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UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA  
RIVERSIDE

The Construction of Professional Identity and Pathways of Participation of Full Time  
Faculty Members in University Restructuring in Mexico

A Dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction  
of the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

in

Education

by

Virginia Montero Hernandez

August 2010

Dissertation Committee

Dr. John S. Levin, Co-Chairperson

Dr. Judith H. Sandholtz, Co-Chairperson

Dr. Natalie Becker

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The Dissertation of Virginia Montero Hernandez is approved:

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## DEDICATION

To the Lord- You enable each one of us to make sense of the world around us by putting in our soul the right amount of faith, love, and reasoning to find the answers to our compelling questions.

To my always supportive friends, Daniela, Berenice, Maribel, Alejandra, Anna, and Chrissy—you experienced along with me the pain, joy, stress, and passion that the process of becoming a woman in the professional world entails.

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## **ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION**

The Construction of Professional Identity and Pathways of Participation of Full Time Faculty Members in University Restructuring in Mexico

by

Virginia Montero Hernandez

Doctor of Philosophy, Graduate Program in Education  
University of California, Riverside, August 2010  
Dr. John S. Levin, Co-Chairperson  
Dr. Judith Sandholtz, Co-Chairperson

Since the 1990s, the federal government required public state universities in Mexico to recruit full time faculty members with doctoral degrees and research productivity to increase the academic competitiveness of higher education. After two decades of the implementation of federal mandates, public state universities have not improved their academic life significantly (Chavoya-Peña, et al., 2006). The failure of federal programs for university restructuring can be understood from a variety of perspectives. Central to this failure is the faculty body.

Based on a case study approach, this investigation sought to understand the ways in which full time faculty members who entered state public universities since 1996 as part of the Faculty Enhancement Program (PROMEP) negotiated their professional identity within a climate of university restructuring in Mexico. The case site

was a public state university in the state of Morelos (UM) in the central valley of Mexico. This investigation included three research questions: What are the contextual factors for the negotiation of academic identity? What are the practices that enable full time faculty to negotiate their academic identity? What are the characteristics of the academic identity of full time faculty? Organizational theory, cultural theory, and professional identity theory served as the theoretical framework and shaped this investigation.

Empirical data collected through semi-structured interviews, participant observation, and document analysis were interpreted through analytical induction (Erickson, 1986) and reflexive analysis (Aunger, 1995). Three central findings are presented. First, full time faculty members at UM self-defined as researchers. Full time faculty members negotiated their academic identity within the conception of two types of Faculties: parochial and modern Faculties. Each type of Faculty had a different cultural orientation and social structure to organize academic life. Second, full time faculty members stressed their reluctance to participate in committee work; yet they engaged actively in institutional service activities in order to create organizational conditions that facilitated the development of research and teaching. Third, through strategies of self-regulation, full time faculty members negotiated three types of self-definitions: the academic as researcher, the academic as change-maker, and the academic as saturated worker. Contributions of this study, implications for practice, and pathways for further research are discussed.

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## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **INTRODUCTION TO THE PROBLEM**

Mexico is a nation with one of the lowest percentages of human resources engaged in the production and application of scientific knowledge (Pérez, 2006). Using survey data from 1998, the National Council for Science and Technology in Mexico (CONACyT) reported that until 2005, there were only 1.07 researchers per 1,000 individuals in the labor force (Bonilla, Guerrero, & Juárez, 2006). The report notes that 17.4 % of the labor population attained either a master's or a doctoral degree. The participation of Mexico in the production of knowledge at the international level is well below countries such as U.S.A., Canada, Germany, Chile, Spain, Brazil, and Japan. During the 1980s and 1990s, the federal government of Mexico realized that to reach levels of knowledge production and academic competitiveness comparable to other countries it was mandatory to initiate a process of modernization of higher education (Chavoya-Peña, et al., 2006).

The lack of academic competitiveness and participation in knowledge production among higher education institutions in Mexico derive from historical and socio-cultural factors. Public universities in Mexico have incorporated partial and fragmented elements taken from the Spanish, French, and U.S. higher education models (Barona, 2006; Díaz-Barriga, 2007). There has not been a consistent project either to adopt or adapt a perspective that guides the development of educational practices that respond to regional conditions and demands. Instead, higher education institutions have grown

without defined purposes and structure (Guevara, 2004). After the Mexican civil war in 1917, the establishment of higher education institutions grew quickly as a response to the demands of middle income people asking for greater access to formal studies (Gil-Antón, 2003). State public universities during the first half of the twenty century allowed the enrollment of a massive number of students without planning the type of the educational services to offer to this new community of learners. From the 1960s to the 1990s, higher education institutions in Mexico recruited faculty with low levels of professionalization (i.e., bachelor's degree holders) to educate university students (Gil-Antón, 2000; Guevara, 2004).

By the 1980s, the Mexican landscape was defined by an educational crisis stemming from the unregulated expansion of higher education (Gil-Antón, 2003). The declining conditions of educational processes in the country became evident in low student attainment, no accredited programs, use of outmoded instructional techniques, and almost nonexistent participation in research activities (Guevara-Niebla, 1992).

From 1982 to 1994, the federal government in Mexico released a series of national strategic programs aimed to promote university restructuring. The purpose of federal programs was to encourage state public universities to obtain better indicators of academic achievement (e.g., graduation rates, accredited programs, funded research programs, research networks, and number of full time professors) (Porter, 2003; Silva, 2000). Federal programs were formulated and monitored by three national agencies:

CONACyT, the Ministry of Education (SEP,<sup>1</sup> *Secretaría de Educación Pública*), and the National Association of Universities and Higher Education Institutions (*Asociación Nacional de Universidades e Instituciones de Educación Superior*, ANUIES). At present, public state universities which show positive indicators of academic achievement (e.g., graduation rates, accredited programs) receive greater federal funds (Cazés-Menache, Ibarra-Colado, & Porter-Galetar, 2004; Ibarra-Colado, 2002; Porter, 2003).

Federal programs in Mexico presented two central strategies for university restructuring: first, to delineate a model of professional identity that academics in public state universities were expected to attain in order to improve academic life; and second, to instill an organizational culture based on planning and evaluation practices that would enable public state universities to compete for the allocation of federal funds (Aguerrondo, 2004; Boice, 1992; Roy, 1998). During the 1990s, a central assumption was that if public universities increased the number of full time faculty members with a universally validated professional model of postsecondary education [e.g., research oriented, high degree output, participation by faculty in international scholarly exchange, and publication networks] (Gil-Antón, 2003), then higher education institutions would become more competitive both in the national and international context. The federal government thought of the professionalization of the faculty body as a strategy to promote university restructuring (Vidales, Sahagún, & Oca, 2006). As a result, federal strategic programs were and continue to be consistently oriented to

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<sup>1</sup> Acronyms of agencies and institutions named are presented in Spanish.

increase the levels of professional training among faculty members, their participation in research and teaching activities, collegial work and networking, and publications.

Two major federal programs have persisted over the last decades to promote academic professionalization as a pathway for university restructuring in Mexico. One of the first programs targeting academics was the National System of Researchers (*Sistema Nacional de Investigadores, SNI*), created in 1984. SNI was aimed to monitor and award the scientific activities and productivity of the community of Mexican scholars working in different disciplines. PhD holders who belong to either federal or state universities, both in the public and private sectors of the nation, can compete to have the quality of their work assessed. PhD holders who obtain positive outcomes in the process of evaluation are granted the appointment of “national researcher,” which translates into increased salary and public prestige for the individual. It is the expectation that national researchers sustain and advance scientific activities and collaborate in the formation of students who can enter the labor market. Researchers can aspire to be awarded merit in one of the three categories defined by the program: candidacy to national researcher, national researcher (levels I, II, and III), and emeritus researcher. Once a researcher has been granted a place in one of these categories they hold that status for three years before eligibility to apply for the next level. However, the application for another level is not required and moving up a level is not universal.

In addition to the National System of Researchers, another major federal program was released in 1996 to elevate the levels of credentialization among faculty

members and to foster the participation of faculty in research and teaching activities. SEP along with CONACyT and ANUIES released the Faculty Enhancement Program (*Programa para el Mejoramiento del Profesorado*, PROMEP). PROMEP was aimed to remediate the low levels of professionalization (e.g., lack of graduate studies) that faculty members exhibited since the 1960s and 1970s when the student population of higher education institutions grew dramatically (Torres & Schugurensky, 2002). By the 1990s, most of the professors working at state public universities only held a bachelor's degree. In 1996, there was a total of 18,093 full time professors working at public universities: 8% of that population had completed a doctoral program, 32 % had a professional specialization (e.g., pediatrics or psychological therapy ), and 60% had attained a bachelor's degree (Vidales, et al., 2006). PROMEP was expected to last ten years (from 1996-2006) and intended to encourage universities to increase both to the number of full-time professors with a master's or doctoral degree and the number of academic bodies<sup>2</sup> capable of developing collaborative research and research networks both at national universities and abroad (Chavoya-Peña, 2001; Chavoya-Peña, et al., 2006). The main feature of PROMEP is that it establishes a series of indicators that define a validated professional model which academics at universities are expected to enact in order to improve academic life. PROMEP identified four central activities for professors: research, teaching, tutoring, and service.

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<sup>2</sup> In Mexican public universities, an academic body consists of a group of full-time professors who work in the same department, have diverse disciplinary backgrounds, share research interests, and work together to design research projects and apply for federal funds.

PROMEP disburses federal funds, which are supplementary and do not constitute part of the base allocation, to those state universities which demonstrate that their academic personnel match the professional model. Those supplementary funds are allocated among academics for them either to enroll in high-quality graduate programs, nationally or abroad or to design and implement personal and collective research projects. PROMEP encourages academics' professionalization both at the individually and collective level by offering financial aid for graduate studies and research activities both individual and collaboratively. After 1996, the hiring policies of academics in state universities were influenced by PROMEP: academics are hired for full time positions if they comply with the professional model validated by PROMEP.

### **Problem Statement**

State public universities have responded to federal prescriptions and programs by recruiting full time faculty members with high levels of professionalization [i.e., PhD degree, substantial number of publications, funded research projects, teaching experience, and membership in national and international academic associations] (Chavoya-Peña, et al., 2006). However, after two decades of the implementation of federal strategic programs, state universities have not reached significant improvement in the indicators of academic achievement such as student graduate rates, accredited programs, and enrollment of graduate students (Chavoya-Peña, et al., 2006).

According to the 2001-2006 report issued by SEP in collaboration with the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), completion rates of

students enrolled in both public and private higher education institutions was 57%; however, student withdrawal was high, reaching an average of 20% per year. According to the 2006-2007 national statistics provided by ANUIES, in public universities and technologic institutes offering four-year degrees only 9% (i.e., 130, 527 students out of a total of 1,437,498) of students finished their course work and attained a bachelor's degree by 2005. Similarly, the number of students who enrolled in a graduate program and attained either a master's or doctoral degree during the 2005-2006 academic year was 20% (i.e., 18, 200 students out of a total of 88, 293 initially registered). Additionally, according to the statistics reported by the Interinstitutional Committees for the Evaluation of Higher Education (*Comités Interinstitucionales para la Evaluación de la Educación Superior*, CIEES), until August 2009 the percentage of educational programs in public universities (those institutions that decided to participate in the diagnostic evaluation conducted by CIEES) that had reached the highest level of consolidation was 9.3 % (i.e., 321 out of a total of 3,468 programs which applied for diagnostic evaluation).

The implementation of federal programs aimed to enhance public state universities has not led to the outcomes expected; instead, it has triggered two phenomena. On the one hand, the demands of professional development placed upon academics have precipitated their engagement in a series of individual efforts to reach higher levels of research productivity that are not entirely related to improve academic activities at universities but focused to attain tenure and sufficient salaries for individuals (Chavoya-Peña, et al., 2006; Ibarra-Colado & Porter-Galetar, 2007). On the



other hand, it has become common among institutions to simulate planning and evaluation practices. That is, while institutions have learned how to formulate documents that represent strategic planning models, self-evaluation reports, and long-term projects, they do not implement effective mechanisms for organizational change and correspondingly their everyday routines preserve traditional practices (e.g., intervention of union leaders into academic decisions) that hinder the construction of university life (Ibarra-Colado & Porter-Galetar, 2007; Porter, 2003). Critics of the higher education system in Mexico suggest that federal programs for university restructuring lack conceptual bases, as well as implementation strategies that are sensitive to local differences. Furthermore, institutions lack the ability to measure the adequacy of these programs to respond to the complexities of educational processes in everyday life (Chavoya-Peña, et al., 2006; Gil-Antón, 1994; Ibarra-Colado & Porter-Galetar, 2007; Porter, 2003).

### **The Study's Purpose**

The general purpose of my inquiry was to explain the ways in which full time academics that entered state public universities since 1996 as part of PROMEP negotiate their professional identity within a climate of university restructuring in Mexico. I examine the construction of faculty members' professional identity and its intersection with the process of university functioning because I considered this relationship as a factor that intervenes in the construction of higher levels of academic competitiveness at state public universities in Mexico. The failure of federal programs aimed to upgrade

universities can be understood from a variety of perspectives. Central to this failure is the academic who has evolved in the midst of the multiple prescriptions and forms of control and assessment established in the programs released by the Mexican government.

State universities recruit an increasing number of skilled and productive full time faculty members; however, scholars note that the lack of organization of university functioning lead academics' work to become an aggregate of individual projects and efforts that contribute peripherally to the development of university life (Guevara, 2004; Ibarra-Colado & Porter-Galetar, 2007; Porter, 2003). It is argued that hiring full time faculty members with high levels of formative training does not automatically lead to more competitive universities (Bonilla, et al., 2006; Castaños-Lomnitz, 1997; Porter, 2003). Thus, the determination of what behaviors and actions are necessary for a group of highly trained academics to be able to generate responsive educational practices and services at a university is elusive. To make this determination, we need to know the ways in which academics shape their work and the reasons why the construction of a professional identity that seems to be more in synchrony with international standards does not lead to the enhancement of university life. It is appropriate to address such a question in the context of state universities with a significant number of prestigious and productive academics and yet whose academic performance remains deficient.

Currently, PROMEP, the most important federal program that prescribes the valid professional model among academics in Mexico, has maintained both its

prominent place and its original features. In 2006, SEP released the first analysis of the effects of PROMEP upon the higher education system (Vidales, et al., 2006). The national statistics presented in the PROMEP report show an evident increase both in the number of academics holding master's and doctorate degrees as well as their research productivity. However, the analysts offer no explanations about the way in which academics adapt to their institutions and how the features of their professional identity enable them to participate in the process of university restructuring.

This investigation sought to understand the ways in which full time faculty hired on the basis of PROMEP negotiated their academic identity within a context of university restructuring aimed to attain better indicators of academic competitiveness.

### **Theoretical Framework**

Organizational theory, cultural theory, and professional identity theory shape the theoretical framework of my inquiry. The use of these theories allowed me to connect micro and macro levels of analysis. Organizational theories (Achinstein, 2002; Bidwell, 2001; DiMaggio & Powell, 1991; Friendland & Alford, 1991; Grubb, et al., 1999; Metz, 1990; Scott, 1998) help make sense of the characteristics and process of development of social-institutional structures in the organizational and larger context. Culture theorists (Eisenhart, 1996; Florio-Ruane, 2001; Holland, Lachicotte, Skinner, & Cain, 2001; Ortner, 2006; Rockwell, 1999; Swidler, 2001) lead to the understanding of the ways in which individuals select and use symbols, rituals, ideologies, and words that are available in their institutional context to define who they are and to enable their

participation in the construction of social structures and cultural patterns. Finally, professional identity theory informs the study by emphasizing the relationship between the organization of work and the formation of the self within a professional discourse (Abbas & McLean, 2001; Assaf, 2008; Connelly & Clandinin, 1999; Ibarra, 1999). This theory acknowledges that socio-cultural factors of the working place provide resources for individuals to engage in practices of interaction that frame processes of personal construction and organizational functioning.

By using these theories, I understand that the study of the person, as a member of a formal organization, has to be linked to the study of historical, social, and cultural conditions (Holland & Levinson, 1996; Rockwell, 1996, 1999; Swidler, 2001). I view individuals as self-reflective agents who navigate socio-cultural contexts where multiple and, sometimes, contradictory symbolic structures such as cultural traditions, ideologies, and codes are available for them to develop their daily life and process of self-construction (Swidler, 2001; Luttrell, 1996; Luykx, 1996). Thus, to understand social actors and their behaviors, it is critical to note the construction of their cultural experiences.

The theoretical frameworks acknowledge the existence of reciprocal power relationships between the structure and the agent. Collective forces have a constraining effect upon individuals; however, individuals have agency through the cultural resources that the structure makes available to them (Swidler, 2001; Ortner, 2006). Côté and Levine (2002) emphasize that people can use symbolic structures they are in contact

with on a daily basis to reflexively resist and/or react to the social forces impinging on them. I rely on the notion of agency to explain the foundations of informal action or the emergence of loosely coupled arrays in organizational settings. The concept of agency suggests that social actors are capable of intentional behavior even though they are constrained by regulatory institutional structures (Ortner, 2006).

### **The Research Questions**

Studies of academics' lives and work in Mexico suggest that the academic body of higher education institutions is varied as a result of historical periods (e.g., unregulated expansion and differentiation) and the series of efforts of reconfiguration of the system (Gil-Antón, 1994). Literature notes two broad subgroups of academics whose professional ethos and practices vary as a result of generational differences and participation in federal programs (Gil-Antón, 2003). There is a group of part time and full time faculty that were pioneers (i.e., *profesores de carrera*) who started the construction and development of public state universities during the period of unregulated expansion (i.e., 1960-1990). Because of the growing demand of students for access to higher education institutions, the only admission criteria required for pioneers was to hold a bachelor's degree. The core activity among academics who were pioneers was teaching. A second academic subgroup consists of full time faculty members (i.e., *profesores investigadores*) with a high level of formative training and a strong tendency to engage in research activities both at the national and international level; most of them were not pioneers of public universities but foreign to the

institutions in which they were hired as full time faculty. The emergence of this last subgroup has been linked to the implementation of federal programs such as PROMEP (Gil-Antón, 2003).

Although scholars and the university community itself are aware of the existence of the variations in the characteristics of the academic body, there are limited in-depth studies that explain the origins of these two subgroups, their particular approaches to the construction of academic work, and the ways in which variations in academics' professional identity either enrich or hinder the construction of university restructuring (Cazales, 2006; Fortes & Lomnitz, 1994; Gil-Antón, 1994; Guevara, 2004; Izquierdo-Sánchez, 2000).

The research questions included in this study address the processes through which members of a specific academic subgroup (i.e., full time faculty members) negotiate their professional identity within a climate of university restructuring in the University of Morelos (hereafter UM), Mexico. Three broad questions and their sub-questions become central to this investigation:

1. What are the contextual factors for the negotiation of academic identity for full time faculty who entered state public universities in Mexico during the late 1990s? Specifically, in what ways do institutional and organizational structures shape the ways in which academics negotiate a sense of themselves as professionals?

2. What are the practices that enable full time faculty to negotiate their academic identity? That is, how do the activities in which academics participate as part of their organizational role at the university shape their academic identity?
3. What are the characteristics of the academic identity of full time faculty?
  - a. What are the kinds of self-understandings and self-definitions that full time faculty communicate when describing themselves as members of a professional community?
  - b. What are the strategies of action that academics develop to express themselves as professionals within the university context?

### **Research Design**

This investigation uses an interpretative approach that seeks to understand social events as experienced by social actors who endeavor to make sense of themselves, their actions, and their common context (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). The study aims to understand the negotiation of the academic identity of full time faculty members as part of the everyday construction of the higher education system in Mexico. I use a case study approach that examines behaviors at one site that are connected, theoretically, to behaviors in other similar sites (Eisenhardt, 1989; Merriam, 1988; E. Patton & Appelbaum, 2003; Stake, 1978). This method enabled me to pay attention to the complexity of dynamics that contribute to the particular uniqueness of the case in which a set of actors are involved (Flyvbjerg, 2006; Ruddin, 2006).

