms, those who utilize faculty research, individuals and organizations who rent facilities, farmers, high technology organizations, and governments, to name only a few. Because it is difficult to specify who are the customers of higher education, it is commensurately difficult to delineate how one should measure their satisfaction, even if one were to agree that it is satisfaction rather than other variables that one should use to measure the results of TQM. Few institutions in society are as complex in composition and motives as American colleges and universities. For that reason, identifying our customers is not an easy task and is one reason why TQM efforts often have fallen short in academe.

Much the same considerations hold with respect to determining the products of higher education. The Ford Motor Company produces automobiles and other identifiable items such as parts and service. What is it that academic institutions produce? Education? Students? Credit hours? Degrees? Certificates? The performance of students on an examination? The ability of graduates to earn income, or is it the actual earned income of those graduates? The satisfaction and active citizenship of those graduates? The ability to understand a complex and rapidly changing world? Research? Winning athletic teams? Prize-winning theater productions? One need not extend this list of questions very far to see that most individuals believe that colleges and universities produce many different products. The thorny nature of this issue makes the implementation of TQM on most campuses a difficult undertaking. If the denizens of higher education cannot agree on what they are producing, how can they apply quality-enhancing methodologies to those processes?

Since I'm an economist, let me restate this in economic terms. What is the objective function of higher education and what are the constraints? If we were talking about a business firm such as Ford, we might well assert that Ford ostensibly attempts to maximize its profit, or the return to its stockholders, or the rate of return on its invested capital, or some similar variable. No such consensus exists in higher education, especially where faculty are concerned. Higher education publications such as *The Chronicle of Higher Education* are filled with continuing and even bitter arguments over the soul of the academy and quarrels about why colleges and universities exist. These disputations reflect the fractious, diverse, and decentralized nature of the academy and magnify the difficulty of defining a TQM study that actually deals with one of the central issues of modern American higher education. Consequently, there is a strong tendency for TQM to be applied to peripheral issues such as how efficiently campuses handle their mail.

Some believe one can eliminate such ambiguity and disagreement by focusing on individual colleges and universities that have adopted specified missions. True, concentrating upon an institution such as Babson (which traditionally has focused upon business-related education) or Eastman (music) is helpful, for these institutions have much more well-defined missions and cultures. But, what about California-Berkeley, Illinois, and MIT, or perhaps Illinois Wesleyan, Hampton, and Southern Utah? What are their objective functions? What are they attempting to maximize or minimize? What are the constraints? That's one reason why it is difficult to apply TQM to the things that really matter in institutions of higher education. Yes, one can attempt to determine whether students in an organic chemistry class are more or less satisfied with a specific instructional technique, or one can attempt to improve the satisfaction of faculty with the cleanliness of their offices. Once again, however, these are marginal considerations in the context of the modern college or university.

It is not the fault of TQM that it is so difficult for institutions of higher education to specify their objective functions and constraints. Nonetheless, that difficulty necessarily diminishes the impact of TQM on college campuses. The more complex the enterprise, the less useful is TQM.

FINAL THOUGHTS

One of my former colleagues had a poster on his office wall that proclaimed, "At a good university, much is said and done. But, in the last analysis, lots more is said than done." When all is said and done concerning management fads such as TQM in higher education, the inescapable conclusion is that there has been far more pontification than action. Yes, some faculty have become strong exponents of TQM and other fads, as has a somewhat larger proportion of administrators. Even so, there is little doubt that there is more lip service paid to TQM and its relatives than there is actual adherence. And, the focus

of management fads in higher education always has been on non-academic activities. The really important, value-laden and resource intensive questions of educational policy have not been amenable to TQM and other management fads. TQM has little or nothing to contribute to discussions of faculty tenure, undergraduate curricula, and so forth.

It seems a bit impolite to say so, but TQM is well over the hill in higher education. It had its moments, but failed to deliver, and now gradually will fade into the background, albeit slowly because of the tremendous inertia that afflicts higher education. In this regard, Getz, Siegfried, and Anderson's (1997) landmark study of the adoption of 30 of the most important innovations in higher education reported that on average 26 years were required for the median institution to adopt a typical innovation such an automated library circulation system. Alas, TQM and most other management fads seem designed only to exacerbate this sloth.

