

# Administration

## An End or a Means

THOMAS J. STANLY  
*Nicholls State College*

Administration is a means to accomplish the end — advancing knowledge through education. However, a meeting of college administrators, from presidents to department heads, will always produce the side remark, "I would be much better off if I were just a professor teaching or doing research instead of worrying about all this which we aren't going to solve anyway. Those full-time professors are much better off than I." Not many of these soul-searching administrators would change their situation if they had a choice, but their remarks do point up that the opportunity to move from teaching and research to administration is a two-sided coin.

Rebuffs are common today from promising young scholars when offered administrative posts at which their counterparts prior to World War II would have jumped. This fact realistically focuses attention on how effective an administrative assignment is as a means of professional accomplishment.

A paper of this sort is not complete without taking note of change as a major cause of new standards of value. Change may indeed be employed here. Some of the changes affecting current re-assessment of full-time teaching or research versus administration as a means of personal and professional accomplishment should begin by relating to this dilemma the recent knowledge explosion. Lawrence C. Hackmack,<sup>1</sup> a professor of management, has said, "At most universities prominent professors, outstanding lecturers, and eminent researchers are holding administrative posts." Recognizing this to have been the logical vehicle for their promotion to administration, it is no wonder that these people find themselves unable to cope with escalating levels of demand for personal time to be devoted to increasingly complex administrative problems and at the same time remain abreast of a growing body of knowledge in their disciplines. Hanzeli<sup>2</sup> says, "The new administrator should waste no time in being more than an enlightened

reader in his former field." This may not be acceptable but it indicates that there is a swelling tide of personal academic frustration shared by the administrator of today due to the task of serving two demanding masters. The result is a personal feeling of academic inadequacy unless a broader, impersonal end is viewed—unlimited expansion of knowledge.

A second consideration is that the public now views academic achievement as news. Research and teaching accomplishments now compete for news-media space. This brings heretofore unheralded public acclaim to the innovator in the classroom or laboratory. His star may rise far beyond that of his boss.

Faculty development has evolved largely into a battle of dollars at the market place for promising scholars. They are in short supply. The price has gone up faster than for administrators. In some cases mobility, usually not allowed an administrator, has become an effective bargaining weapon for more demanding faculty at institutions hungry for terminal degrees. Therefore, a third reason may be that administration is no longer the only avenue for financial advancement in the academic community.

Greater participation in academic decisions by the non-administrator may be looked on as a fourth condition which has changed the traditional concept of administrative authority. As the result of this democratic trend, one need no longer occupy the sometimes spiny chair of administration to voice his views, consequently exerting his influence on his colleagues.

Finally, outside concern with the direction of higher education has begun to erode the self-direction of institutional administration. Manning M. Patillos,<sup>3</sup> Associate Director of the Danforth Foundation, said, "Most people connected with colleges and universities are not yet fully aware of the increased power of the federal government in higher education. It will be several years

before the shift of influence is completely understood. But, here and there, especially among administrators, I find a growing awareness of the diminution of institutional autonomy which the new conditions have produced . . . Energetic and capable federal administrators see their role as shapers of educational policy—not just conveyers of funds . . . renders the administrators interpreters." It may be added that these non-institutional influences have numerous points of origin.

If administration is truly viewed by the participant as a means to accomplish the end of advancing knowledge, the above changes do not present insurmountable problems. Indeed they may be viewed as incentives. On the other hand, if they make administration truly undesirable, then one should check whether he is serving himself or his profession, and in what order.

On the assumption that administration is viewed as a means to the end of advancing knowledge, it may be well to look at how the administrator may attain professional and personal achievement from his particular assignment.

Most administrators continue to teach or do some research because it is a "good" institutional tradition and perhaps more often because they want to. This is where the time-study-interest squeeze takes place. They are a fish out of water if they become professionally inactive. They soon become an also-ran academician if they continue to compete. A young administrator recently indicated neglect of classes and writing as his biggest concern in his new administrative post. He apparently sees his primary mission as being that of teaching which is perhaps as it should be if he views advancing knowledge as his end. It has been suggested that the administrator confine his active professional interest to a limited field within his discipline, seeking professional satisfaction in his new field where competition for excellence in research and publication is

not so keen, not nearly so sophisticated, and probably in greater need, though it is less sensational.