The case site is a state university in the northern region of the state of Morelos in the central valley of Mexico. The university of Morelos (hereafter UM) is a “critical case” (Flyvbjerg, 2006) with strategic importance to illuminate the relationship between the negotiation of an academic identity of full time faculty based on high levels of professionalism and no significant improvement of academic competitiveness. UM is nationally acknowledged, among the best of state universities, because it has one of the largest number of academics with high levels of professional ability and productivity (Vidales, et al., 2006). Paradoxically, this university, as many of other state universities, exhibits low levels of academic performance and student achievement (Izquierdo-Sánchez, 2000).

### ***Data Collection Process***

The study considers three methods of data collection that support an interpretative approach: semi-structured interviews, participant observation, and document analysis (Mason, 2002). These methods were aimed to capture the ways in which individuals’ subjectivity and patterns of behavior were intertwined to trigger processes of self-construction and the development of socio-cultural structures.

I used semi-structured interviews that offered respondents a chance to elaborate on a series of identified topics of conversation to provide quantitative and qualitative, comparable, and meaningful data (Pawson, 1996). The interview protocol consisted of a series of semi-structured questions in which participants were asked to pay attention to specific experiences without restrictions on the form or manner of their



responses (Sewell, 1949). Adjustments (e.g., addition of questions) were made to the interview protocol on the basis of the interview conditions. Through purposive sampling (M. Q. Patton, 1990), I selected a total of 26 interviewees (i.e., administrators, staff, and faculty members). All interviews were recorded and transcribed after permission granted by participants.

Participant observation was carried out over a six month period. This methodological technique involves the collection of data from a community, whereby the researcher is or becomes a member of the community (Wing, 1989). The purpose was to obtain both a holistic description of the organizational context surrounding academics and fine details of life at UM. I observed episodes of interaction in which the actions of participants were jointly organized to produce behaviors relevant to the construction of the academic life of the university. I identified the main qualities of behavior (i.e., frequency, duration, and quality) that participants showed when they had to work in specific projects or institutional mandates as part of their professional duties. Each observed event was categorized on the basis of five dimensions: actors, time of the action, conditions or place, central and peripheral action, linguistic forms, and the purpose of the action(s) as explained by actors (Martin, 1982; McCall, 1984). I took “jotted field notes” (Emerson, Fretz, & Shaw, 1995) of the shared experiences with participants.

Written texts were a central source of information on institutional context and organizational structures (i.e., policies, programs in operation, and procedures) of the

university. I collected both official and unofficial texts to identify the dynamics and interconnection of the multiple discourses that were relocated and regenerated in everyday texts and that have an effect upon the lives of individuals (Luke, 1995). I collected various types of documents: federal official documents and evaluation reports, institutional documents (e.g., mission statements, regulations), curricular documents, and academics' files. Following Fleming (1974) and Holbrook (1997), I sought to (a) maintain the integrity of the documents; (b) pay attention to general textual structures (i.e., sequence of parts); and (c) provide contextual descriptions to evoke the natural setting in which the documents were written, their purpose, use, and the characteristics of the producers.

### ***Data Analysis***

The analysis of data consisted of a set of interpretative and systematic strategies to explain the ways in which full time faculty members negotiated their academic identity and the connection of this process to the forms of participation in activities expected to improve academic life at the university. Scholars describe the analysis of data as a flexible, intuitive, particular, and creative process aimed to make meaning of data (Agar, 1996; Crabtree & Miller, 1992; Creswell, 1998). I took participants' mediated action as the unit of meaning during the process of analysis (Gudmundsdóttir, 2001); analysis involved the examination of the kind of individual who is performing the action and the cultural resources that individuals use to organize their activities and interactions with others. I took two parallel approaches in the process of data analysis:

analytical induction and reflexive analysis. Analytical induction (Erickson, 1986) involved the identification of patterns and linkages across the data as a strategy to create a coherent explanation of the events studied. The reflexive analytical approach (Aunger, 1995) is based on the concept of a data collection situation, which refers to the variability in each of the factors—including the researcher herself—that could modify the quality of data elicited.

Both data reduction and the reorganization of data in more complex ways were developed through four basic analytical operations: codification, categorization, comparison, and integration (Flick, 2004; Spiggle, 1994). The construction of a coding scheme triggered the beginning of the formal process of data analysis and the implementation of analytical operations upon empirical data. I developed the coding scheme through an iterative process of induction (i.e., developing concepts and constructs from the data) and deduction (i.e., refining concepts and drawing out their theoretical implications). The process of data analysis was assisted by the use of software to trigger analytical operations. I used Atlas.ti ([www.atlasti.com](http://www.atlasti.com)) to initiate the segmentation and codification of interview transcripts, documents, and field notes. I also utilized the CmapTools software (<http://cmap.ihmc.us>) to build concept maps that enabled me to integrate conceptual elements from the literature and units of meaning within the empirical data.

### ***Issues of Validity and Reliability***

The validity and reliability of an interpretative study are based on the researcher's ability to show both the non-neutral and actively constructed nature of the observation and analysis of the object of study (Agar, 1996). I enacted two strategies to ensure the adequacy of this inquiry: dialogue with other researchers and participants and the enactment of reflexivity. Dialogic encounters enable the researcher to contrast and confront their ideas with others both inside and outside the field (Shryock, 1997). The use of reflexivity is a methodological stance to examine how the researcher's vulnerability and multiple roles illuminate deeper meanings about theoretical and epistemological aspects of the research questions (Marcus, 1994).

### **Significance of the Study**

This study unravels the series of factors that frame the negotiation of academic identity within the context of university restructuring as defined by federal programs designed to elevate the academic competitiveness of the Mexican university. This inquiry explores the relationship between the negotiation of full time faculty's academic identity and the construction of academic life at a university. On the one hand, the research explains the character and construction of the professional identity of full time faculty members in the Mexican context. It describes full time faculty members as a professional community that consists of individuals who negotiate their professional identities on the basis of their participation in work practices and institutional policies. On the other hand, this investigation shows that the ways in which academics perceive

themselves and the ways in which they develop their academic activities have a central effect upon the ways in which new academic values are instilled into the organizational culture of the university to develop different forms of academic life. This study confirms that the organization of work conditions at a university as well as economic and political factors in the larger context shape faculty's academic work (Camblin & Steger, 2000; Carducci, 2002; Gappa, Austin, & Trice, 2007). At the same time, the ways in which academics develop their practices and interact with one another sustain and create styles in the organization of work and academic life at the university. This research adds to existing literature by explaining the connection between the construction of academic identity and the development of university life. The study of the negotiation of faculty's academic identity enables us to trace the functioning of the university and possible strategies of action for its improvement.

The significance of the study derives from its capacity to enable practitioners, policy makers, and university executives both to understand the components of the academic profession and to identify strategies to manage and guide academic work. Academics play a central role in the implementation of programs for university restructuring; thus, policy makers have to gain an in-depth understanding of the historical and cultural factors prevailing at universities in order to develop forms of instrumental and social support for full time faculty to satisfy their personal goals and to engage actively in a shared project to enhance the academic performance of the university.

This study also provides elements for educational researchers to think about and perform further investigations in the field of higher education. The research design attempts to provide a frame of reference that other qualitative researchers can explore to define the nature of their studies. It is noteworthy that in this study concept maps are used as a principal strategy of data analysis. Researchers can test the use of this technique and report their experiences by assessing the benefits and limitations of the use of concepts maps as heuristics for the creation of theory.

### **Chapter Summaries**

The chapters of this dissertation are organized in three broad sections: fundamentals, research findings, and concluding remarks. The first three chapters present the problem of research, theories, and methodological elements that enabled the design and implementation of the investigation. The findings of the investigation are presented from Chapter Four through Chapter Six. These chapters present the analysis of the contextual and personal factors that intervene in the negotiation of academic identity among full time faculty at UM. Chapter Seven summarizes the main arguments and conclusions derived from the investigation. The implications for practice and questions for further research are presented in this final chapter.

Chapter Two reviews and analyzes studies that address the study of the academic profession. The chapter is organized into three sections. First, I explain those studies which address the context of the academic profession. I identify three contemporary discourses that shape the development of the academic profession.

These contemporary discourses include the discourse of reform and university restructuring, the discourse of accountability and quality assurance, and the discourse of commodification and marketization of knowledge. The second section of the chapter reviews literature to explain the main features that characterize the academic profession as a community of practice. I explain the role demands, career socialization, and processes of interaction in which academics engage as well as the construction of academics' subjectivity through the construction of work related attitudes and academic identity. The last section of the chapter explores the structural elements of the academic profession: reward systems, governance structures, and disciplinary fields and institutional type as cultural configurations. This chapter emphasizes the tendency of scholarship to address the structure (i.e., institutional discourses and organizational structures) over the individual and his or her subjectivity as the focus of analysis. I argue that a more appropriate study of the academic profession requires examining the link between macro and micro levels of analysis by explaining the ways in which the socio-cultural and historical factors of a university define the opportunities of a specific group of academics to negotiate their work and forms of self-identification. At the end of Chapter Two, the research questions, the theoretical framework, and conceptual principles of the study are discussed.

Chapter Three describes the methodological approach and the research design embedded in the study. I start the chapter by offering the ontological and epistemological principles that characterize qualitative research and the suitability of

the approach to study the negotiation of academic identity among full time faculty. I describe the use of case study as the methodology selected to address the object of study. This chapter explains the processes of data collection and data analysis that I used to answer my research questions. I talk about the semi-structured interview, participant observation, and document analysis as the methods to gather empirical data. Both analytical induction and a reflective analytical approach are explained as part of the process of data analysis. I explain the use of technology (i.e., ATLAS.ti and concept mapping) to assist the analysis of empirical data. At the end of the chapter I discuss issues of validity, reliability, and generalizability.

Chapter Four begins the first of the chapters that present the investigation's findings. In this chapter I explain the socio-cultural and organizational factors that framed the negotiation of academic identity among full time faculty members. This chapter answers the first research question: What are the contextual factors for the negotiation of academic identity for full time faculty who entered state public universities in Mexico during the late 1990s? The purpose of the chapter is to explain the influences of institutional and organizational structures in shaping the ways in which academics negotiate a sense of the self as a professional.

Two main findings are explained in chapter four. First, full time faculty who identified themselves as researchers noted that it was difficult to sustain and negotiate their academic identity as researchers within a university where the core organizational structures such as mission and goals, bureaucratic apparatus, and normative framework



were ambiguous and inefficient to encourage research work as a core element of academic life. Second, full time academics negotiated their academic identity within two types of Faculties<sup>3</sup> whose differences were based on their cultural orientation and social structure to organize academic life. These two types of Faculties included parochial and modern Faculties. Each type of Faculty provided different academic structures for the negotiation of a professional identity.

Chapter Five answers the second research question: What are the practices through which full time faculty negotiate their academic identity at UM? The chapter explains the series of activities in which academics participate as part of their organizational role at the university and the ways in which their participation in such activities influence the negotiation of their academic identity. Three main findings are explained in this chapter. First, full time faculty in parochial and modern Faculties at UM emphasized that research, teaching, and service were core activities of their academic work; they noted that these three academic functions were central to maintain their self-understanding as modern academics. Second, full time faculty engaged actively in institutional service activities in order to create organizational conditions that facilitated the development of research and teaching. Full time faculty members engaged in

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<sup>3</sup> Readers should be advised to note the distinction between *Faculty* with capital F and *faculty* with lower case f. Faculty is the basic unit of the university organization (e.g., Faculty of Medicine, Faculty of Sciences). *Faculty* at UM was the space where academics performed their academic functions, and the context in which they interacted with colleagues and students. Faculties at UM tended to be self-contained units that nested the construction of issues such as individualism, conflicts of communication, collaboration, and competition among academics. The term *faculty* refers to the members of the academic body who enacted several academic functions both inside and outside the Faculty in which they were affiliated.

curricular design committees aimed to coordinate the design and accreditation of graduate programs as part of the process of university restructuring. Finally, the enactment of institutional service activities was detrimental for full time academics because it postponed the development of research activities and threatened the status and remuneration of full time faculty. The socio-cultural context in parochial and modern Faculties at UM led to full time faculty members to participate in committee work in distinct ways.

Chapter Six answers the third research question: What are the characteristics of the academic identity of full time faculty members? The purpose of the chapter is to explain the forms of self-understandings and self-definitions that full time faculty communicated as part of the process of negotiation of their academic identity within a climate of university restructuring. Chapter Six also explains the strategies of action that full time faculty developed to negotiate their self-definitions as academics within parochial and modern Faculties at UM. Two main findings are discussed in Chapter Six. First, PROMEP professors both in parochial and modern Faculties communicated three types of self-definitions (i.e., identity claims): the academic as researcher, the academic as change-maker, and the academic as saturated worker. Each type of identity claim was developed on the basis of specific motivations and had an emotional dimension. The relationship among the three identity claims was explained by PROMEP professors in parochial and modern Faculties differently. The second finding is related to the mechanism through which identity claims were sustained and negotiated.

Chapter Seven presents the conclusions of the study. This section provides an integration of the arguments presented in previous chapters on the basis of theoretical principles. In this part, I emphasize the ways in which contextual and individual factors were intertwined to enable the negotiation of full time faculty's academic identity and that identity's connection to university restructuring. I reflect on the relationship among three conditions: university restructuring, academics' participation in service activities, and the formation of academic identity. I argue that the climate of organizational change experienced at UM encouraged forms of academic altruism that influenced the development of specific identity claims among full time faculty members who engaged in committee work. I argue that the identity claims among full time faculty represent the struggle and remedial identity work that such academic subgroups experienced to achieve their self-identification as members of the research community. I conclude that the demands of university restructuring require academics to move strategically across their three main functions: research, teaching, and service. Thus, academic structures at the university have to acknowledge and facilitate the processes through which full time faculty can develop a professional career and contribute to the process of university restructuring. At the end of the chapter, directions for further research are discussed.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

This chapter reviews existing literature about the context and components of the academic profession. I classify previous studies into three broad sections: the context of the academic profession, the components of the academy as a professional community, and the structural organization of academic work. Each section reviews previous studies about academics in the university setting, both in the international and Mexican context. Existing scholarship is organized into these three sections to show not only the breadth of knowledge but also the ways in which macro and micro levels of analysis have been addressed to make sense of the academic profession.

Two arguments are central to this chapter. First, I argue that an in-depth study about higher education faculty members has to incorporate a theoretical framework that addresses the link between macro and micro levels of analysis in order to examine the historical, socio-cultural, and personal dynamics that intervene in the development of academic work and the negotiation of academic identity within a climate of university restructuring. Current research about the lives and work of academics provides general accounts that explore either the macro or micro levels of analysis of the academic profession. There are few case studies that examine the ways in which historical and socio-cultural factors in the university setting enable academics to construct narratives about their practices and their identities. As part of the second argument in this chapter, I suggest that the study of the academic profession in the Mexican context has to

acknowledge the heterogeneity of academic bodies at state public universities as a result of the efforts of university restructuring initiated at the international level since the 1960s and in Mexico beginning in the 1980s. An in-depth study of the academic profession in México has to analyze the connection of macro and micro levels of analysis to understand the composition of different academic subgroups, their position within the academic structure, and their processes of negotiation of work and professional identity.

The first section of the chapter discusses scholarly work that examines the contextual factors that frame the construction of academic structures. Research on this field provides conceptual elements to understand the main institutional discourses that dictate directions for the organization of the academic profession and the work of faculty members. Existing literature that addresses the context of the academic profession can be classified into three types of contemporary discourses: discourses about university restructuring, accountability, and commodification of knowledge.

The second section of the chapter analyzes the components of the academy as a professional community. I explore previous studies to understand the ways through which individuals become members of the academic profession. Studies in this area explore not only the development of the academy as a profession but also the criteria of professionalism and professionalization attached to the academy. Topics commonly found in these studies include the processes of career advancement and socialization, the role and functions of academics, the forms of interaction in the workplace, the

development of work-related attitudes, and the construction of academic identity. These studies acknowledge that institutional discourses in the local and international level exert an influence upon the nature and components of the academy as a community of practice. The academy is described by the findings in these studies as a changing profession that is vulnerable to the modifications and demands of the socio-political and economic context.

The third section of the chapter discusses the structural organization of academic work. In this section, I review studies that describe the ways in which the organizational structures of the university frame the participation of professors in research, teaching, and service. Scholarship explains the involvement, or lack thereof, of professors in governance structures as well as the forms of power distribution among academic groups. Reward systems and forms of academic appraisal are also identified by previous studies as one of the central structural elements that shapes academic practices and processes of career advancement among the professoriate. Ultimately, academics' disciplinary backgrounds and their affiliation with higher education institution with a particular institutional type (i.e., research extensive or baccalaureate) are also structural factors that frame the ways in which academics engage in their work and their self-definitions as professionals.

The last part of the chapter discusses the strengths and gaps in the literature, and it offers an alternate framework for the study of the participants of the academic profession. In this section, I describe a theoretical and conceptual framework that

combines organizational, cultural, and professional identity theories in order to address the connection of micro and macro levels of analysis. The use of these three theoretical areas enabled me to make sense of the ways in which the members of a particular academic group negotiate their work practices and academic identity within a context defined by discourses of university restructuring, accountability, and the commodification of knowledge. The conceptual framework of the study emphasizes the situated nature and agency of academics, the construction of academic work as mediated by cultural, social, and organizational structures, and the construction of academics' subjectivity as part of the everyday work practices in the university setting.

### **The Context of the Academic Profession**

The sociology of education emphasizes that the larger institutional context (i.e., goals and policies of the State) and the organizational setting influence the enactment of educational practice and the patterns of behavior of the actors who participate both at the elementary and postsecondary level (Cuban, 1984; Lortie, 2002; Waller, 1961). The context shapes educational practice because the nature of State goals and policies as well as the allocation of financial resources create particular imperatives, dilemmas, and possibilities that practitioners will have to take into account in their routine activity (Denscombe, 1980). Studies in higher education note that changes in the political and economic climate of a country exert a direct effect upon academics' work and professional roles, including factors such as the growing of the student population,

economic restrictions, and managerial leadership. These influence the working conditions of academics and lead to shifts in the demands of their roles (Askling, 2001)

### ***Contemporary Discourses Shaping the Academic Profession***

The construction of university life and the academic profession is affected by various institutional factors. These factors can be classified into three types of contemporary discourses that frame the construction of collective and individual practices of academics at the university setting. According to poststructuralist analyses of social history and contemporary culture, a discourse refers to a set of knowledge-power relationships aimed to create taken-for-granted definitions and categories by which governments rule and monitor their populations and by which members of communities define themselves and others (Foucault, 1972, 1980). Discourses influence the development of social events, communities, and individuals' social identities (Luke, 1995). The first of these discourses, the discourse of reform and university restructuring, emphasizes the necessity of structural change to address the deficiencies of higher education and aim to transform universities to become sources of progress and economic productivity for a nation. The second discourse, a discourse of accountability and quality assurance, is related to the implementation of accountability principles based on the continual use of standardized means and indicators to assess the outcomes of higher education. Finally, the discourse of the commodification and marketization of knowledge emphasizes the implementation of a business-like



institutional logic to regulate academic practices in higher education. Academics develop their work within a university setting defined by these three discourses.

***The discourse of university restructuring.*** Studies informing the discourse of educational reform and university structuring examine the connection among three categories: the character of educational reform at the higher education level, the forms and strategies through which reform is materialized through policies, and the State's participation and rationale in the definition of educational reform at the postsecondary level. The discourse of reform and university restructuring emphasizes the need for structural change in higher education organizations. University restructuring involves "serious changes not only in the ways universities are funded and governed, but also in the logic guiding academic and nonacademic activities" (Torres & Schugurensky, 2002b, p. 430). A handful of studies on higher education are devoted to understanding why and how public colleges and universities either preserve the inflexibility in their academic structures or manipulate their structures and processes in the face of social demands (Gumport & Snyderman, 2002). In the report elaborated by the Commission on the Future of Higher Education, convened by Margaret Spellings the U.S. Secretary of Education in 2005, changes in higher education are expected to respond to the demands of the new economy.

Scholarship in higher education notes that after World War II western countries recognized the need for highly trained personnel and the development of sophisticated technology for national defense (Gumport, 1997; Rhoades & Slaughter, 1997). Since

universities are considered to be a major instrument for social change and the progress of a country (Davies, 2002; Vaira, 2004), government authorities across countries have emphasized the necessity of implementing structural changes in their higher education systems as a strategy to strengthen national competitiveness through the creation of a skillful workforce and the production of knowledge. Pressures for change also stemmed from a heightened dissatisfaction with higher education institutions and their increasing inadequacy to cope with social problems such as population explosion, discontent in the Third World, increasing illiteracy, energy and ecological crises, unemployment, and accelerated technological automation (Marginson & Rhoades, 2002). The discourse of educational reform in higher education emphasizes a push for higher education to be more efficient, self-sufficient, and accountable.