The strong emphasis upon committee work, meetings, and teamwork, and consensus that permeates TQM is admirable in some respects, but contributes to the tardy response of higher education to innovation and change. Collective, committee-generated decision-making often is an excuse for non-action. However, to paraphrase the old maxim of the United States Marines, "Sometimes it's better to be led by one jerk than by two geniuses." Most shared governance committees have more than their quotas of real or imagined geniuses. Such arrangements generate risk-avoidance behavior, promote solutions that injure no one, discourage entrepreneurial activities, and encourage institutional torpor. Dozens of geniuses collectively utilizing TQM nearly always produce inferior results. As a faculty member pithily once put it to me, 2 + 2 can equal 3 on a faculty committee. It's a form of anti-synergy, he said.

Early in the 20th century, Luigi Pirandello authored "Six Characters in Search of an Author" (Pirandello, 1979). Pirandello's characters were in need of an author who would produce a unifying theme and enunciate their reason for being. Analogously, TQM, as a representative management fad, now is in search of a reason for being. Despite the claims of its devotees that it hasn't ever yet really been implemented correctly (Brigham, 1993), it is a theory in search of empirical evidence, at least where higher education is concerned. And, it is a theory in search of relevance, as it currently skirts the most important challenges in higher education. The irony is that the TQM movement now is in urgent need of TQM (Koch and Fisher, 1998).

Chancellor Ringeisen: That brought back memories, Jim, of those opening convocation speeches and things like that. I'm still thinking about some of your remarks. Thank you. I think I speak for everybody in saying that was a stimulating lecture.

Now for today's program, we have two scholars who will respond to Dr. Koch. First, we will hear from Dr. Keith Sanders, the former executive director of the Illinois Board of Higher Education. He served in that role from 1998 until last spring. Keith was born and raised in southern Illinois and was at Southern Illinois University in Carbondale for quite a while. Prior to being the director of the Board of Higher Education in Illinois, he was the senior vice president for administration and he was the chief operating officer for the University of Wisconsin System in Madison, Wisconsin. He also served as dean and professor of the College of Communication and Fine Arts at Southern Illinois from '83 to '89. He left that position at Southern Illinois to become chancellor and professor at the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point. He is author or co-author of five books and more than 50 articles and papers on the role of communication and politics. He received his Ph.D. in communications from the University of Pittsburgh, and his bachelor's and master's degrees in speech and psychology from Southern Illinois University-Carbondale. Keith, welcome back to Springfield, and we look forward to your remarks. (applause)

Response by Dr. Keith Sanders

Keith Sanders: Well, thank you very much, Richard, for that nice introduction. It wasn't nearly as hyperbolic as the notes I gave you, so it's clear that you are very carefully reading what you say in public and I'll just have to polish that one up and see if I can't get somebody else to read it on some other occasion. Good afternoon, and actually, thanks for those kind words of introduction and thanks also for the invitation to respond to Professor Koch's excellent lecture. As I was listening to him, I thought of Mark Twain's response to a question. Twain was asked, "Mr. Twain, what do you think of the music of Wagner?" He thought about it and said, "Well, it's better than it sounds." (laughter) I had a chance to read this lecture, and although it was very well presented, it is much better than it sounds, so I'm not going to spend a whole lot of time refuting some remarks. Before, in the early and mid 1990s, I was devotee of Total Quality Management. I bear the scars on my back from that experience. Let me for just a few minutes make some remarks, which you will think are digressions, which actually are not. Over several years I have been an interested and reasonably well-informed observer of the University of Illinois and particularly of the University of Illinois at Springfield. Carol and I lived in Springfield for 4 1/2 years, about three of which Naomi Lynn was the star of the show and was an outstanding chancellor of this campus. And from those observations and from my position as executive director of the Board of Higher Education, I bring some good news and some bad news. First the good news: Naomi and her colleagues here, many of whom are in this room, and with the help of the faculty made an outstanding and smooth transition from being Sangamon State University to being the University of Illinois at Springfield. It was done with alacrity and with a minimum of distemper. It was not inevitable that this change, as significant as it has turned out to be, would go so smoothly, but it did, and this institution is far better positioned today for the future because