One writer<sup>4</sup> has said, in the interest of a administration, that "Achievement is not in data, but patterns of actions perceived and interpreted by the human mind . . . An authoritative knowledge of the educational process compensates . . . the administration for the loss of scholarly prestige." He further stated, "Administrators should become students of higher education."<sup>5</sup>

The new found acclaim of the researcher or teacher should be viewed by the administrator as public evidence of his own effectiveness in his position of leadership. This leadership accrues from his central relationship with research, faculty, students, and ideas. Perhaps a greater end — that of harnessing resulting new ideas for improvement of man's lot — is what is to be accomplished by the administrator.

The fact that outstanding achievement by teachers and researchers now commands adequate financial reward should be a point in favor of higher financial horizons for those in administration. No doubt the practice of selecting administrators from the ranks of outstanding prac-

tioners will continue. On this assumption, one may conclude that generally as the salaries of non-administrators advance, that of the effective administrators will advance accordingly. Higher income for non-administrators resulting from salary, publication, and consultation will undoubtedly retain a greater number of the more able people in the non-administrative group. Their presence in numbers will put pressure on administrators for more creative leadership than in the past. This will undoubtedly result in an upgrading of administration.

Leadership in higher education is more concerned today with allowing the voice of the faculty to be heard regarding the means and ends of education. This influence, kept within the bounds of institutional purpose, may well give the administrator more tools with which to work toward his end of advancing knowledge because of his central position among the faculty, students, and ideas. This enhances his accomplishment potential rather than detracts from it. The encroachment of outside influence on the individualism of the administrator may be looked on as assistance rather than interference. Where a void of direction exists, perhaps such things

as committee reports, studies, and panel reports do dictate decisions to administrators who could be making their own. But, where there is direction, vitality, and the desire for accomplishment of the end — advancing knowledge through education — then evaluations, recommendations, minimum standards, and position statements emanating from various outside groups, will normally assume their intended complementary role.

All of these emerging conditions surrounding the administrative function if viewed in the above perspectives should make these posts more attractive as a means to professional and personal accomplishment. In short, the administrator has more with which to work toward the end of advancing knowledge through education.

<sup>1</sup> Lawrence C. Hackamack, *College and University Business*, Vol. 41, (Nov. 1966), p. 39.

<sup>2</sup> Victor E. Hanzeli, "The Educational Leadership of the Academic Dean", *Journal of Higher Education*, XXXVII (Nov. 1966), p. 425.

<sup>3</sup> Manning M. Patillos, *Speech, College Management*, (August, 1966), p. 32.

<sup>4</sup> Hanzeli, V. E. "The Educational Leadership of the Academic Dean", *op. cit.* p. 425.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 427.

# The Dean and his Bosses

S. E. WHEELER  
*Berea College*

There is no set job responsibility for a college dean. His duties are largely determined by the president. In fact, in many cases he is a trouble shooter for the president. He mediates conflicts and pours oil on troubled waters.

It has often been said that the dean is a lightning rod; he absorbs static. The college is rare which does not have professors who need to have someone to lend an ear to their grievances and suggestions. The dean listens as he must and should. He listens and sometimes he learns. He learns why a professor is leaving, why a department is sick with dissension. The dean listens, and he does something or he does nothing. But the listening itself is important, because it is one of the few devices he may have to learn what is going on among his faculty members; but for the most part, the dean will concentrate on

policy rather than upon individual cases, on orderly procedures rather than impromptu decisions.

The faculty under the chairmanship of the dean has three major responsibilities. (a) Proposes to the dean and governing board for approval of academic objectives and long range academic plans and their modification, based on continuous evaluation. (b) To develop, evaluate, and modify academic programs of instruction and research field services consistent with approved objectives and plans. The programs include the curricula of instruction and policies for the undertaking of research and field service. (c) To establish criteria and policies for student standards, their selection, retention, and the awarding of degrees and honors. After the educational program and objectives have been defined and accepted, they in turn become his boss.

Mr. Wheeler has been a teacher and administrator since graduation from Berea College in 1929 (B.S. Agriculture). He received his masters degree in agricultural education from the University of Kentucky, Lexington, Kentucky in 1941. He has taught in the Agriculture Department of Berea College since 1955.

\* \* \*

Few people realize that the dean rarely has the power of decision. This may cause some people to underestimate his power in the college community; but the strong dean has a tremendous influence. He selects new faculty members, hires and in many cases trains them. He works long and hard in preparation of the budget. He proposes to the president