The need for change is not a recent trend but a part of the historical manifestations of continuity and change of the context of higher education both in the United States and Europe (Rhoades & Sporn, 2002; Taylor, Amaral, & Machado, 2007; Trow, 1985). Examples of reform movements are to be found in the progressive era, during the first decades of the twentieth century, when western countries emphasized the necessity of educational reforms to respond to a transforming context (Bowen, 1979; Kliebard, 2004). During the 1960s, discourses of educational reform among developed countries emphasized the use of educational research to organize university and college life to respond to issues of educational access and quality (Husen, 1979). During this period, policy reform entered an era of scientifically controlled innovation

and massive expansion (Zajda, 2002). Since the 1970s, discourses of educational reform embrace both initiatives to align education with socialist (i.e., demands for participatory democracy and social egalitarianism) and revised versions of positivism [i.e., quantification of behavior and competency-based assessment] (Bowen, 1979).

There are two central components in educational reform movements at the higher education level: policy and State control. First, educational reforms aimed to dictate the path for change in higher education are materialized through policy (McLendon, Heller, & Young, 2005). Therefore, to understand the management of change in higher education, scholars have explored the processes of policy formulation and policy implementation that are linked to structural changes in public colleges and universities (Cheng & Cheung, 1995). Second, reform movements have emphasized the increasing participation of the State in the management of higher education across nations (Masser & Yorisaki, 1988; McLendon, 2003; Rhoades & Sporn, 2002). Studies that address the processes of reform at the higher education level emphasize the increasing participation of the State to dictate and control the process of educational reform (Adria, 2000). Gumport (1997) notes that in the case of American higher education, federal initiatives have dictated the direction of change, even though states hold principal responsibility for public colleges and universities. Gumport remarks that since the middle of the nineteenth century, there has been an enduring, formative presence of the national government in public higher education institutions in the U.S.

Higher education scholarship has also addressed and explained the areas of educational reforms; which include curricular structures, budget allocation systems, forms of governance, incentive programs tied to tuition and financial aid, use of technology, revenue sources, and managerial practices (Grundy & Bonser, 2000; Serban & Burke, 1998). Targets of reform in higher education in western countries include mechanism of access and course enrollment, quality of undergraduate education, the connection between academic programs and employment sectors, institutional performance and cost-effectiveness, assessment of student learning, and faculty productivity (Gumport, 1997).

Higher education scholars note that the need for reform at universities has been encouraged by the set of pressures and imperatives that characterize the conditions of global competition in a postindustrial society (Appanduri, 1996; Barrow, 1996; Marginson, 2006). Globalization and neoliberal ideologies have affected higher education by orientating new forms of structuring aspects such as policy-making, governance, organization, and academic work and identity (Levin 2001, 2007). Globalization consists in part of a market driven process whose dimensions can be synthesized in the following three points. First, there is the presence of a minimalist state, which is linked to the reduction in public expenditures and funding and a trend toward control on and evaluation of performance and outcomes (Vaira, 2004; Yang, 2003). Second, contemporary globalization stimulated and advanced the entrepreneurialization or managerialization of organizations by promoting the

construction of a business ethos that is concerned with high flexibility, innovation, and quality in production as the basis to facilitate client-supplier relations and exchanges (Vaira, 2004; Yang, 2003). Third, the global world is based on the strengthening of the knowledge society which entails technological development and a greater emphasis on knowledge production and information processing for competitive purposes (Vaira, 2004; Yang, 2003). Some scholars emphasize that contemporary globalization (post-1945) is characterized by the structural power of the United States inscribed in the nature and functioning of the present world order (Held, McGrew, Goldblatt, & Perraton, 1999). However, other scholars suggest that American hegemony is declining and that since the 1970s and 1980s both Japan and Germany are arising as economic competitors (Torres & Schugurensky, 2002b).

The new economy has forced universities in developed countries such as the U.S to engage in structural reforms that encourage the organization of university life on the basis of institutional differentiation, applied research and development, multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary studies, and organized research units such as centers and institutes (Barrow, 1996). Structural reforms within higher education are viewed as central conditions to encourage the economic competitiveness of a country; therefore, competition, rationality, and efficiency are keywords to describe the expected change of universities within the market-driven fundamentals of globalization (Yang, 2003).

In the context of contemporary globalization there is a series of highly legitimated agencies such as UNESCO, World Bank, IMF, and OECD who are responsible for disseminating the ideas and practices under which higher education institutions have to define their structural changes to respond to global demands (Vaira, 2004). The World Bank's educational policies, for example, emphasize structural reforms on the basis of three principles: the enactment of educational investment according to the calculation of rates of return, the provision of a greater role to the private sector in education, and the decentralization of educational systems to achieve improvements in efficiency and quality in education (Bonal, 2004). In western countries such as the U.S. the discourse of higher education reform combines a mix of autonomy and constraints in which contradictory imperatives, conflict, and pressure are both a permanent and central characteristics of the university setting. Gumport (1997) points out that the new economic order has caused public universities during the last decades to face unpredictable funding fluctuations from major revenue sources including, unfavorable economic conditions such as inflation, recession, and a rise in operating costs.

The discourse on educational reform has incorporated planning for change as another central topic into the process of university structuring (Taylor & Karr, 1999; Taylor, Amaral, & Machado, 2007). Scholars note that in the post-1950 international context, attention was exclusively directed to educational planning as a central practice that accompanied movements of educational reform: planning was viewed as a way for both the management of educational change and national development (Adams, 1988).

Scholars emphasize that universities that expect to achieve greater levels of academic performance have to find strategies to organize their basic functions and to ensure an adequate use of financial resources under the high degrees of uncertainty that surround enrollments and budgetary levels in many countries (Ewers, 1964; Morgan, 1982). Planning for change is based on continual efforts to implement quality assurance and strategic management (Rhoades & Sporn, 2002). Although government officials and university executives view planning as a central practice to regulate university life, Morgan (1982) emphasizes that the present conditions of long-term contraction that face higher education institutions, both in western and developing countries, foster significant barriers to planned institutional change. Planning for change involves the difficulty of achieving organizational consensus and the reluctance of administrators to make long-term commitments (Morgan, 1982). At the international level, studies have examined the various factors that intervene in the implementation of planning practices and models aimed to define specific domains of university life (Burgess, 1996; Kraft & Nakib, 1991; Masser & Yorisaki, 1988). Special attention is also paid to understand the way in which members of the academic profession engage in the process of planning; findings suggest that the locus of control for decision making is shifting away from departments and their faculties and toward various state-level actors and university spokespersons (Gumport, 1997).

Higher education scholarship has paid primary attention to the ways in which developed countries respond to reform demands under the global age and the new

economic order (Tikly, 2001); however, there is a growing interest in analyzing the way in which higher education institutions in developing countries transform themselves to meet with global demands and conform to international practices to form part of the world community (Yang, 2003). The discourse of reform and university structuring in developing countries has developed differently from that in developed countries. Latin America continues to be one of the regions in the world with the highest levels of both poverty and inequality (Bonal, 2004). Latin American countries that enacted structural adjustments to close fiscal gaps during the decade of the 1980s suffered a per capita income decline of 78% which caused a deterioration of living conditions and the growth of inequities; additionally, education as a percentage of public expenditure declined to 57% (Reimers, 1994).

Higher education in Latin American countries is characterized by the differentiation and multiplication of institutions, the prevalence of a teaching orientation, the growth of the private sector, increase in the teaching staff, and increase in the number and variety of graduates (Orozco-Silva, 1996). While funding for public higher education has declined significantly in Latin American countries, higher education institutions are pressured to engage in processes of structural reform to accommodate global pressures and neoliberal economics (Bonal, 2004; Torres & Schugurensky, 2002b). In Latin American, universities are also seen as sources of scientific and technological innovation that can feed high-tech productivity; therefore, political leaders and



university executives are depicted as concerned for the promotion of university restructuring on the basis of excellence, efficiency, expenditures, and rates of return.

Although higher education in low income postcolonial countries has also been subjected to reform, the affects of globalization and neoliberal economics upon the management of change in these countries has different connotations and implications which need to be studied at deeper levels. While the regulation of structural reform in developing countries continues, Orozco-Silva (1996) notes that the dynamics of new economics and politics as well as the demands for reform have created a series of symptoms among higher education institutions in Latin America. The first refers to structural maladjustment which is related to the lack of direction and design in the process of institutional differentiation in higher education. Structural maladjustment involves progressive segmentation between different levels and weak connection among different institutions, thus making student mobility or transfer difficult. The second major symptom that Orozco-Silva identifies includes institutional paralysis or dysfunction which refers to poor process and product quality, poor system equity, and internal efficacy problems. Similar to scholarship at the international context, studies addressing the macro level of analysis of university and academic life in Latin America note that both university restructuring and its influence upon the organization of academic work derive from the efforts of specific interest groups to adapt the university to new routines, laws, and regulations that accommodate the principles of contemporary globalization (Torres & Schugurensky, 2002a).

Although university restructuring is common to Latin American countries, global trends are promoted, resisted, and negotiated differently in each national context and in each individual institution (Torres & Schugurensky, 2002b). During the last decade of the 1980s in Mexico, educational reforms and university restructuring were a response to two central phenomena. On the one hand, Mexico was experiencing fiscal deficits and austere conditions: the economic growth rate in Mexico was -1.5 and the urban minimum wages declined 46% (Orozco-Silva, 1996). On the other hand, during the end of the 1980s the country's president, Carlos Salinas de Gortari, encouraged economic liberalization, State shrinkage, and market-oriented reforms as central strategies to organize social, economic, and political life in Mexico (Murillo, 2000). By the 1990s, through corporatist pacts such as the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) Mexico entered a process of national competition and privatization that would pressure social institutions to modify their structures, missions, and functions.

One of the most salient areas of university restructuring in México was the massive recruitment of faculty members during the 1960s (Gil-Antón, 1994); it is estimated that for the period from 1960 to 1992, 9 faculty members were recruited daily and at least 10% of them were researchers as well as teachers. During the 1970s and 1980s, university restructuring was aimed to implement strategies for faculty to participate in research activities and knowledge production. Ultimately, during the 1990s, changes to higher education were focused on the development of organizational structures and behaviors to respond to the climate of accountability, declined budgets,

and increased state control (Ibarra-Colado, 2002; Porter, 2003; Rodríguez, 2000; Silva, 2000).

One of the central conclusions from the studies that explain educational reform in higher education is that the process of university restructuring, both in developed and developing countries, entails resistances, conflicts, and tensions as well as efforts to conciliate, adapt, and translate policy mandates. Countries endeavored to merge the new with the old, that is, the national features of higher education with new globalizing pressures, the single institutions structural and cultural features with the new imperatives and demands such as organizational effectiveness in the management of humans and material resources and economic competitiveness (Arnold, 2004; Burton, 1996; Castaños-Lomnitz, 1997; Ibarra-Colado & Porter-Galetar, 2007; Izquierdo-Sánchez, 2000; Meyer, 1982; Vaira, 2004).

***The discourse of accountability and quality assurance.*** One of the central purposes of university restructuring in different countries is to remain competitive in the global market (Torres & Schugurensky, 2002a). Since the adequate functioning of a university is viewed as central for the purposes of national progress, there has also been increased control by the State and as well as market logics over the content and outcomes of teaching, learning, and research in higher education (Neave, 1980; Serban & Burke, 1998). In a broad sense, educational accountability refers to the presence of various approaches to measure and document particular outcomes in teaching, research, and institutional management (Kearns, 1998). Whereas the discourse of

university restructuring has emphasized the development of planning practices, the discourse of accountability promotes an increased use of “technologies of assessment” such as self-study and evaluation of academic units and institutions, peer review by expert panels, audit by semi-autonomous agencies, performance indicators that are quantifiable, surveys of “client” groups, and public reporting (Mollis & Marginson, 2002; Tierney & Rhoads, 1995). During the 1980s and 1990s, the accountability movement made reference to quality review processes that made students, academics, and university executives formally accountable for their performance, both in the United States and Europe; (Alexander, 2000; Huisman & Currie, 2004). The imposition of accountability mechanisms across countries has been justified as part of the mandatory actions to effect greater financial efficiency and usage of public resources by higher education. The purpose of making universities accountable for their performance is to respond to public demands for access, high-quality research, engagement of institutions with surrounding communities, and the economic development of a nation (Gappa, Austin, & Trice, 2007; Kearns, 1998; Neave, 1980).

There are two ideological aspects that define the institutional logic of the accountability climate. The first refers to the idea that the production and use of knowledge and information as a marketable commodity have become one of the most important determiners of economic success; thus, universities must contribute to the economic development of a nation by organizing the production and application of knowledge effectively (Gumport, 1997). The second is to view institutional functioning

like a business in a competitive context as the one acceptable avenue toward national improvement (Gumpert, 1997). There exists the premise that the introduction of management principles derived from the private sector, which encourage competition within and between universities, will enable the construction of more efficient higher education institutions (Naidoo, 2003). Examples of accountability policies include performance funding and performance budgeting initiatives, and legislatively mandated assessments of undergraduate students (McLendon, et al., 2005). Performance-based funding refers to “the development of state-mandated measures for institutional outcomes and the required tracking and reporting of these measures by postsecondary campuses” (Petrides, McClelland, & Nodine, 2004, p. 44). Scholars emphasize that the implementation of performance-based funding is a strategy used by the State to justify financial reductions to public universities and of the pressures to respond to a mix of competing budgetary priorities (Gumpert, 1997).

A system of accountability has two dimensions. The first refers to a set of accountability standards, explicit or implicit, generated by internal or external stakeholders. The second consists of a response to these accountability standards, tactical or strategic, from inside the institution (Kearns, 1998). The set of practices that are identifiable with the accountability movement include: (a) increasing efforts of national governments to keep a close watch on the effectiveness and efficiency of higher education institutions; (b) establishment of reward systems on the basis of a comparison of their merits or achievements: good practices (e.g., effective teaching,

high research productivity) are rewarded whereas low quality performance (e.g., low graduation rates, low outcomes of student assessment) are punished; and (c) the use of quantitative indicators and standardized means to measure the effectiveness of performance both at the individual and institutional level. Examples of accountability measures include research indices, quality reviews, and teaching evaluations, and annual reviews of instruction (Kearns, 1998; Neave, 1980; Petrides, et al., 2004). Accountability measures are implemented through a combination of external review and a process of internal monitoring of the university in accreditation processes.

The enactment of accountability principles and models differs from country to country; in the United States the accountability movement has been operated through regional accreditation agencies; however, in Europe the tendency is to establish a national body to monitor accountability mechanisms (Huisman & Currie, 2004). Scholars suggest the existence of a binary model of accountability which refers to the combination of central control (i.e., State supervision) and regional devolution. There are two modes of accountability, each corresponding to two distinct types of institution: “the first, accountable to the national community through the central administration, the second accountable to the local community through having its representatives on governing boards” (Neave, 1980; p. 55).

In Latin American countries, the accountability movement was been adopted as part of the national concern for quality and the implementation of national systems of regulation of university functioning to respond to global pressures. Since 1990, Latin

American countries have attempted to introduce assessment as an institutional value; however, the development of national evaluation systems is at an embryonic stage (Kells, 1996). Kells (1996) suggest that although Latin American countries have tried to adopt both Western European and American university evaluation models, there is not a substantial strengthening of the culture of evaluation in higher education institutions. In Latin American countries, practices that are commonly identified as part of the culture of planning and evaluation such as problem solving strategies, establishment of goals, and the use of data analyses, surveys, and interviews are not strongly exhibited. Instead, "Latin academies have tended to focus on inputs and process considerations and to tolerate rather to focus on dysfunction" (Kells, 1996, p. 243)

In Mexico, evaluation efforts and the participation in the movement of accountability initiated during the 1970s and 1980s when the leaders of universities through the National Association of Universities and Higher Education Institutions (ANUIES) and the representatives of government indicated the need for evaluation in the relatively autonomous, large, unregulated and somewhat duplicated system of Mexican higher education (Ibarra-Colado, 2002). In 1989, the National Commission for Higher Education Assessment was created to assist in the development of a comprehensive evaluation scheme (i.e., program and institutional levels and system review) which suggests that all institutions conduct annual program level evaluations and a thorough institutional assessment every four or five years. Accountability systems and evaluation models in Mexico are currently under development; however this

development is slow due to the lack of an adequate funding and institutional structures to manage innovation (Porter, 2003). Although Mexico is recognized as having one of the most comprehensive evaluation schemes in Latin America after Brazil, the assessment of university functioning and restructuring is taking place under less than ideal conditions (Kells, 1996).

The effects of accountability mechanisms vary depending upon the local characteristics and practices of the setting under examination; however, academics across different countries tend to be skeptical about the effectiveness of current accountability measures and the bureaucratic procedures that entails the use of quantifiable indicators (Elton, 1988a). Gumpert (1997) argues that in the American context, the implementation of accountability measures has reinforced competition among public higher education institutions for limited public money and leads to further stratification in higher education institutions. At the internal level the transfer of management principles from enterprises and the use of economic standards as benchmarks have encouraged an international tendency to overemphasize quantifiable outputs (e.g., number of publications, research grants, and graduates rates), and to leave educational values far behind (Naidoo, 2003; Yang, 2003). Neave (1980) notes that in the European context, the strengthening of external accountability created various restrictions among universities: restriction to the growth of university budgets and restriction to the growth of academic staff. Huisman and Currie (2004) found that academics in higher education institutions both in Europe and the U.S. perceive that



accountability models do not change the day-to-day behavior of organizational members and do not necessarily lead to any increased quality of university functioning. Participants in their study emphasized that governments can be successful in formulating accountability policies; however, if institutional leaders do not translate the policies into institutional mechanisms, little changes. Scholars note that accountability measures and their effects upon university functioning could be improved through the incorporation of qualitative appraisals of the dynamics and outcomes of academic life (Elton, 1988a; Huisman & Currie, 2004).

Although the imposition of accountability principles creates sources of constraint for university actors, scholars suggest that the ways in which each university organize their organizational forms and functioning can moderate the negative effects of the accountability climate and competition among institutions (Denscombe, 1980). The ways in which organizational missions are defined and the construction of departmental cultures may either diminish or increase the pressure of state control and policies (Marsh & Hattie, 2002). Beyond the positive or negative effects of the accountability climate upon higher education institutions, scholars indicate that compliance to accountability mandates are enacted both through adaptive responses and negotiation and conflict as well as the exercise of power (Dill, 1999; Elton, 1988b; Gumport, 1997; Mollis & Marginson, 2002); Mollis and Marginson (2002) emphasize that practices of assessment within a climate of accountability involve a shifting interplay of (university) autonomy and (governmental) heteronomy.

***The discourse of commodification of knowledge.*** One of the basic premises in higher education scholarship is the existence of a link between higher education functioning and economic development: efficient universities will lead to global competitiveness. The capacity of the university to develop effective processes of teaching, learning, and knowledge production at universities is considered a key component to respond to the demands of the new knowledge economy (i.e., production, dissemination and transfer of economically productive knowledge, innovation and technology) that characterize the global order (Vaira, 2004; Yang, 2003). Gumpert (1997) notes that university functions of knowledge transmission (teaching) and knowledge production (research) are viewed by government officials and university executives as potential sources of economic profit that enable them (a) to identify extraordinary sources of revenues to alleviate, in some degree, the impact of budget cuts; and (b) to respond to social demands of economic progress and competitiveness at the global context.

Commodification is a form of organizational behavior among higher education institutions that reflects the influence of global forces upon the institution and reproduces the globalization process. Commodification as an organizational practice becomes visible in higher education when “institutions create products and establish services that they take to the market place to sell, or private individuals or companies approach the college to purchase goods and services” (Levin, 2001, p. 40). When higher education institutions establish partnerships with the private sector and compete with

other institutions and organizations for revenues, they engage in processes of marketization: “they solicit private donations of money, goods, and services, which they acknowledge through publicity and tax benefits” (Levin, 2001; p.40).