of the process and because of the outcome of that process. I also want to say that in my time as a resident of this community the relationship between the University of Illinois at Springfield and this community grew and prospered and became one not only of respect, but of affection. Town-gown relationships here are virtually a model for every state university and private university in the state. The addition of the doctorate in public administration was a giant step forward for everyone here—faculty, staff and students—with its focus on policy development at the state level. It is unique. It is beginning to attract an abundance of excellent students and will earn national renown as it grows into full maturity. The presence of a doctoral program on this campus, particularly one in public policy, will further enrich the intellectual climate of the campus; will raise expectations because UIS is now among those doctoral degree-granting institutions across the country. Welcome to the big leagues.

Another real important change that took place while I was here was the approval and the implementation of the Capital Scholars program. It's clearly one of the most important milestones in the history of this campus. Finally, you became a full-fledged bachelor's degree-granting institution with graduate programs built on top. When I arrived at the Board of Higher Education in January 1998, the board had just rejected the Capital Scholars program. Naomi and President Stukel will well understand that momentous occasion. A rigorous debate preceded and followed the rejection of that good idea, creating much ill will, and attracting the attention of legislators who had not really noticed until then, but started very much to take notice. I went to work shortly after I arrived mending a number of badly broken fences. And with the strong leadership of this campus and of the University of Illinois system, and with my friend Phil Rock, who was then the head of the Board of Higher Education, and the support of Governor George Ryan, the board voted unanimously to approve the Capital Scholars program. And there was hardly a murmur of dissent from competing

universities who did not want to see that happen or from disgruntled legislators. And of that I am quite proud. Now I make this point not really because I want to be self-aggrandizing. I am actually capable of that, but that's not why I am making this point. I make it for the few among us who hold the belief that all academic matters should be resolved within the university community. That has never really happened and it never will happen in many important instances, because we have become far too important a public enterprise for us to be allowed to make all the decisions at home and without consulting those who pay the bills. I make the point about the Capital Scholars program also for those who believe that conciliation and compromise are four-letter words. Sometimes, they are considered as such inside the academic community, but they are the hallmarks of the political process. It's not by accident that some people define politics as the art of compromise. I make the point also for those who are sure that government never gets it right no matter how hard it works and no matter how well intended it is. The historic Capital Scholars program is an excellent example to the contrary.

Now the bad news. In Illinois and in most other states, we have very serious fiscal problems, probably worse than any we have experienced since roughly the end of World War II. The University of Illinois' appropriation for this year is already less than it was for last year. And we're not talking about inflation and adjusted figures. We are talking about real dollars. In the next week or so, the governor will inevitably ask the University of Illinois and all other state colleges and universities in the state to give back some of this year's money. My guess is that will be in the range of 2 to 4 percent. Next year's budget reductions will be nothing less than draconian, not only here but in many other places. I wish I could tell you that this is a very temporary phenomenon and that real soon now war jitters will pass, the economy will return to full force and these burdens will be lifted permanently from our shoulders. That isn't

going to happen. The scenario that we are experiencing this year and next year will go on for another at best two or three years. For those of us who try hard to remember the lessons of history, we will remember that the last time the state was in dire straits financially was in the early 1990s, and we weren't in as bad a shape then as we are now. As President Stukel pointed out recently in a meeting at which I was in attendance, it took two or three years for Governor Jim Edgar and the General Assembly to pull us out of that situation and it will take at least that long to do that in this case.