The ability to compete successfully in global and national contexts relies on the production of higher value-added products and services that involve the use and continual innovation of scientific and technological knowledge (Naidoo, 2003; Zucker, Darby, & Armstrong, 2002). One of the features of contemporary globalization is the strengthening of a “knowledge-based society, which is expressed in the rise of new forces of production governed by the micro-chip, robotics and automatic, self-regulating machines based on computer and digital technologies” (Torres & Schugurensky, 2002a, p. 433). Buchbinder (1993) argues that in the global context, the role of knowledge has shifted from social knowledge to market knowledge. The previous interest in the production of knowledge to work out questions or cognitive problems and to resolve specific social problems or needs (i.e., social knowledge) has lost relevance in direct relation to the production of knowledge for profit or knowledge for sale (i.e., market knowledge). Buchbinder adds that market knowledge becomes an intellectual property that can be traded in the market like any other form of property. Market knowledge is what Gibbons (1994) describes when he talks about the mode 2 form of knowledge which is trans-disciplinary, problem-oriented, application-based, team-driven, multi-sited, partnership-based, socially useful, heterogeneous, quality controlled, reflective and responsive, and less hierarchical than disciplinary knowledge.

Across countries, the commodification of knowledge is part of an understanding of the university as an industry (i.e., entrepreneurial university) in which education and knowledge production become lucrative services that can be sold in the global marketplace (Cleverley, 1987; Naidoo, 2003). Common features of the entrepreneurial university include the enactment of research activities funded by the private sector; use of performance indicators to assess quality; emphasis on science and technology fields rather than on non-profitable research, business-university research partnerships and the creation of consortia; development of specialist units that deal with proprietary intellectual rights; fragmentation of teaching and research; increased participation of university administrators and external (state-level) actors into the allocation of resources and academic decision-making; reduced academic autonomy and faculty participation in governance; and institutional competition for state resources and contract with the private sector (Buchbinder, 1993; Buchbinder & Rajagopal, 1995; Gumpert, 1997; Subotzky, 1999).

Academic capitalism is a central construct that provides a detailed explanation about the effects of the emergence of the entrepreneurial university upon the construction of academic work. Academic capitalism was formalized as a theory by Slaughter and Leslie (1997) to suggest that academic institutions have become capitalist entrepreneurs where faculty and their institutions are increasingly viewed in terms of their ability to generate revenue and commercial value. Slaughter and Leslie (1997) explain that universities have increasingly moved to applied and entrepreneurial science

due to the financial constraints and corporate principles that have become prevailing components of the economic and political context. The concept of academic capitalism emphasizes the idea that academics are pressured to think about the academic capital, which may comprise teaching, research, consultancy skills, or other applications of forms of academic knowledge as profitable resources. Examples of entrepreneurial university behaviors aimed to generate revenues include the establishment of research parks and technology transfer offices, fundraising activities, and development offices and foundations.

There are three indicators of academic capitalism. The first refers to the establishment of forms of governance that encourage the growth of managerial professionals and a decreasing proportion of faculty as members of the professional workforce on college and university campuses. The second involves the conceptualization of students as future workers in the global corporate machine and economy instead of individuals having a right to access and/or seek upward mobility. As part of such conceptualizations, students are required to become flexible workers, specialized in certain fields, have high quality preparation, and standardized levels of efficiency. The third includes differentiated forms of resource allocation on the basis of disciplinary backgrounds and potential of departments to generate wealth. For example, engineering or natural sciences are identified as areas that ensure the acquisition of larger profits (Slaughter & Rhoades, 2004).

Whereas academic capitalism emphasizes the effects of the commodification of knowledge upon the definition and dynamics of academic work, new managerialism or entrepreneurialism (Deem, 1998) focuses on explaining the systems of administration and management that enable the commodification and marketization of knowledge. Managerialism “refers both to ideologies about the application of techniques, values and practices derived from the private sector of the economy to the management of organizations concerned with the provision of public services, and to the actual use of those techniques and practices in publicly funded organizations” (Deem, 2001, p. 10). In addition to the need for identifying new sources of finance to alleviate the decline of government funding, the transferring of strategic management principles from the private industry to the public education sector has been explained as part of the efforts to instill efficiency, effectiveness, and excellence as central values for university functioning and restructuring. According to Deem (1998, 2001) new managerialism includes three behaviors: the search for new, more effective and efficient ways of action (e.g. teaching larger numbers of students through distance and flexible learning); the setting up of new organizational forms (e.g., implementation of auditing practices and bodies, inter-disciplinary research centers which work closely with industry); and the emphasis upon the hiring of managers to regulate the organization of academic life (e.g., departmental and research centre heads responsible for managing their budgets).

Globalization and neoliberal ideologies that emphasize market reforms across countries have encouraged the rise of university practices based on the

commodification and marketization of knowledge. In developed countries, entrepreneurial behaviors have become salient components of organizational culture, even though the implementation or adaptability of such behaviors vary across types of universities and disciplinary field (Albert, 2003; Francis & Hampton, 1999). The case of developing countries is different. Sutz (2003) emphasizes that poverty in Latin American countries is worse now than twenty years ago, and at the same time, economic activities are less based on knowledge production and innovation. Among Latin American countries, it has been difficult to think of markets and neoliberalism as a development strategy because of the political instability that characterizes their national history and the lack of social institutional development (Veltmeyer, 1997; Walton, 2004). Although universities in developing countries are urged to respond to the global pressures of the knowledge economy, entrepreneurial behaviors related to the production and transfer of knowledge for market purposes are embryonic practices. Contradictory messages in national policies (i.e., governments and other funding organizations place strong emphasis on socially committed research; however, there is a stronger willingness to fund applied research) and the lack of institutional structures to support innovation through the production and application of knowledge have hindered universities' capacity to engage in market practices entirely (Murillo, 2000; Sutz, 2003; Torres & Schugurensky, 2002a).

The participation of Latin American universities in the processes of commodification of knowledge is influenced by social and cultural traditions related to

the understanding and use of research in developing countries. Sutz (2003) explain that on the one hand, research in Latin American countries has never enjoyed much social or political status as a way to implement substantial changes and progress. Additionally, the value attributed to endogenously produced knowledge is low, which leaves researchers with limited power to pursue their research interests and to use their findings to improve the social and natural conditions of their countries. On the other hand, the systematic efforts to create and support innovation are weak and incomplete: technology-based new firms do not receive support, public research institutions are usually underfunded, and networking between universities and industry is difficult when industry shows little interest in research results. Academics in Latin American universities are expected to engage in the processes of knowledge production and the transfer of knowledge to promote economic development; however, the cultural, political, and organizational condition in which higher education institutions must function hinders that possibility (Brunner, 1989).

Mexico also experiences the demands of global competition and increased participation in the knowledge economy; however, higher education institutions struggle to play a central role in the processes of modernization, industrialization, and technology transfer. Scholars imply that practices of commodification and marketization of knowledge at Mexican public universities are not as prominent as those in developed countries due to cultural traditions and the co-existence of contradictory technology discourses that shape the participation of universities in the process of modernization



and technology transfer (Castaños-Lomnitz, 1997; Lomnitz & Chazaro, 1999). On the one hand, in Mexico there exists the tendency to undervalue technology or applied research. According to Lomnitz and Chazaro (1999; p.114), “despite the acclaimed importance of applied and technological research for the development of science, policies and evaluation systems seem only to benefit basic research as the only valid manner of conducting scientific research.” The underestimation of the technological aspects of applied sciences explains the enormous gap that exists, in Third World countries, between university research and the need for industrial renovation (Lomnitz & Chazaro, 1999).

One of the reasons for the lack of connection between the university and the industry sector in developing countries such as Mexico is the restricted vision of university leaders and agents from the public and private sector to develop partnerships. In a study by Castaños-Lomnitz (1997), the public statements of universities leaders, industry, and the state strongly supported the transfer of technology from academic institutions to industry; however, when asked their private opinions, these leaders were overwhelmingly opposed to university-industry interactions as they were defined in their previous public discourses. Castaños-Lomnitz explains that the contradictions expressed by leaders from these sectors can be explained by identifying two discourses about industry and university partnerships. The first discourse is borrowed from advanced industrial societies; it criticizes earlier policies that failed to implement workable interactions between higher education and industry,

particularly in the vital context of technology transfer. Thus, this discourse emphasizes education for science and technology as a significant component of a competitive Mexican economy. The second technological discourse is a traditional pre-industrial or colonial discourse, which held higher education to be a personal adornment of a gentleman. Thus, skills provided by higher education are not intended to be relevant to industrialization. Since these two forms of discourse permeate the functioning and restructuring of university life, the commodification and marketization of knowledge in Mexico are, primarily, intermittent, non-regulated, and even accidental practices in the higher education context.

Because the participation of Mexico into the knowledge economy at the international level has been minimal (Bonilla, Guerrero, & Juárez, 2006), during the 1970s the federal government endeavored to stimulate the production of knowledge through the creation of the National Council of Science and Technology (CONACyT) which oversees and coordinates the development of (a) a scholarship program to train Mexican human resources (i.e., students) in science and technology both in Mexico and abroad, industry programs and research centers, and international agreement (Flores, 1983) . CONACyT's activities have been linked to the definition of university functioning and restructuring since CONACyT provides higher education institutions with highly trained human resources, financial resources for academics to develop research activities, and performance indicators to evaluate the quality of educational programs at the graduate division. However, since 1982 the financial crisis and the continual budget

cuts among public institutions have significantly constrained the fostering of research activities encouraged by CONACyT (Flores, 1983).

### **The Academic Profession**

The academic profession is a promising field of research widely acknowledged across various countries; however, to present a detailed review of the international scholarship is an endeavor beyond the purpose of this work. Nonetheless, it is possible to distinguish that at the international level, research efforts to address the academic profession include two central dimensions: the character of academy as a professional community and the organizational or structural factors that influence the ways in which academics engage in their professional endeavors.

Since similar issues affect higher education and the academic profession worldwide (Altbach, 2001); the American context is used as a framework of reference to analyze the ways in which the academy has developed as a professional community over the years and the structural components that influence the ways in which academics define their work. U.S. scholarship can shed light on the main topics that have been studied and the findings regarding such topics internationally. U.S. scholarship is an unavoidable point of reference since “the American university stands at the center of a world system of science and scholarship and is the largest producer of research and scholarly publications; the American academic profession is today the largest in the world, with a half-million full-time scholars and scientists” (Altbach, 2001, p. 316).

In the development of this section, I also integrate part of the Mexican literature that provides relevant contributions with regards to the development of Mexican academics as a professional community. Since the study of academics in Mexico is a relatively new topic of research that started to be developed during the 1980s, there are categories of analysis that remain unexplored and thus absent of this discussion.

### ***Profession, Professionalism, and Professionalization***

A profession is a regulated enterprise that, according to some authors, exhibits eight characteristics that define it as an actual profession (Buchanan, 1983; Carr, 2000; Kline, 1981; Marutello, 1981; Riggs, 1981; Shanker, 1986). The first characteristic refers to the possession of a body of knowledge that is not accessible to everyone and whose content overtime is expected to be expanded. Second, professions are based on a sense of calling and a service orientation which responds to the centrality of the functions of the profession to those outside the profession. Third, a professional is required to apply a body of knowledge to a specific context to obtain a predictable outcome or resolution for individuals over the short term. Fourth, members of a profession engage in formal training for an extended period of time that enables the possession of a degree to claim expertise in a particular field of knowledge. Fifth, the making of a profession involves the development of a collective consciousness which is maintained through the creation of professional associations aimed to promote the communication of the knowledge and culture of the group among the members and regulate the size of the group through controlled admissions. Sixth, to be a professional requires continual update of

professional qualifications and knowledge to provide service. Seventh, professional practices are measurable against defined codes of ethics of conduct or principles of procedure. Eight and finally, by virtue of their expertise, members of a profession are permitted to operate fairly independently, to make decisions, to exercise discretion, and to be free of most forms of direct supervision.

Two concepts are tied to the notion of profession: professionalization and professionalism. Although scholars in the sociology of professions tend to use different approaches to define these concepts; in the present investigation, professionalization refers to “a change in the nature of an occupation and the underlying values that governed its practice, defined its status, and regulated its accessibility to new members” (Pescosolido, 1991, p. 354). Professionalization, which leads to status enhancement, can be enacted through certification or credentialing, contracts, and tenure (Crandall, 1993). Professionalism, in some distinction, according to Crandall (1993), is defined as professional practice and continued learning. Professionalism refers to the appropriation or enactment of the indicators that define a profession; therefore, professionalism is characterized as having structural factors such as formal education and entrance requirements as well as attitudinal characteristics such as a sense of calling and the interaction with colleagues as a central work reference (Palumbo & Styskal, 1974).

### ***The Professional Community***

Work in the academy has been acknowledged as a professional enterprise in the United States since the last decades of the nineteenth century. During 1869, at research based universities in the United States, faculty gained recognition for the value of expertise, specialization in intellectual disciplines, and the advancement of knowledge on the basis of professional autonomy and academic freedom (Taylor, 1999). The academic profession “is distinctive in the extent to which its individual members orient themselves towards their work in terms of explicit interpretations, or a system of cognitive and normative ideas” (Lane, 1995; p. 242). Contextual changes across years have influenced the character of professionalism and professionalization among academics. By the 1940s, the general education movement<sup>4</sup> in the U.S. modified the understating of faculty as professionals: academics were expected to be not experts in a specialized body of knowledge but general practitioners in command of broad areas of knowledge and dedicated to teach and interact with students (Alpert, 1980). Since that period the role of a professional in the academic community has incorporated the research-teaching role dilemma as part of the process of evolution of the academic profession (Massey, 1997). In addition to changes in the content or orientation of professoriate’s work, modifications to the academic profession include the loss of status and public esteem (Altbach, 2001; Massey, 1997). Massey (1997) emphasizes that

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<sup>4</sup> General education is opposed to specialization, research, and pre-professional training as defining elements of undergraduate education. As a movement, it argued instead for a liberal art program that would provide students with a broad learning experience and would treat them as whole persons (Alpert, 1980).

during the years following War World II and through the 1980s, two conditions marked the loss of status of the academic profession. On the one hand, the public lost confidence in those involved in the enterprise of education as a result of the low levels of academic performance as experienced in higher education institutions. On the other hand, the incorporation of professionals holding a managerial perspective and the exclusion of faculty members from the decision making processes aimed to organize academic life lead to members of the professoriate to think of themselves as part of a beleaguered minority with restricted or limited power to define their academic practice.

### ***The Academy as a Changing Profession***

Transformations in the academic profession at universities are linked to the structural and ideological changes that are derived from the dynamics of globalization and neoliberalism (Gumport, 1997; Gumport & Snyderman, 2002; Honan & Teferra, 2001; Rhoades & Slaughter, 1997). Capitalist modes of production have increased conditions such as the dynamics of competition in the workforce, less protective labor contracts, the replacement of the hourly wage by piece-work remuneration, and a polarized labor market composed by a small, highly skilled and well-paid sector, on the one hand, and a large low skilled and low-paid sector, on the other (Torres & Schugurensky, 2002b). A central characteristic of this new work order is the increased participation of the state as a coercive mechanism through which desirable professional practices are identified in policy and legislation (Rhoades & Sporn, 2002). Barrow (1996) notes that postindustrial workers have to be flexible specialists (i.e., workers with highly developed symbolic,

research and communication skills who are essentially involved in assembling ideas rather than things) who can move across different work places, adapt to contextual demands, and commit to ongoing education.

Academics are characterized by several scholars as a new kind of knowledge workers who are expected to assume entrepreneurial and fundraising roles, expected to develop skills in interdisciplinary and team project management and networking, and expected to deal with the media and an increasingly better informed general public (Crosby, 2003; Subotzky, 1999). Rhoades and Slaughter (1997) emphasize that the academic profession is becoming a part-time, managed, and capitalistic profession. Institutional conditions that in previous decades were viewed as beneficial in the academy such as occupational security and independence assured by tenure, academic freedom, and peer review, have been now eroded (Naidoo, 2003). Under a climate of accountability and assessment, universities opted for more part-timers and non-tenure track faculty (Honan & Teferra, 2001). Faculty have lost part of their capacity of self-regulation and professional autonomy; they have become managed employees required to be flexible and meet performance expectations and reviews; and they are monitored and told how to spend their time and in what kind of activities to which they should devote their energy , and what they should produce (Gibbons, et al., 1994; Gumpert, 1997; Rhoades & Slaughter, 1997). The excessive supervision embedded in the current approaches of academic management communicates a lack of trust for the capacity of



academics as professionals who can teach and research according to internalized standards (Shanker, 1986).

Clark (2001) emphasizes that the changing conditions of the academic context in the United States have created five systemic problems that affect the ways in which academics engage in their work and interactions with colleagues and students. The first of these systemic problems refers to increase of remedial education to address the low academic performance of students. Increased interactions of faculty with poorly educated students create a lack of challenging work activities that prevent academics from achieving their maximum potential as professionals. Burton Clark emphasizes that the lowering of standards of educational practices marginalizes the development of faculty's professional competencies. The second problem includes a continual conflict about the balance between teaching and research workloads. Faculty members who have engaged primarily in research activities are urged to increase their teaching load at the undergraduate level, a situation that according to Clark is becoming a source of academic burnout. Weakened professional control is the third systemic problem. It refers to the loss of participation of academics in the decision making process at universities and colleges. The fourth problem is related to the fragmentation of academic culture in that there are no core values or an overarching common framework to guide and assess academic practices. Clark emphasizes that academic culture is characterized by high levels of differentiation of meanings and interpretations about the components and character of academic work. The fifth and last problem refers to

diminished intrinsic reward and motivation among academics as a result of the constraining effects of their changing context.

The practices of the academy have been diverse and open to change; therefore, the making of the academic profession demands that the professoriate develop abilities to adapt to changing conditions and cope with uncertainty (Taylor, 1999). Scholars note that academics are not passive entities who became victims of contextual changes; instead, academics choose their styles of participation in the construction of organizational structures and the behavioral responses to change (Trowler, 1998). Trowler (1998) develops four categories that characterize the different roles that academics can enact either to facilitate or hinder policy implementation and change. The first refers to academics who engage in conformity, ritualism, and self-exclusion as a result of the intensification in workload, decline of resources, and general degradation of their labor. The second category is comprised of academics that essentially accept the spirit of change and act within new contexts. The third category includes academic who use coping strategies to respond to the competing demands that result from change. The final category is shaped by academics who participate in policy reconstruction, which occurs when academics engage in reconstructive strategies (i.e., curriculum innovation, reinterpretation of policy, policy manipulation, and re-professionalization) to manage the direction and style of change effectively.

In the last three decades, the academic profession in Mexico has been required to develop new forms of professionalism based on the increase of research activities,

productivity, and internationalization (Gil-Antón, 2003). With the new role of the federal government as a regulatory agent and the release of policies for the modernization of higher education in Mexico since the 1980s, the professoriate has become the target to implement changes within public universities (Vidales, Sahagún, & Oca, 2006). With limited structural support and cultural traditions contrary to the research university that is commonly found in developed countries, Mexican academics are delegated the responsibility to improve academic competitiveness of the higher education institutions (Cazales, 2006; Ibarra-Colado, 2002). For Mexican academics, the experience of change and the redefinition of the professional endeavors of academics have been saturated with ambiguities and conflicting messages in various levels of educational policies (Izquierdo-Sánchez, 2000; Porter, 2003).

### ***Career Advancement and Socialization***

The incorporation of faculty into the academic profession takes place through a series of stages in which individuals have to be socialized into a system of values, knowledge claims, and procedural behaviors that are demanded according to the dynamics of continuity and change at universities. The incorporation of individuals into an academic career is based on approximately ten to twenty years of intensive training and organizational socialization in which academics are required to learn about (a) disciplinary world views and research methodologies (Abbas & McLean, 2001; Fortes & Lomnitz, 1994; Murray, 2000), (b) codes of ethics and patterns of behavior that define the academic culture and the scientific community (Fortes & Lomnitz, 1994; Jensen,

1982; Martin, 1999), and (c) the nature and function of the academic work place (Grbich, 1998). The sense of career among academics “includes the search for continuity in terms of the pursuit of particular lines of research, the development of expertise in teaching, and the development of a reputation and capacity to engage with the community through various service activities” (Taylor, 1999; p. 40). Although academics seek to develop a sense of stability about the nature of their roles and functions (i.e., teaching, research, and service), the demands in the postmodern world has created continual changes in career patterns (Taylor, 1999).

Examinations of academic career patterns across countries show that women have experienced more disadvantaged conditions than their male counterparts to gain access and advancement in the academic profession (Gould, 1997; Guevara, 2004; Romanin & Over, 1993; Turner, 2002). In the making of their profession as academics, women working full-time at universities tend to struggle to maintain high levels of academic performance and achieve balance between family life and scholarly commitments (Jensen, 1982). A central conclusion of the studies addressing similarities and differences in career development between men and women across countries is that women are underrepresented in not only academic jobs but also in authority positions (Poole, Bornholt, & Summers, 1997).

In general, studies that address the stages related to the process of career advancement among academics explore several of the following aspects: motivating factors to pursue the academy as a career (Leggon, 2001); the experiences of training

and apprenticeship (Fortes & Lomnitz, 1994); the processes and policies of professional recruitment (Honan & Teferra, 2001); and the incorporation into the labor market in relation to faculty recruitment policies and practices as well as the conditions for permanence and promotion (Martin, 1999). One of the conclusions drawn from these studies is that pathways for admission and career advancement in the academic profession are variable as a result of the changing nature of the political, social, and economic context. Thus, the development of the academic profession is based on individuals' capacity for flexibility with and adaptation to continual changing role demands.

In the Mexican context, the study of academics' career advancement and socialization is scarce, with a limited number of scholars addressing the way in which members of the academic profession navigate their experiences of training and access to the labor market (Fortes & Lomnitz, 1994; Salord, 2001).

### ***Role and Functions***

In the contemporary university, the professoriate is expected to accomplish various and expanding roles not only inside but also outside the classroom effectively; they have to engage in grant writing as much as they have to participate in governance (Gappa, et al., 2007). Although there is no uniform definition of what constitutes the role and function of a faculty member, the core content of academic work for a typical full-time faculty member at a U.S. four-year university includes teaching, research, and service; peripheral activities consist of consulting and professional development (Honan

& Teferra, 2001; Rhoades & Slaughter, 1997). The distribution of the percentages allocated to each one of these activities can vary according to the size and orientation (i.e., teaching or research) of the university (Boice, 1992; Gappa, et al., 2007; Massey, 1997). However, it is acknowledged internationally that academics tend to gravitate toward research as their preferred activity (Lane, 1985). In U.S. context, the professional status of teaching is often undervalued in relation to research (Grubb, et al., 1999). Yet, there exist renewed demands for faculty members to pay greater attention to teaching as an activity that is as central to university competitiveness as research (Boyer, 1990, 1991; Rhode, 2006).

In the academic practice, research and teaching are core functions in the faculty workload; academics are required to participate both in teaching and research with the same degree of efficiency (Fairweather, 1989, 2002). In a meta-analysis of various studies exploring the relationships between teaching and research as components of academic practice, Marsh (1987) noted that the achievement of effective teaching and research productivity demands different kinds of effort and abilities. Marsh concludes that professors struggle to develop both activities effectively and simultaneously; additionally, pressure to conduct research reduced the quality of university teaching. Both Wong (1995) and Cuban (1992) acknowledged that both research and teaching are related to one another; however, when faculty members try to combine them as part of their everyday work, both ethical and logistical dilemmas emerge. Cuban (1992)

emphasizes that the fragmentation that exists between the research and teaching community make difficult among academics to excel in both activities.

Although research and teaching are the core functions of academic practice, the workload of faculty members is also shaped by other activities such as institutional service in committees or administrative positions. Hours invested in administrative work, unremunerated professional service, committee activities, and remunerated outside work (e.g., consulting) reached low numbers in the total work load percentage of academics; however, after the 1980s scholars started to notice that academics devoted more time in the development of other activities that do not constitute the core of their role functions and that bring detrimental effects eventually (Massey, 1997). Taking an administrative position (e.g., department chair, director of an institute, or dean) is not atypical among academics; however, academics emphasize that administrative roles are time consuming and that an increase in administrative work has negative effects on research and teaching (Lane, 1985). Two factors explain the increase in faculty's workload: financial declines in budgets allocated to universities and the bureaucratization of the academic structure. The financial constraints upon higher education institutions triggered the layoff of faculty members and an increase in the workload of the faculty members who remain at the institution and who are required to sustain organizational structures and functions (Honan & Teferra, 2001). In addition, the increasing efforts to make academics and universities more accountable have triggered

the development of bureaucratic structures, both inside and outside institutions, to exert mechanism of regulation, supervision, and control (Lane, 1985).

One of the central conclusions among scholars who examine the academic professions in the U.S. context is that the reward systems on campuses across the nation do not match the full range of academic functions and that professors are often caught between competing obligations (Boyer, 1990). Emergent demands such as reduced university budgets, decline of salaries, the incorporation of management principles to regulate academic life, greater workload, technology integration, and student diversity have transformed and will keep transforming the roles and functions of academics (Martin, 1999).

In Mexico the role and functions of the professoriate revolve around teaching and research primarily; yet, research has held higher appraisal within the professional community during the last decades (Cordero-Arroyo, Galaz-Fontes, Sevilla-García, Aceves, & Villegas, 2003). Academics' levels of participation in core activities such research and teaching as well as in peripheral activities such as service and academic administration are linked to occupational status (i.e., part and time full-time) and patterns of career advancement; therefore, the professoriate's role and functions in Mexico are highly diversified as a result of their personal life stories and organizational conditions (Gil-Antón, 1994, 2003). It is also acknowledged that the high degrees of bureaucratization and organizational inefficiency in public universities in Mexico have increased academics' workload and created various peripheral activities that are neither



remunerated nor substantial for the professional consolidation of the academic community (Morales & McGinn, 1982). Since there exists high degrees of ambiguity with regard to the percentages of time that academics have to devote to their core and peripheral functions, in Mexico it has been difficult to determine coherent programs that evaluate the quality and pertinence of professoriate's role and academic performance (Ibarra-Colado & Porter-Galetar, 2007; Izquierdo-Sánchez, 2000).

### ***Work-related Attitudes***

It is acknowledged in international scholarship that "academics are experiencing a sense of loss and anxiety as universities confront and are confronted by postmodern challenges and discontinuous change"(Taylor, 1999, p. 15). In general, academics appear to be overwhelmed by the enormity of challenges they face; additionally, they feel undervalued and overworked (Martin, 1999). Existing trends in academics' work-related attitudes are linked to contextual changes including the growing role of government in university control; the climate of accountability; technological changes; increased expectations for research productivity; public scrutiny and calls for more emphasis on teaching; and increase in the use of part-timers (Everett & Entekin, 1994; Jacobs & Winslow, 2004). Researchers have examined job satisfaction and occupational stress as part of the work-related attitudes among members of the academic profession. Since the 1990s, the trends in the work-related attitudes of academics working at different types of institutions include diminished job satisfaction and an increase in the levels of occupational stress across countries (Perlberg & Keinan, 1986).

Olsen (1993) notes that professors report job satisfaction when they meet institutional expectations, establish collegial bonds, negotiate multiple role demands, develop a sense of autonomy, and find opportunities to use their skills and abilities successfully. Although academics identify areas of satisfaction as related to their jobs, they complain about the prevailing system of compensation, the conditions of governance, their workload, conflict among work commitments, conflicts with colleagues, and time pressures (Jacobs & Winslow, 2004; Olsen, 1993; Thompson & Dey, 1998).

Occupational stress is associated consistently with lower levels of job satisfaction (Olsen, 1993; Thompson & Dey, 1998). Some of the reasons for the decline in academics' job satisfaction and the increase of alienation and occupational stress includes a shared sense of insecurity and anxiety about the future of the academic profession; the deterioration of the conditions for career development, promotion, and permanence; and the sense that the work at universities is not valued by the community (Everett & Entekin, 1994). Beyond the question of whether devotion to work is either a self-imposed routine or the result of structural constraints, findings confirm that the greatest stressor for the members of the academic community is having to maintain an excessive workload (i.e., working fifty four hour in average or more than sixty hours per week in some cases) (Jacobs & Winslow, 2004; Thorsen, 1996). In specific, it is academics' workload as related to research and publishing which was found to be the greatest stressor, after which came teaching and service (Jacobs &

Winslow, 2004; Perlberg & Keinan, 1986; Thorsen, 1996). Thompson and Dey (1998) note that regardless of the type of institution, women experience significantly more work stress than their male counterparts (Thompson & Dey, 1998). Additionally, occupational stress is compounded by conditions of marginality among minority groups (e.g., racial groups) within the academic community (Thompson & Dey, 1998).

Given the prevailing tendencies of academics' work-related attitudes, scholars emphasize that it is imperative for institutions to develop strategies or systems of social and problem solving support (e.g., mentorship programs, new faculty seminars, opportunities for interaction to obtain information or feedback from colleagues) that enable academics to reduce their level of work stress (Neumann & Finaly-Neumann, 1990; Olsen, 1993; Perlberg & Keinan, 1986).

### ***Social Interaction at Work***

The making of the academic profession is based on the development of interactions and relationships with other members of the professional community; therefore, the kinds of relationships that academics establish both inside and outside their workplace (i.e., conferences, national and international associations, or international networks) have a strong effect upon their career patterns (Gersick, Bartunek, & Dutton, 2000). Scholarship identifies two dimensions of collegial work and interactions among academics: internal and external (Baker & Zey-Ferrell, 1984). Internal forms of interaction refers to departmental peer collaboration (or the lack of it) and interaction with university administrators and authorities (Quinlan & Åkerlind,

2000). External forms of interaction include the construction of national and international networks in which academics attempt to maintain communication and collaboration with external scholars in settings such as professional associations' annual meeting or conferences (Rhode, 2006; Wilson, 1979).

The development of collegial work within university departments is influenced by the ways in which power relationships are constructed and negotiated; events such as the definition of leadership and the search for status and authority within an academic group have an effect upon the enactment of specific academic activities (Baker & Zey-Ferrell, 1982; Birnbaum, 1992; Turner, 2003). Interaction within departments is also viewed as a source of learning and professional development for academics (Boice, 1992; Lattuca, 2002). Ultimately, collegial interaction in departments is a factor that influences the work performance and attitudes of academics (Braxton, 1983; Wood, 1990). Researchers who explore collegial interactions among faculty members have found that one of the reasons why academics develop forms of interaction with colleagues in external settings is based on their interest in increasing their productivity, construct public prestige, and gain membership in the professional community both at the local and international level (Rhode, 2006; Wilson, 1979).

### ***Academic Identity***

Studies about the formation of the professional identity of members of professional communities such as medicine or law gained prominence during 1988 to 2000 (Pratt, Rockmann, & Kaufmann, 2006). In the field of education, the number of

studies that examine the professional identity of schoolteachers is larger than that addressing the professoriate in postsecondary education (Beijaard, Meijer, & Verloop, 2004; Beijaard, Verloop, & Vermunt, 2000; Connelly & Clandinin, 1999). Yet, recent efforts have been devoted to uncover the character and formation of academic identity (Abbas & McLean, 2001; Bocock, 1994; Henkel, 2005; Murray, 2000). Explanations about the construction of the academic identity rely on cultural and social identity theorists (Watson, 2006, p. 509).

Based on the basic premises provided by the socio-cultural approach on identity formation, scholars list four observations about the features and construction of academic identity (Abbas & McLean, 2001; Cazales, 2006; Gregory, 2001; Henkel, 2005; Murray, 2000; Thompson & Dey, 1998). First, academic identity formation is influenced by the context (i.e., culture, organizational structure, perceived authority) in which individuals perform their professional duties and interact with colleagues and students (Cazales, 2006; Gregory, 2001; Henkel, 2000, 2005). The primary context in which academic identity is constructed is in the department, where academics find a source of symbolic power, interaction and membership, and opportunities of decision making and command of resources in the university (Henkel & Vabø, 2006). Second, the development of an academic identity is the result of the negotiation of beliefs and experiences that individuals develop as part of their participation in two key communities, the discipline and the higher education institution (Henkel & Vabø, 2006; Murray, 2000). Thus, the construction of academic identity is strongly influenced by the

system of beliefs and values that defines a disciplinary field. Third, academic identity is neither a fixed nor a stable construct. Academics develop hybrid and fluid professional identities that are held in place through the temporary unification of different beliefs, values, and practices (Abbas & McLean, 2001). Thus, self-perception among members of the academic profession can be ambiguous and contradictory. Fourth, the construction of academic identity is experienced differently depending upon the social position that individuals occupy in the stratified academic system. Members who belong to marginalized groups within the academic community (i.e., racial minorities and women) tend to struggle the most when they try to develop self-understandings, status, and membership within the academy (Abbas & McLean, 2001; Gregory, 2001; Thompson & Dey, 1998). Henkel and Vabø (2006) conclude that the construction of academic identity takes place in the intersection of national policy and the rhythms of the disciplines, departments, and individuals.

Other studies about the construction of academic identity at the micro level of analysis describe the strategies of action that professors develop to adapt themselves to their challenging work place and satisfy both institutional and personal projects. In a study that explores the lives and work of new generation academics, Archer (2008) found that part of the construction of academic identity includes the development of five strategies to deal with the overwhelming demands of contemporary higher education and its intense requirement to produce. Archer labeled the first strategy as playing the game: this refers to individuals' engagement in both engaging in intellectual

work and pursuing external funding to ensure their privileges and prestige in the institutions where they work. The second strategy is speaking out: this involves academics' complaints within their institutions regarding their conditions of work. This strategy is aimed to demonstrate the potential for younger academics to promote change in the system. The third strategy is the creation of supporting practices: this includes the organization of informal relationships both to receive from and provide support to colleagues. The fourth strategy is a form of self-protection through work on the psyche: this refers to the maintenance of well being within the work context through the construction and maintenance of personal projects that are sustained within the margins of institutional norms. The final strategy that Archer identifies is academics' creation of boundaries and balance between work, family, and social lives. This refers to academics' involvement in other activities, responsibilities, and relationships with partners and families. Archer concludes that young researchers who seek to shape their professional identity accept and play within the margins of structural constraints; however, they are not constrained by structural forces entirely. Instead, at the micro level, Archer identifies that younger academics develop forms of resistance through their professional practice.

Finally, because of the differentiation of academic roles and career paths in the contemporary university, some scholars note that it is not possible to talk about the academic identity as a homogeneous phenomenon (El-Khawas, 2008). Instead, it is necessary to acknowledge the existence of different academic identities; each of them

deserving separate attention to identify their processes of construction and special features. El-Khawas (2008) identifies at least four different roles and responsibilities that define the construction of academic identities on the basis of professional status, training, field of specialization, and institutional affiliation: university professors, part-time academic staff, research professors (i.e., high-profile research academics), and research scientists. El-Khawas (2008) explains that the various types of professional identity that are developed within the academic community reflect the processes of continuity and change in university restructuring. Additionally, El-Khawas acknowledges that her classification system is blurred when academics engage in academic practice in their everyday life.

### **The structural elements of the academic profession**

The organization of work conditions defines the way in which individuals engage in occupational practices and the way in which they define their identity as workers and professionals (McAllister & Bigley, 2002). The development of the academy as a professional community is strongly linked to the way in which organizational structures and behaviors as well as cultural configurations are aligned to enable the professoriate to engage in their core activities of teaching, research, and service (Gumport & Snyderman, 2002; Lane, 1985).

### ***The Organizational Character of the University***

The making of the academic profession occurs within the structural factors that define the university. Contemporary universities are defined as complex organizations in



which “goals are ambiguous, their focus is on people not on profit; their techniques are unclear and non-routine; they are vulnerable to environmental changes and experts dominate the decision-making process” (Sporn, 1996, p. 43). There are four structural conditions that define the character of the university as an organization: high degree of structural differentiation, efforts of disciplinary and structural integration, increased bureaucratization, and internationalization.

The high degree of structural differentiation at the university is viewed in the development of departments that emphasize the functional division between academics; departments tend to become self-contained units that encourage the emergence of individualism, conflicts of communication, and competition among academics (Lane, 1985). Departments at the basic unit of the university organization is where typical academics perform their basic functions and the context in which they interact with colleagues and students (Wilson, 1979). Structural integration refers to the development of cross-disciplinary departments, interdisciplinary research, and the creation of research institutes that integrate various traditions of knowledge (Lane, 1985). The conditions of differentiation and integration described by Lane are sustained by specific forms of governance.

Martin Trow (1985) refers to two forms of governance that are commonly found among universities across countries: the complex administrative apparatus and the departmental structure. Central administrations formulate rules and regulations to coordinate the whole enterprise and give it coherence, whereas departments tend to

redefine central regulation to create their own logics of functioning, which in turn foster diversity and may produce fragmentation. Therefore, the central administrative apparatus centralizes decision making and departmental units decentralize it. The characterization of the academic organization as a site for the construction of structural differentiation and integration echoes the claim that educational organizations are cultural configurations in which differentiation, loosely coupled arrays, and conflict, as well as consensus, can be achieved (Kezar & Eckel, 2002; Van-Maanen & Barley, 1984; K. E. Weick, 1976).

The third structural factor that characterizes the university and exerts influence upon academic work is bureaucratization. Lane (1985) notes that bureaucratization refers to the definition and introduction of a rational system of rules for the conduct and regulation of academic life. Bureaucratization also involves the expansion of the number of levels in the hierarchy of the system, the size of higher levels, and the number of administrators or amount of regulation of the work done.

The fourth structural factor refers to internationalization. In the contemporary university, academics develop their work activities between and within the national and the international context; in U.S. research universities, the professoriate is expected to be responsive to their local context and interact with international scholars and international students increasingly (Altbach, 2001). The construction of international knowledge networks along with the use of complex systems of information and

communication technologies has become an imperative among universities which expect to become competitive at the global context (Gibbons, et al., 1994).

### ***Governance Structures and Distribution of power***

Structures of governance vary across institutional type (i.e., faculty gain higher levels of participation into decision making in research universities and leading private four-year colleges than they have in public sector institutions) (Clark, 2001); however, there exists a tendency among higher education institutions to adopt a principle of shared governance, which refers to the allocation of authority among faculty, president, an oversight board, and external regulatory bodies including state governing boards and accrediting institutions (Rhode, 2006). Although in a shared governance system faculty members are expected to have primary authority over curricula, appointments, promotion issues, and the research agenda, studies show a clear decline in authority and power among faculty at universities and an increase in the participation of federal and state governments and other non-governmental institutions into decision making regarding academic life (Gumport, 1997; Gumport & Snyderman, 2002; Honan & Teferra, 2001; Rhoades & Slaughter, 1997; Rhode, 2006).

Historical accounts on the evolution of the academic organization in the United States emphasize that in the years after the 1960s and 1970s, internal decision making at universities became more dispersed, with a marked emphasis upon the participation of external bodies. Taylor (1999) describes that during the 1950s and 1960s in spite of the sense of ambiguity in the authority and processes of governance, students and

faculty had a note in participation in policy making. Tenured members of the faculty comprised a majority on many of the policymaking committees and other academic bodies; untenured academics were frequently excluded from voting privileges in matters of general university governance. Taylor reports that studies conducted during those years indicate that administrators and the faculty shared much of the same values and worked toward the same goals, with no evidence of deep-rooted conflicts. Although faculty members expressed ambivalent attitudes toward participation in decision making, they could legitimate their power within universities by election to councils, senates, and other bodies which enabled them to regulate the behavior of their colleagues. Taylor (1999) concurs with other scholars that after the 1960s there was a marked change in the loci of academic governance in U.S. universities. Forms of self-governance and local control were eroded; there was a shift of control away from campuses to other constituents and stakeholders such as state wide boards, councils, or commissions that started the development and release of policies to direct public higher education.

In the United States, in addition to state intervention, mandates of federal agencies became part of the redefined system of university governance, external authority bodies gained opportunities of decision making in areas such as student admission policies, faculty and staff employment practices, teaching and research objectives, budget construction, system of accountability, master planning, and use of facilities. With the increased participation of managers in the decision making process at

colleges and universities, part-time faculty members have become the professional subgroup largely excluded from the definition of academic life: they have become “a relatively powerless proletariat in American academic life, centered in employment that is part-time and poorly paid” (Clark, 2001, p. 35).