Thus, I pose a question for you, which I think illustrates that the remarks I've just made are responsive to this lecture. In this fiscal climate, how can the University of Illinois at Springfield fund its admirable new initiatives, some of which I mentioned, while sustaining the quality of older programs and activities? Now, I don't know the answer to this question. But it is the kind of hard question that involves questions of fact and questions of value to which Total Quality Management can offer no counsel. I don't know the answer but I do know that finding an answer over the next few years will be probably the central preoccupation of the leadership on this campus, and that means all of you. Well, some of you, I think, are saying, "Well, we invited this guy more or less out of obligation to come and critique a lecture, but now he is telling us our business. He's quit preaching and gone to meddling." Actually, I intend to do that because one of Professor Koch's key contentions in his excellent lecture is that TQM and related fads failed because they avoided "the most important challenges facing institutions of higher education," focusing, as he said, more on the non-academic side of the academy. This is, by and large, true and it tells us something pretty important about ourselves. We are, as institutions and as individuals, subject to the same errors which afflict other less respected and less well educated compatriots in the human struggle. I know that comes as hard news to accept, but it is true. Given the choice, we, and by that I mean

good institutions of higher learning, will generally avoid the tough, potentially divisive issues in favor of the easy and the non-controversial. TQM gave us a perfect means by which to activate this pre-existing prejudice on our part. It let us exercise our natural process with impunity, making it look all the time like we were in fact struggling mightily with the great issues of our institutions, when in fact we were not. I know of what I speak. As I indicated earlier, in the mid -1990s I was a TQM devotee victimized by the facile promise of a quick fix—of which there are none. There are shadows on the walls of caves. There are many persuasive consultants who will come borrow your watch, tell you what time it is and leave with your watch. (laughter) And there are false hopes everywhere, but no easy, quick fixes to any important academic problem, particularly not in the fiscal climate in which we now find ourselves.

One final point, and I'm sure you're glad to hear me say that. Professor Koch argues that "In the realm of higher education one cannot resist recording surprise at how little concrete empirical evidence has been generated concerning TQM...When feelings are substituted," he says, "for evidence and for reality, there is a strong sign that an idea has become passé." To this point I say yes, but many passé ideas remain powerful for a very long time. Indeed, sometimes they grow in influence because they have become passé. We drop our guard and they eschew the world of "logos" and enter the realm of "mythos." Let me give you three examples: Christianity, Islam, and Judaism, all much a part of our mythical past.

In the academic world we have rich cognitive and spiritual opportunities to take advantage of the two trends suggested by Professor Koch's lecture. First, we can deny the hard empirical realities that stare us in the face. But even that is made even easier by the fact that we have a retreat that we can make into the cozy world of academic myth. When a colleague comes up to you, is a

good friend no doubt and courageous, and tells you that your favorite course is a good one but really doesn't fit the overall curricular objectives of the department, you can pay attention and make some changes, or you can take the preferable academic option and invoke academic freedom. When an unfilled position gets taken from one department and allocated elsewhere we can snort, "Administrators are stupid. They can read but I'm beginning to doubt if they can count." When the state reduces institutional budgets we can say, and have said, "If Illinois really cared about education it would make higher education a priority above and beyond K-12 education, above and beyond providing healthcare for the elderly, above and beyond the incarceration of felons." Now all of these are emotionally satisfying responses, and all of them are largely irrelevant to the rational, to the empirical, to the hard problems that we face on a regular basis. Professor Koch has given us an exceptionally well-researched lecture. It is thoughtful. It is eloquent. But the very best thing about it of all, in my judgment, is that it stimulates us to think seriously about the best and the worst of who we are. (applause)

Chancellor Ringeisen: Our second respondent today is Dr. Ronald McNeil, dean of our own College of Business and Management here at UIS. He is new to us, and prior to his appointment to UIS, Dr. McNeil served as dean of the Charlton College of Business at the University of Massachusetts-Dartmouth for a decade. During his ten years as dean at UMass Dartmouth, the college achieved AACSB international accreditation, which is what our business college here will do. His fields of interest and teaching experience were in the areas of strategic management, organizational development and change, and entrepreneurship. His research interests include public policy formulation, international trade and competitive advantages, e-commerce and strategic advantages, and assessment. He is the author or co-author of over 50 publications, has delivered

invited presentations in China, Taiwan, Italy, France, Brussels, England, and the United States. Dr. McNeil received his Ph.D. and master's degrees from the University of Memphis and completed his undergraduate degree in England. So let's welcome our own Ron McNeil for the second response. (applause)

Response by Dr. Ronald McNeil

Dr. Ronald McNeil: Thank you, Chancellor Ringeisen and Dr. Koch, for your presentation. It is very difficult to follow a performance by a former head of the Illinois Board of Higher Education, who has such an accumulation of history and personal knowledge about higher education in the state of Illinois. From my experience and background over the past decade, I could recount to you the dilemma and problems facing higher education in Massachusetts. However, to do so would be neither germane or appropriate. The agenda is to comment on the presentation by Dr. Koch and that I will do.