In the Mexican context, the participation of academics in the process of decision making is also decreasing (Gil-Antón, 2000; Ibarra-Colado, 2002; Ibarra-Colado & Porter-Galetar, 2007; Izquierdo-Sánchez, 2000; Ordorika, 2003). Mexican academics perceive that academic decision making is a highly centralized process in which both central administration and external agencies decide and oversee aspects of university life such as budget priorities, compensation practices and reward systems, and admission criteria (Gil-Antón, 1994). External regulatory agencies such as the Ministry of Education (SEP) and The National Council of Science and Technology (CONACyT) determine, in the main, the organization of academic work (Cazés-Menache, Ibarra-Colado, & Porter-Galetar, 2004). Although federal educational policies in Mexico emphasize the participation of academics in planning and evaluation practices, the management of academic life remains a centralized process (Porter, 2003). Mexican academics who participate in academic decision processes at public universities report higher levels of satisfaction with their workplace than those who are excluded from the planning and evaluation practices aimed to define the orientation of university life.

### ***Reward Systems and Academic Appraisal***

Two central factors are related to the development of institutional appraisal of professional endeavor among academics: the content of academic work and the assessment of practice conducted through both internal and external agents. On the one hand, the status and opportunities of advancement among academics depend upon the levels of professional competency and productivity with regards to teaching and research: academics are assessed on the basis of their roles as both teachers and creative thinkers in scholarship and science. On the other hand, Taylor (1999) notes that academics are appraised both inside and outside the institutions where they are employed: “they are judged according to competitive standards that come from outside as well as inside the institution” (p.142).

Adherence to the merit principle (i.e., technical competency and productivity) in the appraisal of faculty services and status is widely accepted in U.S. higher education; however, scholars emphasize that the strategies that universities use to dismiss, retard, or promote academic members are ambiguous, dynamic, and not well articulated: judgments of merit and the mechanisms to assess it differ according to the group dictating the verdict (Taylor, 1999). Taylor (1999) notes that since the 1960s and 1970s there exists a lack of a systematic and widespread attention to the development of appraisal standards and the evaluation of faculty services and productivity, which has created confusion and conflicting demands among academic members with regards to the primary basis for promotion. In spite of the ambiguity and lack of articulation in

systems of faculty appraisal, scholars note a strong tendency to view scholarly productivity as a symbol of visibility, prestige, and esteem in the academic community both at the local, national, and international levels (Burgess, 1996; Deem, 2001; Fairweather, 1989, 2002; Gappa, et al., 2007; Taylor, 1999).

Similar to the existence of variable systems of faculty appraisal, the compensation practices for academics and the opportunities afforded to academics for additional earnings differ from institution to institution (Taylor, 1999). The structure of academics' compensation includes fringe benefits (e.g., retirement plans, insurance programs, paid leaves), regular salary, and supplemental earnings (e.g., summer teaching, consultant fees). Academics' salaries tend to be lower when compared to other professions such as law and medicine. Historical trends exhibit no substantial expansion in academics' salaries after 1960s and 1970s as a result of financial constraints across countries. Part-time faculty members, who are in the main women, have lower salaries than full-time faculty members.

The decline of academic appraisal is also evident in the modifications of hiring and promotion arrangements that allow the university to become flexible and offer education at a low cost. The proportion of the professoriate in tenured and tenure-track positions is steadily declining in the U.S. as well as in many other countries; part-time status and term appointments (e.g., full-time but nontenure-track faculty) occupy a larger percentage of the academic body at higher education institutions (Altbach, 2001; Gumport, 2000). Altbach (2001) emphasizes that in Latin America, the high proportion

of part-time faculty has hindered the development of a modern academic culture since “reliance on part-timers has meant that university governance is in the hands of a very few senior faculty, little research takes place, and teaching is limited to lectures given by busy professors” (p. 324)

In the Mexican context, the reward system for academics is based on a merit principle that is enacted primarily by external forms of evaluation aimed to provide supplemental earnings on the basis of research productivity, teaching, services, and mentoring activities (Cordero-Arroyo, et al., 2003). Although public universities are expected to develop their own practices of compensation and academic appraisal, the professional status and assessment of academic performance is dictated by federal programs and agencies. Studies of academics in Mexico have focused on examining the adverse consequences (e.g., individualism and collegial competition) generated by the current forms of professional appraisal enacted through federal education policies and programs such as The National System of Researchers (SNI) or the Program for Faculty Upgrading (PROMEP) (Díaz-Barriga, 2007; Ibarra-Colado, 2002; Ibarra-Colado & Porter-Galetar, 2007; Izquierdo-Sánchez, 2000). Conclusions suggest that Mexican academics compete with their colleagues both inside and outside the university to achieve national prestige and increase their salaries.

### ***Disciplines and Institutional Types as Cultural Configurations***

The definition of academics’ work is also influenced by the ways in which symbolic dynamics (i.e., negotiation of meanings, symbols, and rituals) in universities



are constructed and maintained. Organizational dynamics in higher education institutions are constructed through individuals' use of cultural resources (e.g., values, rituals, language, and traditions) or systems of beliefs that individuals use to make sense of themselves and others while enacting their practices as organizational members within a formal education setting (Kezar & Eckel, 2002; Locke & Guglielmino, 2006; Sporn, 1996; Tierney & Rhoads, 1995). In academic organizations there exist group subcultures and hybrid organizational identities that are derived from the heterogeneous cultural traditions and individuals' selective use of cultural resources (Gioia, Schultz, & Corley, 2000; K. E. Weick, 1976). The various symbolic aspects that are present in the relatively autonomous subunits or groups of the university provide a frame of reference for university participants (i.e., faculty, administrators, and students) to define their strategies of action, both individual and collectively (Jensen, 1982; Sporn, 1996).

The variety of symbolic elements and dynamics that shape academic work are related to the conditions of institutional and disciplinary differentiation (Clark, 2001). Different types of institutions (e.g., research universities, master's level institutions, baccalaureate colleges, specialized institutions, community colleges) construct different core values and behavioral responses as to the enactment of academic life (Clark, 2001; Gappa, et al., 2007; Gumpert, 1997; Leggon, 2001). Similarly, the proliferation of disciplinary specializations has increased the subcultures within universities and departments (Becher, 1989; Clark, 2001; Ylijoki, 2000). Thus, within universities there is

the coexistence of several modes of knowledge production and various conceptions of scientific quality which is the result of the various disciplinary cultures (Albert, 2003).

In the Mexican context, studies support the idea that academic work and the performance of academics are linked to the cultural orientation of the university as a whole and the system of values and practices that emerge on the basis of disciplinary affiliation. Different forms of professional socialization as well as understandings of the scientific endeavor are linked to the cultural traditions that define departments and their disciplinary orientation (Chavoya-Peña, 2001).

### ***Information and Communication Technology***

The integration of information and communication technologies (ICT) such as e-mail, the internet, and satellite and cable technology has expanded the demands placed upon academics and diversified their work load: academics now have to learn how to redefine strategies for knowledge delivery, interaction with students and colleagues, research networking, and evaluation of student learning (Finley & Hartman, 2004; Hassini, 2006; Honan & Teferra, 2001; Hughes, 1996; Massey, 1997). Technology integration at higher education institutions has created new challenges as to faculty learning processes and abilities of flexibility and adaptability (Howland & Wedman, 2004; Hughes, 2003, 2005). The incorporation of technology into higher education not only creates new requirements upon academics but also has become a threat to faculty ownership of the curriculum. Martin Trow (2001) emphasizes that the inclusion of information technologies to provide broader access to high-level continuing education

has shifted professional status and scholarly expertise to outside developers since faculty members have little incentive (i.e., no access to additional resources and no institutional rewards in the form of released time to devote the time and energy necessary to build ICT applications) to create ICT-enriched courses.

### **Strengths and Gaps in Existing Literature**

Studies on the university and the academic profession have relied in the main on organizational theories (Bastedo, 2007). Primary attention has been given to characteristics of the larger context (i.e., political economy) and its constraining effects upon the ways in which university actors interact to construct organizational life. Scholars have explored topics such as state and university relationships (Slaughter & Rhoades, 2004), ideological foundations in the design of higher education systems (Kliebard, 2004), the nature of the accountability climate and the managerial approach to organize university life (Marginson & Considine, 2000), and globalization (Appanduri, 1996; Barrow, 1996b; Marginson, 2006). These studies provide evidence concerning the characteristics and complexity of the institutional context that frame work activities and processes of professionalization of faculty members.

Other scholars have focused on explaining the organizational structures and dynamics that are constructed when university actors interact with each other. These works address the organizational culture and micropolitics in higher education institutions (Arnold, 2004; Clark, 1979; Meyer, 1982) and practices aimed to improve academic life such as strategic planning (Taylor & Karr, 1999), assessment (Tierney &

Rhoads, 1995), and organizational change (Gumport, 2000). These studies acknowledge larger institutional factors that frame the construction of academic life; additionally, they contribute to the existing literature by paying closer attention to the ways in which professors interact to develop social structures, goals, technologies, and power relationships within the university setting.

Scholarship specifically in the Mexican context focuses on the study of the characteristics, origins, and evolution of the larger institutional structures that frame university functioning: the formulation of educational policies, issues of educational centralization, and the role of the federal government in shaping academic life (Ornelas, 2003; Porter, 2003; Rodríguez, 2000; Silva, 2000). Few studies explore the lives and work of faculty members and these offer only brief overviews of the institutional context and its influence on faculty members' construction of their subjectivity (Cazales, 2006; Mérida-Serrano, 2006).

One of the limitations in studies that address both the larger institutional context and organizational behaviors in higher education is that they present the collective actor (e.g., departmental units, professional groups, or organizational fields) not the individual as their main category or unit of analysis (DiMaggio & Powell, 1991; Scott, 1998). There is limited attention to particular individuals and their subjectivity; the central focus is on the organizational and societal level of analysis. In short, researchers emphasize the effects of the structure upon the collective actor. The studies listed above do not explore, from the perspective of academics, what it is required to be a faculty member

who has to perform his or her professional activities in the midst of the implementation of new accountability mandates, pressures for technology use, and demands of increasing organizational competitiveness.

Other lines of research address the characteristics of professional practices and the process of socialization into the academic profession. Studies in this area address the relationship between faculty and student relationships and educational outcomes (Chang, 2005; Pascarella, Pierson, Wolniak, & Terenzini, 2004); the characteristics of collegial interaction (Boice, 1992; Wildman, Hable, Preston, & Magliaro, 2000; Williams & Pennington, 2002), power relationships as related to status construction (Bellas, Ritchey, & Parmer, 2001), the curricular structures of professional development programs (Camblin & Steger, 2000; Jones, Davis, & Price, 2004; Lindman & Tahamont, 2006), and the ideological components embedded in the design of faculty education programs (Centra, 1989; Riegle, 1987). While these studies pay greater attention to the individual, the focus is on understanding the construction of practices as part of a professional community. Academics are described as a collectivity. Scholars have pointed out that most of the research on professional development which is a major component of professionalization rests upon survey data; therefore, the personal and social complexities of faculty work remain obscure (Menges & Austin, 2001; Zeichner, 1999).

Ultimately, there are few studies that examine the construction of subjectivity and personal experiences through which academics develop their research, teaching,

and service activities in particular institutional conditions. Although at the end of the 1980s constructs such as professional identity became a prominent research area in educational research at the elementary level (Connelly & Clandinin, 1999), the examination of academic identity in higher education has received limited attention (Menges & Austin, 2001). A common finding among these studies is that faculty members at universities continually have to choose between enacting the role of either teacher or researcher (Cuban, 1992; Ellermann, Kataoka-Yahiro, & Wong, 2006; Gappa, et al., 2007; Wong, 1995). This scholarship acknowledges that the work and lives of academics are linked to socio-cultural factors (e.g., gender and disciplinary background) in the organizational and larger context (Cashin & Downey, 1995; Erdle & Murray, 1986; Green, 1993; Yuen & Ma., 2002); however, few studies examine the narratives in which academics explain the construction of their professional selves in the university context and their connection to the construction of academic life.

Overall, existing literature clarifies conceptual elements that make up the context and practices of the academic profession. However, there is a disconnection between the levels of analysis in that the scholarship does not link the micro and macro components that intervene and interact in the construction of academics both as professionals and as members of an organization. There continues to be a lack of qualitative studies that connect categories of analysis such as faculty members' professional identity, the organizational setting, and the larger socio-cultural context. Studies do not explore, from the perspective of experienced faculty members what is

required to be a faculty member that is expected to engage in a series of professional activities (e.g., teaching, research, service, publication, collaborative work, networking, and participation in leadership positions) in the midst of multiple pressures to implement accountability mandates and improve organizational competitiveness. What is absent are explanations that contextualize the formation of academics' professional identity and that formation to their patterns of participation in both organizational and governmental mandated programs aimed to improve academic life at universities.

### **Toward a Comprehensive Analytical Framework**

The theoretical framework I use for an in-depth understanding of the ways in which faculty members negotiate their academic identity in the university setting consists of organizational theory, culture theory, and professional identity theory. These three theories are complementary because, from their specific approaches, they are concerned with the study of identity formation both as a collective and individual process. This theoretical framework connects micro and macro levels of analysis to study the negotiation of academic identity within a context of university restructuring.

#### ***Theoretical Perspective***

Organizational theories address macro level of analysis by explaining the ways in which organizations and social groups within organizations participate in the construction of social and institutional structures in the local and larger context (Achinstein, 2002; Bidwell, 2001; DiMaggio & Powell, 1991; Friendland & Alford, 1991; Grubb, et al., 1999; Metz, 1990; Scott, 1998). Organizational theorists explain the

participation of individuals in the construction of organizational culture, change, learning, and identity (Argyris & Schon, 1996; Brown & Starkey, 2000; Gioia, et al., 2000; Schein, 1985; Smircich, 1983; Tierney, 1991; Willson, 2006). Organizational theories also examine patterns of interaction, diversity of goals, and the distribution of authority among organizational members through the analysis of micropolitics and the array of subcultures and loosely coupled systems (Achinstein, 2002; Locke & Guglielmino, 2006; K. Weick, 1976).

Organizational theorists acknowledge that individuals compete and negotiate with one another in the organizational context and that organizational processes are enacted through continual conflict and coordination (DiMaggio, 1997; Friendland & Alford, 1991); however, organizational studies that address the collective actor (i.e., organization and social subgroups) do not offer in-depth explanations about the specific strategies of action and resources that individuals use to construct their patterns of participation in organizational settings. Culture theory pays closer attention to micro levels of analysis without overlooking the influence of organizational and institutional factors upon the individual. Culture theorists examine the ways in which individuals participate in social and cultural practices on the basis of three conditions: their position in the social structure, their self-reflective capacity, and the development of strategies of action (Eisenhart, 1996; Florio-Ruane, 2001; Holland, Lachicotte, Skinner, & Cain, 2001; Ortner, 2006; Rockwell, 1999; Swidler, 2001). Culture theory is particularly concerned with making sense of the ways in which individuals select and use symbols,



rituals, ideologies, and words that are available in their institutional context to define who they are and to engage in the construction of social structures and cultural patterns (Erickson, 1987; Geertz, 1973a, 1973b; A. Swidler, 1986; Ann Swidler, 2001).

Finally, professional identity theorists address the micro level of analysis by examining the process of construction of the professional self on the basis of two sources: the organization of work practices and the values and patterns of behavior dictated by professional associations (Casey, 1995; Erez & Earley, 1993; McAllister & Bigley, 2002). Professional identity theory acknowledges that socio-cultural factors converge within work places to provide resources for individuals to engage in social practices that frame experiences of personal construction and organizational functioning (Abbas & McLean, 2001; Assaf, 2008; Connelly & Clandinin, 1999; Ibarra, 1999). Professional identity theorists use flux perspectives in identity theory to explain the fluid, negotiated, and context-driven nature of identity formation (Côté & Levine, 2002; Greenhalgh, 2002; Pratt, et al., 2006).

### **Conceptual Principles**

Based on the theories that this study uses, there are three conceptual considerations that guided the methodological approach and the analysis of the findings: the conceptualization of academics as situated and acting subjects, the negotiation of academic identity as the process through which the professional self is constructed in the workplace, and the development of academic work as a socio-cultural practice.

***Academics as situated and acting subjects.*** A study of individuals' identity has to consider the social situation or context in which people behave (Holland & Levinson, 1996; Rockwell, 1996, 1999; Swidler, 2001); thus, the study of the negotiation of academic identity among higher education faculty has to be linked to the study of historical and social-cultural conditions. Individuals have a position within the socio-cultural context that make institutional discourses available to them (Deetz & Mumby, 1995; Gee & Green, 1998); however, the place in which people stand and the attention they give to the discourses available is not fixed (Sveningsson & Alvesson, 2003). I view individuals as self-reflective agents who navigate socio-cultural contexts where multiple and, sometimes, contradictory discourses and symbolic structures such as cultural traditions, ideologies, and codes are available for them to develop their daily life and processes of self-construction (Swidler, 2001; Luttrell, 1996; Luykx, 1996). Thus, to understand academics and their behaviors, it is critical to pay attention to the situated nature of academics: their cultural experiences and how these are assimilated and put in use to achieve both personal and collective ends.

As acting subjects, people are not only recipients of symbolic structures (e.g., institutional policies, norms, legislation) but also creators of these. Culture theory acknowledges that collective forces have a constraining effect upon individuals; however, it is also pointed out that individuals have agency, or the ability to act autonomously, through the cultural resources that the structure makes available to them (Swidler, 2001; Ortner, 2006). Côté and Levine (2002) emphasize that symbolic

structures that people are in contact with on a daily basis may enable them to reflexively resist and/ or act upon the social forces that impinge on them.

The concept of agency is central to understand the nature of the acting subject. Agency suggests that social actors are capable of intentional behavior even though they are constrained by regulatory institutional structures (Ortner, 2006). Ortner (2006) defines agency as individuals' capacity to coordinate their actions to (a) formulate projects along with other people, (b) persuade people to accept one's project, or (c) to resist the projects created by other people. Therefore, the effects of the structure upon individuals are mediated by people's agency. As acting subjects, individuals are continually using cultural tools to negotiate their identities and engage in socio-cultural practices (Nelson, 1999; Ortner, 2003, 2006; Swidler, 2001).

Thus, this study conceptualizes academics as acting subjects who are members of a professional community (Massey, 1997; Rhode, 2006; Taylor, 1999), and organizational members required to engage in processes of organizational socialization to understand and collaborate in the definition of organizational behaviors and strategies (Gumport, 1997, 2000; Gumport & Snyderman, 2002). As acting subjects, academics are organizational members who act to negotiate not only their work practice and identity but also to sustain the organizational structures and processes of the university (Brown & Starkey, 2000; Elsbach & Kramer, 1996; Gioia, et al., 2000; Golden-Biddle & Rao, 1997).

***Academic identity: The self in the workplace.*** Identity is an element of individuals' subjectivity. Subjectivity is understood as the particular ensemble of modes of perception, affect, thought, desire, and fear derived from one's social position in a specific social and cultural context that, in turn, shapes one's actions and self-understandings (Ortner, 2006). The construction of subjectivity is mediated by personal interactions within a specific cultural setting as well as the accompanying power relationships (Levinson & Holland, 1996; Ortner, 2006). Social encounters and the characteristics of developmental experiences have been acknowledged as central factors that mediate the formation of individuals' subjectivity (Eisenhart, 1996; Hundeide, 1991; Levinson & Holland, 1996; Luttrell, 1996; Luykx, 1996; Pizzolato, 2005; Rockwell, 1996). Subjectivity involves two central constructs: agency and identity (Barker, 2002).

Identity refers to people's use of specific modes of affect, thought, desire, and fear that are acquired to define who they are and how they can make decisions (Barker, 2002; Ortner, 2006). Greenhalgh (2001) points out that an individual's identity is both the set of beliefs that individuals hold and the series of actions that they develop in social interaction. Identity formation occurs when individuals develop abilities to talk about their own sense of self-understanding and their strategies of action to interact with others (Erez & Earley, 1993; Hedegaard, 2005; Holland, Lachicotte, Skinner, & Cain, 2001; Ann Swidler, 2001). Identity formation is linked to social location because the connections a person has to structures and systems of power, privilege, and authority

provide specific conditions in self-development (Luttrell, 1996; Luykx, 1996; Tappan, 2005).

The construction of identity in the workplace involves a series of strategies and mechanism through which individuals develop forms of self-understanding and self-definition as members of an occupational or professional group (Kleinman, 1981; McKeon, Gillham, & Bersani, 1981; Pratt, et al., 2006). As described by identity theorists, the construction of an occupational or professional identity is a fluid and negotiated process through which individuals develop multiple narratives that describe their role functions and respond to the challenges and demands of their workplace (Assaf, 2008; Fine, 1996; McKeon, et al., 1981; Volkmann & Anderson, 1998).

This present study conceptualizes the construction of academic identity as a context-driven process through which university faculty construct non-fixed forms of self-definition as professionals on the basis of the negotiation of meanings with other members of the university community (e.g., administrators, colleagues, and students) (Archer, 2008a, 2008b; El-Khawas, 2008; Henkel, 2005; Leo, 2003).

***Academic work as a socio-cultural practice.*** People engage in socio-cultural practices (i.e., selective use of cultural resources and the definition of strategies of action) to achieve two central processes: develop an understanding of themselves and participate in the maintenance and change of institutional discourses (Swidler, 2001). In educational settings, the participation of individuals in socio-cultural practices and the development of organizational structures are enacted through the co-construction of

everyday experiences: faculty members along with students, colleagues, and educational authorities are both deliberately and subconsciously trying to make sense of themselves and their actions in context (Rockwell, 1995, 1996, 1999). Culture theorists point out that individuals' construction of organizational structures and their use of cultural resources in educational settings enable the process of identity formation and the maintenance of educational experiences (Levinson & Holland, 1996; Luttrell, 1996; Luykx, 1996; Rockwell, 1999).

Individuals engage in socio-cultural practices in organizational settings; thus, scholars note that organizational structures are both moderators and mediators of the ways in which individuals construct social-cultural patterns (Diamond, 1991; Gioia, et al., 2000; Golden-Biddle & Rao, 1997; Jermier, Slocum, Fry, & Gaines, 1991; Scott & Lane, 2000; Willson, 2006). In that individuals construct the organizational setting as much as the organizational setting constructs them; there is a reciprocal relationship between the types of socio-cultural practices that individuals develop and the construction of organizational mission, its goals, and technology.

Following along these lines, this present study conceptualizes academic work as a form of socio-cultural practice that enables faculty members to negotiate their academic identity and working activities through their participation in organizational structures. The participation of individuals in socio-cultural practices depends upon the ways in which individuals' use and adapt cultural resources to interact with others and sustain their organizational context (Nelson, 1999; Rockwell, 1996).

## Research questions

The research questions included in this study address the processes through which members of a specific academic subgroup (i.e., full time faculty members) negotiate their professional identity within a climate of university restructuring in the University of Morelos (hereafter UM), Mexico. Three broad questions and their sub-questions become central to this investigation:

4. What are the contextual factors for the negotiation of academic identity for full time faculty who entered state public universities in Mexico during the late 1990s? Specifically, in what ways do institutional and organizational structures shape the ways in which academics negotiate a sense of themselves as professionals?
5. What are the practices that enable full time faculty to negotiate their academic identity? That is, how do the activities in which academics participate as part of their organizational role at the university shape their academic identity?
6. What are the characteristics of the academic identity of full time faculty?
  - a. What are the kinds of self-understandings and self-definitions that full time faculty communicate when describing themselves as members of a professional community?
  - b. What are the strategies of action that academics develop to express themselves as professionals within the university context?

## CHAPTER THREE

### METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH AND RESEARCH DESIGN

Research on education has been characterized by the transition from the process-product paradigm to interpretative research (Erickson, 1986; Floden, 2001; Page, 2000; Shulman, 1986). Process-product research utilized a positivistic approach that relied on the quantifiable and measurable nature of social action and the neutral character of social research; the context of social action and individuals' subjectivity were not categories of study (Dunkin & Biddle, 1974; Good & Grouws, 1977; Gage & Needels, 1989). The emergence of the interpretative paradigm in the 1980s (Agar, 1996; Clifford, 1986) allowed for the progressive acknowledgement of the complexity of educational settings and the relevance of practitioners' voices at the elementary, secondary, and postsecondary educational levels. The use of qualitative research in education embraces an interpretative paradigm to pay attention to the local and non-local forms of social organization and culture that frame the meaning making process of individuals, their choices, and interactions in a specific setting (Erickson, 1986).

To conduct my study, I use a qualitative methodology based on an interpretative and naturalistic approach. In this investigation, the goal is to make sense of individuals' subjective world and the meaning making process through which people construct their self-understandings and social interactions within an institutional context. The inquiry was framed as an interpretative case study approach (Eisenhardt, 1989; Merriam, 1988; Patton & Appelbaum, 2003; Stake, 1978a, Yin, 1994). My research design consisted of a



series of evolving, flexible, and general procedures and techniques aimed to understand social events as experienced by social actors who endeavor to make sense of themselves, their actions, and their common context (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992; Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). The specific purpose of the study was to examine the negotiation of academic identity among a group of full time faculty members at a state public university in Mexico. My study began with a set of research questions that were open to twists and unpredicted turns to collect more comprehensive data and produce findings that were faithful to the complexity of human society and culture.

### **Ontological and Epistemological Principles in Qualitative Research**

An interpretative qualitative approach has ontological assumptions concerning the nature of social life and epistemological assumptions concerning the basis of knowledge. Ontological assumptions suggest that the “social world is socially constructed and subjectively experienced as the result of human thought as expressed through language” (Sikes, 2004, p. 20). This social constructivist position necessitates the collection of subjective accounts and perceptions that explain how the world is experienced and constructed by people who live in it. Epistemological assumptions suggest that knowledge is assumed to be experiential, personal, and subjective. Thus, to obtain knowledge about social life the researcher must examine the way in which people make sense of their reality and the motivation underlying their decisions (Sikes, 2004). Therefore, qualitative research methods will seek explanations and understandings from individuals’ perspective.

To understand the ontological and epistemological assumptions of qualitative research, it is necessary to identify both its theoretical and disciplinary affiliation. Qualitative research is derived from a series of philosophical, historical, sociological, and anthropological perspectives: phenomenology, symbolic interactionism, ethnomethodology, feminism, and postmodernism (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992; Merriam, 2002; Page, 2000). Phenomenology is a philosophical perspective developed in the early years of the twentieth century; it emphasizes the necessity of gaining entry into the conceptual world of subjects to understand what meaning they construct in particular situations. Phenomenology pays attention to the subjective aspects of people's behavior. Symbolic interactionism is a sociological perspective that came from the Chicago School in the early part of the twenty century (Creswell, 1998; Denzin & Lincoln, 2005; Merriam, 2002). This major sociological approach explains the social and interactional nature of reality. According to this perspective, meaning is always subject to negotiation: it is through interaction that meaning is conferred on objects, people, situations, and events. Social interaction produces symbols and personalities. Symbolic interactionism enables the researcher to adopt a holistic approach that acknowledges the intersection of the social context and biography. This sociological perspective pays particular attention to the construction of the self: "the self is viewed as a social construction, the result of persons perceiving themselves and the developing a definition through the process of interaction" (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992, p. 37).

Ethnomethodology is a sociological mode of thinking that bloomed in the late 1970s; it focuses on a micro level of analysis to understand how people negotiate the daily rituals of their lives (Baker, 2002). Feminist theory provided relevant insights to qualitative research by calling attention to the way gender constructs the lives of people. It also acknowledged people's emotions and feelings as topics of research (Green, 1993; Hawkesworth, 1989). Finally, postmodernism is a social philosophy that questions stability, consistency and coherency as values to describe social reality (Foucault, 1980; Giddens, 1991; Spivak, 1994). In qualitative research, postmodernist perspectives led to the acknowledgement of the position of the researcher as interpreter and the reflection of power relationships in the fieldwork and the process of interpretation.

Literature points out five central characteristics for qualitative research (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992; Dressman, 2008; Merriam, 2002). First, qualitative research assumes that behavior is influenced by the setting; thus, methodologically the natural setting is a direct source of data (Merriam, 2002). Prescribed qualitative research design addresses the context and the historical circumstances that frame social events. Second, qualitative research is concerned with understanding processes rather than simply outcomes or products (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992; Dressman, 2008). The negotiation of meaning is a core process that enables the construction of social life. Since meaning is the essential concern of the interpretative approach, researchers are advised to answer questions aligned with meaning for participants: what are participants experiencing?

How do participants interpret their experiences? How do participants structure the social world in which they live? Third, qualitative research uses descriptive data as the source of knowledge; researchers collect data in the form of words (Merriam, 2002). Fourth, in qualitative research, data analysis is the result of an inductive process (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992; Dressman, 2008; Merriam, 2002). Fifth and finally, in qualitative research, the researcher is the key instrument: data collection, data analysis, and the writing of the research project are assumed to be filtered by the theoretical position of the researcher (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992; Dressman, 2008).

The use of an interpretative qualitative approach to conduct an inquiry involves going back and forth between observed experience and social theory accounts (Dressman, 2008). Dressman (2008) emphasizes that social theory in qualitative research may refer to a broad range of philosophical, economic, historical, linguistic, social, psychological, and literary arguments that provide important insights to explain four central components of social life: language, discourse, meaning, and practice. Language is a tool of human meaning-making; individuals use language for taking action in the world by placing themselves and their actions in relation to others in the world. Discourses refer to the way in which people use language in both local and larger social contexts, reflecting what they consider both credible and valuable. Meaning, the third component addressed in social theory, refers to the set of implicit rules that govern people's interactions and the construction of social structures. Finally, social theory is used in qualitative inquiries so that the researcher can make sense of social practices

which consist of the underlying structures of a groups' behavior: the internal process of thinking and the external process of acting or doing.

### **Suitability of the Qualitative Approach**

For this investigation, a qualitative methodology matches the research questions: What are the contextual factors in which full time faculty negotiate their academic identity? What are the practices that enable full time faculty to negotiate their academic identity? What are the characteristics of the academic identity of full time faculty? The first research question refers to the relevance of the setting in the construction of social action. The second question addresses the relevance of interaction and negotiation of meaning in a specific context. The last question addresses the nature of the meaning and subjectivity constructed by individuals.

Research questions were exploratory; they sought to describe the incidence or distribution of particular phenomena. By answering the research questions I expected to understand the process through which full time faculty negotiate their academic identity and the identity's relationship to the process of university restructuring in the Mexican context. To answer the research questions, there was no need to control behaviors; instead, I sought to describe naturally occurring events. The phenomena under study were contemporary but required addressing historical backgrounds. The research design stressed the importance of context, social practices, and subjects' frame of reference. The purpose was to learn about the ways in which full time faculty

interacted with administrators and staff to develop meanings about themselves and the organization within the university context.

### **Defining the Object of Study: Level of Analysis and Constructs**

The definition of the level of analysis and the theoretical constructs employed in this investigation ensures coherence between and among the research problem, the theoretical approach, data collection, and data analysis processes. According to Rousseau (1985) (in Klein, Dansereau, & Hall, 1994, p.198) the level of theory points to the target (e.g., individual, group, organization) that a researcher aims to depict and explain. Educational researchers emphasize that the study of formal education and educational organizations has to address both macro and micro levels of analysis to gain a better understanding of the various factors that converge for educational practices to take place. Fife (2005, p. 4) notes that “education must be seen within its larger social, cultural, and historical context if it is to provide us with useful knowledge about the kinds of relationships that exist between schooling and the social formations inside a developing (or any) country.” A study that focuses on a micro level of analysis addresses the dynamics of interaction and meaning making through which individuals construct academic life within their immediate setting; larger structural factors, such as federal policies and organizational structures that provide cultural and institutional elements for the construction of social interaction among actors are considered to be part of the macro level of concern (Fife, 2005).

This investigation explores three central constructs and the relationships among them: academic structure, work practice, and academic identity. The purpose was to understand the ways in which full time faculty negotiated their academic identity through the enactment of their work practice within an organizational climate of university restructuring in Mexico. The level of analysis that is addressed through this study is “individuals within groups,” which suggests that the focus is not just on the individual, but on the individual in a context: the individual within a group that is located in a local context influenced by larger structural forces (Klein, Dansereau, & Hall, 1994).

Three considerations are central to address the constructs and levels of analysis targeted through this study. First, the relationship between constructs under study is context dependent. Klein, Dansereau and Hall (1994) emphasize that it is necessary to gain knowledge about the group context to understand individuals’ placement and standing in the group. Second, group members are heterogeneous; therefore, comparative analytical processes are necessary to understand the ways in which differentiation among individuals affects the construction of social events. Finally, the theoretical framework used to interpret empirical evidence has to provide relevant propositions that enable the researcher to unravel the relationships among issues of heterogeneity, group dynamics, and contextual factors.

### **Methodology and Research Methods**

Methodology refers to “the consideration of the best ways, methods, or procedures, by which data...will provide the evidence basis for the construction of

knowledge” (Sikes, 2004, p. 16). Examples of qualitative methodologies include case study, ethnography, or narrative inquiry. Methods, on the other hand, “are the specific research techniques that are used in order to collect and then analyze data” (Sikes, 2004, p. 16). This study uses an interpretative case study as the methodological approach. Semi-structured interviews (Dewalt & Dewalt, 2002; Hester & Francis, 1994; Opie, 2004; Pawson, 1996), participant observation (Dewalt & Dewalt, 2002; Marshall & Rossman, 1999), and document analysis (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992; Holbrook, 1997; Luke, 1995) were the research methods used to elicit and analyze data.

An interpretative case study aims to examine and explain the peculiarities of the particular situation and participants to a greater extent (Dressman, 2008; Merriam, 2002; Yin, 1994). This methodology enabled me to pay attention to real-life situations, the multiple components that shape those situations, and the dynamics that contribute to the particular uniqueness of the case in which a set of actors are involved (Flyvbjerg, 2006; Ruddin, 2006). The use of a case study allows the researcher to examine behaviors at one site that are connected, theoretically, to behaviors in other similar sites (Eisenhardt, 1989; Merriam, 1988; Patton & Appelbaum, 2003; Stake, 1978a). According to Merriam (2002), the findings of an interpretative case study are written up as a comprehensive description of the case and these are illustrative of a particular social event at a particular time; the investigation avoids questions of general validity of findings and focuses instead on generating accounts that are internally valid (i.e., accurate descriptions within discrete settings).



The case study approach addresses a bounded system (Smith, 1978), a single entity, or a unit around which there are boundaries. The case has a finite quality about it either in terms of time (the evolution and history of a particular program), place (the case is located in a particular place), and components comprising the case, such as the number of participants (Merriam, 1988; Merriam, 2002). I was not interested in the quantity and distribution of phenomena but in the nature of the phenomena within a particular setting and in identifying broad patterns. I used a purposeful sampling technique; in doing so, I chose particular spaces and subjects to include because they were assumed to facilitate the expansion of the developing theory (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992; Patton & Appelbaum, 2003).

The focus of my study was a particular organization: the public state university of Morelos (hereafter UM) located in Cuernavaca, a city located in the northern region of the state of Morelos in the central valley of Mexico. There are three central parts of the organization that can become the foci of a case study: a particular place in the organization, a specific group of people, and some type of social activity enacted by the actors (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992). For this study, I chose the Academic Division of UM as the particular place in the organization to learn about university life and the academic profession. The Academic Division was comprised of a series of organizational units, staff personnel, institutional policies, and resources that enabled the management and monitoring the university's faculty body and the definition of academic activities at the university. I focused on a group of full time faculty members who were doctorate

holders and participated in international and scholarly exchanges and publication networks. I observed and analyzed organizational dynamics aimed to develop processes of university restructuring and the participation of full time faculty members in concrete activities related to their academic functions and university restructuring.

### ***Reasons for the Selection of the Case***

UM was an ideal site for a case study approach for several reasons. Entry was facilitated by the social connections I had with some members of the organization; there was a high probability to access a rich mix of many components of academic life such as specific players (e.g., research professors), workplace interactions, and organizational structures that were relevant to answer my research questions. My social connections with insiders enabled me to be present in the field for as long as necessary. UM was familiar to me. I was an undergraduate student in the institution from 1999-2004. In addition to the practical reasons to choose the case (i.e., facilitated access and familiarity with the site), the selection of the case was also based on theoretical reasons (i.e., theoretical sampling). The case was chosen to fulfill theoretical categories (Eisenhardt, 1989). I was interested in looking at a case that enabled me to explore (a) processes of university restructuring and (b) the participation of full time faculty into work practices connected to processes of university restructuring.

### ***Contextual Information of the Research Site***

UM is a state public university located in the municipality of Cuernavaca in the state of Morelos. Morelos is one of the 31 constituent states of Mexico. The state has an

area of approximately 4,958.2 square kilometers. According to the most recent state government report (Castillo, 2007), in 2005 the population of the state was 1,612,899 people (1.6% of the national population). Cuernavaca is 85 km south of Mexico City; it is an urban area with an estimated 700,000 inhabitants whose socio economic status is diverse. In the last decade there was considerable increase in housing developments on the outskirts of Cuernavaca. Population density was 322 people per square kilometer. Industrial development was minimal and primarily limited to micro-industries, which employ approximately 28% of the population. A substantial majority of the population (67%) is employed in commerce and service industry, which includes tourism.

UM was founded in 1953 as part of a process of regionalization to address educational demands in provincial parts of Mexico. The university has a main campus, *Chamilpa*, and two satellite campuses: *Oriente*, and *Sur*. UM offers 40 undergraduate programs (13 accredited) and 41 graduate programs (9 accredited) that are distributed in 15 Faculties.

According to institutional statistics retrieved in the university's official website at the end of 2009, in 2008 the academic body of the university was approximately 1,396 faculty members (437 full time and 959 part time faculty members); the number of full time faculty that were members of the National System of Researchers was 166. According to the federal report of PROMEP issued in 2006 by the Ministry of Education (Vidales, Sahagún, & Oca, 2006), UM was ranked in the sixth place on the list of 46 public state universities housing full time faculty holding either a master's or a doctoral

degree. In that report, the Ministry of education acknowledges UM as one of the first public state universities relying on an academic body with one of the highest number of full time faculty with specialized training and credentials.

During the academic year 2008-2009, the number of students enrolled at the undergraduate division was 11,031. The number of students who finished their course work and gained a bachelor degree during that academic year was 1,763. At the undergraduate level, women are the higher percentage of the student population and achieve higher graduation rates than their male counterparts. The number of students enrolled in the graduate division was 937 students, distributed among the 41 graduate programs offered by the university. The number of graduate students who received either a master's or a doctoral degree during the academic year 2008-2009 was 164. The number of women who finished their course work and received a master's or a doctoral degree was greater than their male counterparts.

### ***Research methods***

The case study approach relies upon the integration of various research methods to capture, from multiple angles, the specific practices of a particular social group as a central task prior to theory building (Dewalt & Dewalt, 2002; Stake, 1978b). This study includes three research methods to answer the research questions and to improve the likelihood of accuracy in the research findings: semi-structured interviews, participant observation, and document analysis.

To address the macro level of analysis, I use document analysis of official sources of information (e.g., government and institutional documents). By using this method for macro-level research I sought to identify hierarchical linkages of responsibility and decision making between various departments of the government and public state universities (Fife, 2005). The identification of such hierarchies was relevant to understand the current view of how education is expected to function (normative) in relation to larger social structures within Mexico. Methods for micro-level research included participant observation and semi-structured interviews. These methods were aimed to identify participants' subjective worlds and the ways in which interaction and social structures were developed as part of the meaning making processes in which individuals engage with each other on an everyday basis.

In the following sections I describe the three critical stages of the research endeavor: entry to the field, data collection, and data analysis. In the last part of the chapter I discuss the strategies I used to address issues of validity and reliability.

### ***Entry to the Field***

At UM there is neither an Office of Research Integrity nor a Human Research Review Board as commonly established in U.S. universities. However, both the entry to the field and the maintenance of fieldwork relationships were based on informed consent and protection of subjects from harm. It was necessary that two events took place before initiating the field work. First, University officers at UM provided an authorization letter that granted permission to initiate fieldwork activities. Second, once

I was granted access to UM, the Human Research Review Board at the University of California Riverside verified the nature of the investigation and granted approval to entry the field. Both English and Spanish versions of the authorization and informed consent letters, and the interview protocol were reviewed and approved by the Human Research Review Board. Official approval from the Institutional Review Board was granted in August 11, 2008.