The original paper that I read concerning Dr. Koch's presentation, "TQM and Other Management Fads," was "TQM and Other Nostrums." The first thing I did was wonder what the word nostrums meant. (laughter) The first assumption, hypothesis, was that it had something to do with the nose. In fact, if you look it up in the dictionary, not the word nose, but the word nostrum, you will discover that it resides between nostril and nosey. The meaning of the word nostrum does address some of the issues on which Dr. Koch focused. Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary, states that nostrum means "a medicine of secret composition recommended by its preparer but usually without scientific proof of its effectiveness." Its second meaning is "a questionable remedy or a scheme, otherwise known as a panacea," or as Dr. Koch called it, a silver bullet.

The question is: Why do we need a silver bullet? Is it for vampires when we are out of garlic? Perhaps, but as a rule a silver bullet is required when no other solution is found or available. Ponce de Leon had the silver bullet and for him it was to discover the fountain of youth and escape death. Unfortunately, he is buried in Puerto Rico and never found the fountain of youth. (laughter) But what we really find out from Dr. Koch's presentation is the struggle we have in management, higher education administration and in life in dealing with

a dynamic and changing world for which simple solutions are not known or easily accessible. The result is a multitude of fads. It is similar to television commercials purporting that headaches can be cured in seconds, tens of pounds shed for dollars and the like. There appear to be solutions for almost everything. Yet, we have identified so many that our solutions to them have generated new strains of problems to resolve.

TQM is one of the treatments or solutions that came along to address some of the problems plaguing business practices. In the struggle to find definitions, methods and processes to deal with the world management, Total Quality Management offered solutions to management and was lucrative for consultants and writers. Its history and applications may be strewn with some failures, some successes, but the struggles to discover "the silver bullet to solve all administrative and management issues" remain. The review of Total Quality Management can be traced in contemporary terms to Edward Deming as mentioned by Dr. Koch and his excellent review. Dr. Koch cited the history of TQM from the '80s and reviewed some applications of the practice in companies such as Motorola and General Electric. As he said, the results are mixed with successes and failures. Dr. Koch next moved from applications of TQM in the private sector to its application in higher education in the 1990s. He pointed out the real corpulence of the acceptance of the "fad" as it was adopted to the processes in higher education. Its implementation in higher education is void of the corpulence of empirical evidence of success. One set of empirical evidence suggests that TQM is more often applied to non-academic processes in higher ed, such as collection of bills and check writing, than to the heart and core of what the academy is.

In the remainder of his paper that Dr. Koch wrote an additional 18 pages. From page 9 forward what you heard orally dealt with the heart and core of

TQM applications in higher education; namely, TQM has been used to address improvement in processes which are more mechanical in nature. For example, telephone calls, what courses to take, and the like. However, in the more endemic and important issues of higher education, we are still in need of a silver bullet. We are still attempting to discover how to effectively deal with how effectively and quickly we can improve the way we impart and measure learning. Dr. Koch moved systematically from the concrete and almost simplistic issues with which we of the academy cope, such as how students register, to the higher order kinds of conceptual issues, such as what are students registering for? And what actually happens in the courses that they are registering to take? He posed an all-important question concerning the value of what institutions actually do. He did this in a number of ways, from Babson College with their business and entrepreneurship programs to other well-defined institutions, and then to what purposes do institutions extend themselves.

Now, Dr. Koch wisely avoided answering the questions completely, otherwise, he would have no consulting business now. (laughter) So he moved from those kinds of questions to those of the academic culture and its ability to remain highly impervious to external stimuli of any nostrum. He described the indigenous processes and perceived rights in higher education that impede implementation of change and timely adaptations. As he mentioned, the interpretation of academic freedom, the meaning and interpretation of tenure, the application of confidentiality, the concept of shared governance and the rather unscientific evaluation system that is bi-directionally cross-contaminated by the bi-directional, slow decision-making to the point that change is measured in decades. For example, students evaluate professors, professors evaluate students, which may not lead to objectivity.

Dr. Koch then moved the TQM view of customers and product problems, both of which lead to bitter quarrels among faculty. Dr. Koch subtly implied that the soul of the academy is about learning and that universities avoid answering some very plaguing questions about what we are and what our responsibility is to students and our external funders.

Those external to us never realized we accept 18-year-olds who could not clean their rooms, who cannot repair a car, only damage it, (laughter) 18-year-olds who could not clean their clothes, not do many of those things and in four to five years have them ready to enter a world with a job, which most parents would like, or to higher education for terms of master's or doctor's degrees. And some of the things we do to get there, we don't appreciate and talk about very often.

So what it led me to do, as I reviewed the paper and thought about it, is to look more closely at what we do. You mention the complexity of an organization may explain why TQM doesn't work. I would suggest Motorola has revenues of $30 billion as of 2001, employs 133,000 people, 6,000 in Europe, has many employees with doctorates, has its own university, produces a variety of products and services, a multiplicity of operations ranging from research, engineering, marketing, design, manufacturing, and legal, to name only a few. It has had to cope with a decrease in revenues from $37 billion in the year 2000 to $30 billion in 2001, some 20 percent decline in a very complex organization. I would call that success.

However, Motorola is very different from higher education. There is a quantum leap from a cell phone, a transistor or some other computer chip and to what we do and therein lies the difference. The culture of Motorola is very different from our culture. For example, Motorola cannot remain a viable company if it pontificates more than it has actions. Motorola cannot take 26 years to adopt

a typical innovation. Motorola cannot allow committee decision-making to be an excuse for inaction. The reason is that if it did all of these things, what would happen to Motorola? Well, its competitors would rejoice, but Motorola and the state of Illinois would lose; Motorola would cease to exist. Now, I'm not suggesting at all that a university should become like Motorola. Even Motorola University is for adult, mature professionals, not traditional students or non-traditional students striving to earn a degree. There are large differences in culture, socialization of employees, demand for synchronization of culture and processes with the external environment of technology and its advances, competitive forces, the gap between raw materials and processes from Motorola to those of us in the academy.

The question then becomes, why should we even talk about these issues? Well, those who fund us—students, donors, legislative bodies, and executive bodies—are demanding confirmation of value. That confirmation is what links Dr. Koch's presentation to what our last respondent talked about—that Keith referred to—and that is funding. Our accrediting bodies, such as the North Central, the Southern Association, AACSB in business, are asking for validation of positive learning outcomes as are our funders, whether the state, parents, students or a combination thereof.

The question would be, if we did not have special accesses to resources and histories as universities, whether private or public, there might be very little difference between us and Motorola. Motorola without revenues and we without revenues would be the same. The seriousness of the question requires more than what TQM or any other nostrum or any other fad has to offer.

What it made me think about is: How do we address these issues? Or, do we passively continue on as funding deteriorates and quality dissipates? How do

we think collaboratively about dealing and coping with confirming that what we do has high value and is an asset to society?

As administrators, we deal with an external world of politics, funding and a host of other variables, which have both their good side and bad side. As faculty members, we deal with students, research, instruction and campus issues. Perhaps administratively, one of our tasks is to begin knowing what we are about in some of those external variables that affect all of us. While funding is viewed as an administrative issue, it reaches down to what's in the classroom, and what's in the classroom, includes the curriculum, the faculty, technology and whether the lights go on. Shared governance that Dr. Koch mentioned includes all who participate in higher education, from staff and faculty to administrations and students. We must appreciate those issues which faculty face, and faculty, those issues that others face. If faculty, administrator, government leaders and others each burrow into their myopic functions, then we are destined to achieve mediocrity at best.

Almost a century ago another nostrum was proposed, in much the same way as TQM, to be a silver bullet. This was written in 1912 as a simplistic response to human development. It says, "Give me a dozen healthy infants, well formed and my own specified world to bring them up in, and I'll guarantee to take any one at random and train him to become any type of specialist I might select—doctor, lawyer, artist, merchant-chief and yes, even beggar-man and thief, regardless of his talents, penchants, tendencies, abilities, vocations and the race of his ancestors." This was written in 1912 by J.B. Watson, the father of behaviorism. J.B. Watson was another nostrum. He left the academy and became a wealthy advertiser because of problems he had at Johns Hopkins.

But the real issue that we face, then, as an academy, is to work collaboratively with all stakeholders. We must. I think faculty and administrators need to

recognize the seriousness of the issues forced upon us by a dynamic environment. We must protect those things that are good about the academy, we need to understand those things outside of the academy that affect what we do, and we must narrow the gap between the dynamic changes about us and our culture with its inability to act in a timely manner. We must reduce the constraints that impede our ability and effectiveness to stay true to our profession of teaching, publishing and rendering service as members of the academy who live in a dynamic world external to us. (applause)

Chancellor Ringeisen: Thanks, Ron. That was very interesting as well. I don't know how we separate out all of these ideas that are floating around. What we want to do now is to have a discussion about these topics and anything you have heard today or anything that has made you think about some of these concepts. The floor is open for comments or questions for Dr. Koch or Dr. Sanders or Dr. McNeil. Dr. Koch, there is another idea that came along in the 1990s very strongly, which Ron McNeil alluded to, and that was assessment of learning. It is an idea that has been latched onto by the accrediting organization of this campus, the North Central Association, by the Illinois Board of Higher Education, and by many professional disciplinary organizations. I am wondering, in your opinion, is assessment of learning another one of these management fads or nostrums, or is there something fundamentally different about it that would warrant the kind of effort that is going into developing programs for assessment at universities across the country?

Dr. James Koch: Well, that really is a good question, and no doubt it is somewhat faddish with crediting agencies and everyone else coming to us now and saying, "Demonstrate that your students are really learning" or whatever. It is full of problems in the sense it is very difficult to do well because, first of all, one has to decide—what is it that people are supposed to be learning, let's say, in Economics 101? And then you have what I will call an intertemporal problem in that some of these things you wouldn't see until ten, twenty, thirty or forty years later. I'd like to think, for example, when I'm teaching "Beginning Economics" that one of the major things I'm doing is giving students sort of a kit of logic, a way of thinking about things, a way to attack subject matter, and this relates in some way to how they will pursue their life as citizens over a long period of time. Well, no single examination or the GRE or something like it is directly going to measure that, and some of those things are not obviously observable and we won't observe them immediately. Having said all that, I

think we ought to be interested, vitally interested, in assessment. But some of the things we do in higher education are more in the normative or subjective domain as opposed to the objective domain, and so you can't test those quite so easily. Back at Illinois State and Normal University in the 1950s, I took a music appreciation course, and it was great and it still sticks with me, and I still have an appreciation for certain kinds of things that were very important in my life, and I'm not sure exactly how we would measure that except through my CD purchases or something, or my use of Napster, perhaps. (laughter) So, yes, very much I think this is something we ought to do, and I think we ought to be more concerned that we can provide individuals with some evidence of what it is that we are doing and how effective we are, but we have to understand that it is really very difficult to measure some of the things, and some of the things we won't see the results of for decades.

Chancellor Ringeisen: Anybody else want to give a shot at that question?

Dr. Keith Sanders: Well, since the Board of Higher Education was mentioned, I guess I need to do that. I also want to take one second and attribute an author that I forgot to mention in my talk. I'm about two-thirds through an absolutely stunning book written by Karen Armstrong called *In Search of God*. It's not a religious tome. It is a thoughtful investigation of the origin of the ideas of Christianity and Judaism and Islam and an explanation of why fundamentalist movements have begun all around the world. It is a wonderful book. I couldn't go in search of God when I worked for the Board of Higher Education (laughter) because I knew where God resided, (laughter) and so only now can I read a book like that. And I also want to say to President Stukel, "Professor Koch and I are from THE Illinois State University, (laughter) the first institution of higher learning in Illinois."

Dr. James Koch: Well, nobody is perfect. (laughter)

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