Once in the field, I was asked by university officers in the Academic Division to collaborate with activities related to curriculum design in the graduate division. Thus, during my site visits at UM, I worked in the Department of Academic Affairs by helping full time faculty navigate the process of curricular design and accreditation of graduate programs. I received minimal compensation for the support I provided to full time faculty during my employment at the site. This job opportunity provided me with additional data in the form of participant observation data. Once inside UM, I utilized my personal bonds with several insiders as a source of guidance to navigate the field and to negotiate access to various institutional spaces and activities as well as to contact other participants. Both the meaning and conditions of my interactions and acquaintances with personnel at the research site were recorded as field notes and analyzed as part of the object of study. I presented myself as a doctoral student conducting a research project. I communicated to participants that I would not behave as an evaluator; that I was interested in listening to multiple voices; that I was willing to

respond to their questions and concerns; and that I would share both preliminary and ultimate findings with them.

My entry to the field and my relationships with participants were based on four ethical principles pointed to by Bogdan and Biklen (1982). First, in negotiating permission to do the study, I made clear to those with whom I negotiated what the terms of the agreement were and I abided by that contract. Second, I communicated to participants that their identities would be protected so that the information I collected would not embarrass or in other ways harm them. Anonymity was extended not only to writing but also to the oral reporting of the information I learned through observation. Third, the treatment of participants was based on respect and the search for cooperation in the research. Finally, the research report was constructed on the basis of an accurate representation of the various participants and their stories. People's narratives, official and non-official documents, and observations were not manipulated to cause harm or discomfort to field participants.

### ***Data Collection***

The study relies upon three methods of data collection: participant observation, semi-structured interviews, and document analysis. These methods are consistent with the scholarship on qualitative methodology since they seek to identify the nature of the construction of meaning from participants' perspectives (Fife, 2005). These methods for macro and micro-level research enabled me to collect information to understand the

ways in which academics construct their meanings and identities as well as their forms of interaction in the university setting.

### ***Participant Observation***

I initiated my fieldwork with a process of participant observation that lasted six months, from August 2008 to January 2009. Participant observation refers to the collection of data from a community, whereby the researcher becomes a member of the community (Wing, 1989). I became a member of the community at UM in my roles of researcher-observer and curricular consultant. The Secretary of the Academic Division and the Director of Graduate Programs and Research at the university offered me a position as a curriculum consultant to facilitate my interactions with those groups of academics that I was interested in understanding as part of my research goals. My work as curricular consultant enabled me to work closely with full time faculty members on a daily basis from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. The main responsibility of a curriculum consultant was to support the activities of full time faculty in the process of accreditation of graduate programs in ten different Faculties (e.g., Faculty of Medicine, Faculty of Sciences, Faculty of Arts, Faculty of Agriculture). During the six months of participant observation I worked in the academic division within the central administration offices of the university; however, I also observed full time faculty members through regular attendance at Faculty meetings or in working with professors to develop their graduate programs.



By becoming a member of the community I had to engage in a self-reflexive and collaborative approach: I paid attention to my way of being in the community and the relationships that were constructed in the field. I used this research method because it allows the researcher to develop a holistic understanding of the phenomena under study and to learn about behaviors and the meanings attached to these behaviors (Dewalt & Dewalt, 2002; Marshall & Rossman, 1999). Participant observation “is a way to collect data in naturalistic settings by ethnographers who observe and/or take part in the common and uncommon of people being studied. It involves the systematic use of the information from participating and observing” (Dewalt & Dewalt, 2002, p. 2). One of the central characteristics of participant observation is that it demands firsthand involvement in the social world chosen for study (Marshall & Rossman, 1999).

Participant observation entails complete participation because the researcher becomes a member of the group that is under investigation and the researcher participates fully in as many central social activities as possible while staying at the site (Spradley, 1980). Spradley emphasizes that participant observation is a temporary event in which the researcher suspends other roles, in order to connect to the phenomenon; however, she or he continues to record observations in field notes and adopts an analytical stance at least partially during the research period and more completely after the period of participation. There are three components that are at the core of participant observation: establishment of rapport in a community, development of an emotional empathy with the people with whom one works, and the removal of oneself

from cultural immersion to be able to intellectualize and gain some understanding of the written rules that govern human interactions among a specific group of people (Fife, 2005). Specific skills in participant observation include observing the events, interviewing community members, and becoming involved in the events of the community (Wing, 1989).

Participant observation involves the development of two roles: the effective participant role and the effective observer role (Dewalt & Dewalt, 2002). The development of the participant role involves putting effort into learning appropriate behaviors in a setting, showing respect for people in a setting, performing as a careful listener, reciprocating with the observed when necessary in appropriate ways. In this first stage of the process of participant observation the purpose is the establishment of rapport and demonstration of commitment to the community. In this investigation the effective participant role was based on my activities as a curriculum consultant. I worked with full time faculty members from different Faculties and disciplinary backgrounds. I helped them learn about basic concepts in learning theories, education, and curriculum theory in order for them to design master's and doctoral programs. This meant that I had to learn about the dynamics and components of the academic life in their Faculties in order to be able to adapt educational concepts and instructional techniques according to the specific demands and challenges of different disciplines and the academic culture in each Faculty in which full time faculty members worked.

The observer role is related to the process of intellectualizing the exercise of participation and the observed behaviors. Dewalt and Dewalt (2002) note that the effective observer role involves awareness of the theoretical framework embedded in the inquiry to identify the specific actions and products of action that are indicators of key concepts or categories. Thus, as an observer, the researcher has to study the story line, identify the components of action, order variables, and look for variations and exceptions. As an effective observer, my role consisted of using my theoretical lenses (i.e., organizational, culture and professional identity theory) to make sense of the behaviors and events that I observed on a daily basis as part of my activities and role demands as a curriculum design consultant. Contradictory events, relevant conversations, encounters, and activities were analyzed by taking into account the ways in which theory explains relationships between social behavior, subjectivity, and context.

My method of observation consisted of both general and focused observation (Fife, 2005). During the process of general observation the goal was to record as fully as possible a wide variety of behaviors and social structures at UM to gain a sense of the setting as a whole. General observations included detailed descriptions of the physical environment of rooms as a whole, the spatial arrangements of objects and individuals, and the ongoing verbal and nonverbal interactions of participants. Focused observation involved the selection of a specific pattern or type of interaction that could be construed as a widespread pattern of behavior. My focused observation consisted of paying

attention to meetings with academics and meetings between academics and administrators as part of the process of curricular design and program accreditation. I engaged in focused observation because I intended to confirm the importance of these patterns and to obtain a much greater number of examples of similar forms of behavior. In doing so, I was able to saturate this category of behavior by recording samples that show the widest possible variety of interactions that occurred within that single category or pattern of action. A focused method of observation allowed me to record behavior that originally appeared to be similar but upon later analysis turned out to be different from one another. Finally, focused observations helped me to determine how frequent and widespread behavior was and in which context specific patterns tend to appear in the setting.

In both general and focused observations, each observed event was categorized on the basis of five central dimensions: actors, time of the action, conditions or place, central and peripheral action, linguistic forms, and the purpose of the action(s) as explained by actors (Martin, 1982; McCall, 1984). I had five central sites of observation: the building for the university's central administration, specifically the offices of the Academic Division; Faculties in which academics worked; the offices of academics; the Federal Ministry of Education's offices for the higher education system; and auditoriums, both at the UM and the University of Puebla in which some events related to academic professionalization were scheduled.

Field notes from participant observation represent a catalog of observed behavior (Martin, 1982); they are the written account of what the researcher hears, sees, experiences, and thinks in the course of collecting and reflecting on the data in a qualitative study (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992, p. 107). I took “jotted field notes” (Emerson, Fretz, & Shaw, 1995) of the shared experiences with participants during the period of participant observation. As described by Connelly and Clandinin (1990), my field notes were an active recording (i.e., interpretations) of the episodes of interaction. I used two strategies to record my observations. The first involved recording information immediately after observing some forms or patterns of behavior. The second strategy consisted of the use of my previous experience in fieldwork to recognize significant evidence as it unfolded. I began recording during interactions when some critical events or communication exchanges occurred rather than waiting for the interaction to end.

The content of my field notes included two kinds of materials: descriptive and reflective (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992). Descriptive material involved a series of portraits of the subjects, reconstruction of dialogue, description of the physical setting, accounts of particular events, and depiction of activities. As part of the descriptive material of my field notes, I recorded a) the characteristics of participants; b) participants’ use of time, place, and organizational resources; c) patterns of communication and the topics addressed, d) the nature and process of construction of activities highly valued by participants; and e) the ways in which emotions and reactions of researchers and participants were entwined. Furthermore, I noted additional data that needed to be

collected. Reflective material included reflections on method, reflections on ethical dilemmas and conflicts, and reflections on the observer's frame of mind, as well as points of clarification. The reflective material of my field notes was aimed to capture running commentaries to myself about possible pathways of analysis and related questions (e.g., what am I learning? How does this interaction differ from the others? How can I interpret this? How can I learn more about this topic? What does this word or behavior mean?).

The researcher's participation in the community is expected to produce a form of narrative ethnography in which a situated narrator (i.e., the researcher) is present as a character in the story that reveals his or her own personality and enables the reader of a report to understand the rationale and motivations embedded in the dialogues and encounters constructed with participants (Tedlock, 1991). My observational opportunities were spaces for participants to teach me, work with me, and help me ascertain the actions in their world (Agar, 1996). I sought to develop my fieldwork relationships as a form of collaborative understanding in which participants were recognized as human beings with thoughts and feelings. My exercise of observation and work with academics at UM enabled me to experience research as a relationship (Ceglowski, 2000); I learned from participants as much as they learned from me. The construction of multiple social relationships and my observation of these provided me with the elements to develop this study. As reported by Wing (1989), total immersion in the community promoted the development of trust and my acceptance as a member of

the community; when it was possible, members incorporated me into their extracurricular activities.

Each one of the relationships with field participants manifested particular characteristics and demanded from me different abilities both to initiate and sustain these relationships. I behaved as a researcher, a volunteer, a friend, and a consultant. The varied character and requirements of each encounter became both a rich source of information and an illuminating way to experience the field and learn about the university and the academic profession. The construction and maintenance of social ties and friendship relationships enabled me to obtain personal information that I could not have obtained if I had enacted a more detached position as a researcher (Tillmann-Healy, 2003). As my analysis will show, my reflection on these various relationships was central to understand the academic profession and the university life at UM.

The relationships I constructed over the six month period did not interfere with the purpose of my research; on the contrary, the contacts I made expanded my opportunities to obtain access to informants and data as well as to initiate the process of analysis. However, one of the risks of total immersion into the community is that the researcher may deviate from the principal research interest (Wing, 1989). To attend to issues of diversion (i.e., losing research focus) I employed three strategies that Wing (1989) identifies: recoding observations expeditiously; interpreting behavior and actions within the framework of the theoretical model; and making notations of data that required further investigation.

My decision to leave the field after six months of participant observation was influenced by three factors. These included the realization that elements of empirical data started to be recurring, my sense that it was time to analyze the data as a whole, and my desire to complete my dissertation. By November 2008, I communicated my decision to the Director of the office of research and graduate programs to leave the site. My decision was not a surprise for the Director since I described my time schedule from the beginning of my fieldwork. After leaving the Department of Academic Affairs, I devoted one month to finish activities related to my role as curriculum consultant and close my communication with full time professors working in curricular design committees. I explained to each one of the participants of this study the reasons and terms for my leaving the field. I agreed to be in contact with them in order to schedule personal interviews and let them know both the preliminary and final results of my study.

### ***Semi-structured Interviews***

I conducted semi-structured interviews to understand the meanings, processes, and conditions through which full time faculty negotiated their academic identity in a context of university restructuring. Semi-structured interviews include a list of questions and prompts in order to increase the likelihood that all topics will be covered in each interview; this type of interview offers respondents a chance to elaborate on a series of identified topics of conversation to provide substantial, comparable, and meaningful data (Dewalt & Dewalt, 2002; Pawson, 1996). The semi-structured interview provides



the flexibility that is needed when conducting a naturalistic approach. It allows for deviation from prearranged text and to change in the wording of questions or the order in which they are asked. The semi-structured interview provides opportunities for negotiation, discussion, and expansion of the interviewee's responses to be made (Hester & Francis, 1994; Opie, 2004). Participants' responses were not limited entirely to a set of categories or topics; however, the identification of a set of guiding topics through the interview protocol ensured similar information and patterns of discourse to compare across respondents. Additionally, interviews were an opportunity for participant observation (Hester & Francis, 1994).

The interview protocol consisted of a series of questions that focused participants' attention to specific and limited experiences but did not prescribe the form or manner of the response expected (See Appendix A). In addition to topic-based questions (i.e., questions aimed to explore specific topics related to the variables under investigation). I used three types of questions that permitted a high level of rapport throughout the interviewing process and at the same time led to depth, breadth, and specificity of responses (Dewalt & Dewalt, 2002). The first type of questions consisted of "tell me more" questions whose goal was to prompt the informant to continue with the same issue, not to introduce a new topic. Clarification questions were a type of question used to provide explanations for words, ideas, stories recalled during the conversation. Finally, naive questions involved making statements and then asking the person being interviewed for confirmation. The conduct of interviews was based on a principle of

flexibility, which suggests that additional adjustments can be made to data collection instruments such as the addition of questions to an interview protocol (Eisenhardt, 1989). I varied the sequence of questions and included several areas of inquiry according to my appraisal of the interview situations. At the beginning of the interview I offered the general purpose of my study (i.e., "I am conducting a research project that focuses on understanding the way in which academics develop their profession and their participation in the construction of relevant issues of university life") to provide a frame of reference for participants to share their information and perspectives with me.

I used four interview techniques to ensure rapport and an adequate amount of information (Dewalt & Dewalt, 2002). One of the techniques included active listening which involved not only attending to verbal communication but also noting nonverbal cues. As another technique I used sensitive silence which consisted of communicating through nonverbal expressions to show that I was interested in what the informant was saying. I also provided repetitive feedback to facilitate further discussion or clarification but do not direct or lead the conversation. The final technique consisted of providing summary feedback; in doing so, I summarized the last set of statements articulated by the informant to let the informant know that I heard what was said and to encourage the informant to continue and expand on the comments.

I conducted the interviews after the process of participant observation since participant observation provides context for sampling, open-ended interviewing, and construction of interview guides and questionnaires (Dewalt & Dewalt, 2002). My role

as participant observer enabled me to interact with academic, establish a good rapport with them, and arrange individual meetings. The length of interviews ranged from one to three hours, with an average of two hours for each interview. Participants were requested to sign a consent letter and they were assured conditions of anonymity. Interviews and other forms of social interaction (e.g., participant observation) with participants were conducted in Spanish, the language of participants. Field notes and interview transcripts were also written in Spanish.

Through purposive sampling (Patton, 1990), I selected a total of 26 interviewees who provided relevant information about their work practice and participation in the process of university restructuring. Table 1 shows the general distribution of the interview sample. My sample consisted of three subgroups of informants: faculty members, university officers, and academic administrators. Faculty members were selected on the basis of their occupational status and participation in committee work. University leaders held central authority roles to make decisions about academic, financial, and administrative issues within the university. Academic administrators were individuals knowledgeable of procedures and components related to the definition of academic life and the characteristics of the university's academic body. Table 1 shows the number of individuals in each subgroup and the gender distribution. Table 2 shows the features of the faculty members who participated as informants as well as the pseudonyms used in this study. Finally, Table 3 shows the features and pseudonyms of the university officers and academic administrators.

Table 1 Distribution of participants in the research sample (n= 26)			
Faculty members (n=18)		University officers (n=2)	Academic administrators (n=6)
Full time	Part time	Central administration	Central administration
16	4	2	7
Female: 10 Male: 5	Female: 2 Male: 1	Female: 0 Male: 2	Female: 6 Male: 1

Interviews with administrators and support staff provided me with information about the characteristics of the institutional framework and bureaucratic elements of the context in which full time faculty enacted their work activities. I interviewed university officers and academic administrators who held key positions (e.g., academic planning and budget personnel) within the organization and who had comprehensive knowledge of the university, its structures, and functioning. University personnel who had continual interaction with academics were considered as key informants. The purpose of this set of interviews was to identify features of the institutional context and the ways in which academic administrators conceptualized the role and work of full time faculty members.

<b>Pseudonym</b>	<b>Faculty</b>	<b>Occupational status</b>	<b>Years at the university</b>
Dr. Bianca Aguilar	Sciences	Full time	13
Dr. Carolina Hernández	Architecture	Full time	7
Dr. Eloísa López	Research Center Natural Science	Full time	11
Dr. Estela Gonzalez	Agriculture	Full time	10
Dr. Emiliano Alonso	Agriculture	Full time	11
Dr. Georgina Pacheco	Human communication	Full time	5
Dr. Guadalupe Rosas	Psychology	Full time	14
Dr. Israel Salgado	Agriculture	Full time	6
Dr. Jose Martinez	Agriculture	Full time	5
Dr. Joaquin Acosta	Medicine	Full time	7
Dr. Leticia Rubio	Arts	Full time	13
Dr. Juan M. García	Medicine	Full time	5
Dr. Pamela Pacheco	Research center biotechnology	Full time	30
Rocio Díaz	Arts	Part time	5
Dr. Salvador Salazar	Human communication	Full time	4
Dr. Susana Rocha	Nursing	Full time	10
Dr. Vanessa Rodriguez	Nursing	Full time	10
Ximena Ruiz	Arts	Part time	10

Table 3 Features of university leaders and academic administrators (n=8)			
<b>Pseudonym</b>	<b>Department in the central administration</b>	<b>Job position</b>	<b>Years working at the university</b>
Gloria Cruz	Department of academic affairs	Coordinator of academic services	6
Isabel Castellanos	Office of research and graduate programs	Academic administrator of the graduate division	10
Juan Navarro	Department of academic affairs	Coordinator of academic services	10
Karla Maldonado	Office of research and graduate programs	Coordinator of research programs funded by CONACyT	8
Dr. Oscar Tamayo	Office of research and graduate programs	Director of the office of research and graduate programs	11
Tina Caballero	Office of research and graduate programs	Accountant	9
Yolanda Hurtado	Office of research and graduate programs	Coordinator of PROMEP program	8
Dr. Rodolfo Oejo	Department of academic affairs	Secretary of the academic division	30

The interview guide for administrators and support staff included dimensions to be explored such as (1) personal information and description of an individual's position and duties within the university, (2) policies and procedures (e.g., decision making

process, existing regulations regarding faculty work, budgets, and patterns of expenditure), (3) specific institutional approaches to define academic professionalization, (4) academic productivity and partnerships (e.g., accredited programs, research projects), and (5) mechanisms for assessment of organizational performance.

I interviewed faculty to capture the ways in which they described their lives and working activities through the communication of personal narratives (Bauman, 1986; Bruner, 1990; Florio-Ruane, 2001; Perinbanayagam, 1991). Since the space in which an interview takes place can yield important information regarding the way respondents construct their identities (Hester & Francis, 1994; Sin, 2003), I left the opportunity to respondents to decide the location for their interview as a strategy to observe the spaces they chose, whether consciously or not, to present certain aspects of their academic identity. The dimensions explored during the interviews with academics involved (1) personal information and the socio-cultural context in which participants studied; (2) perspectives about university life; and (3) reflections on their participation in PROMEP, valued social networks, and day-to-day experiences. An audiotape recorder was used to document interview data. All interviews were recorded after approval granted by informants.

### ***Document Analysis***

I decided to collect documentary data based on the assumption that participants' everyday actions as well as the negotiation of their identity are shaped by

the content and forms of the various discourses with which they are in contact (Dressman, 2008). The nature of the discourses shaping the existence of a specific social group or event can be traced by looking at the spoken, written, and visual texts produced by participants in the local and larger context (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992; Luke, 1995). Written texts were a central source of information to illuminate the institutional context and the effects of policies, programs, and organizational disposition upon the negotiation of full time faculty's academic identity and working activities. Texts provide a frame of references for individuals' patterns of social behavior; texts make available various meanings, ideas, and versions of the world which individuals can rely upon to make sense of their worlds and construct social actions and relationships (Luke, 1995). Luke (1995) notes that written texts are located in social institutions and that they are the articulation of cultural representation and social relationships through the use of language and other sign systems.

I collected three types of documents: federal, institutional, and personal documents to identify and contrast the various discourses that framed the construction of university life and the development of self-definitions among full time faculty members. The first set of documents consisted of official federal documents that were created outside UM; these documents involved the National Master Plan and other documents describing the nature, purpose, and mechanism of operation of Federal strategic programs. Documents produced by the federal government were open to the public; thus I retrieved them from the federal government's official website. Another set



of written texts consisted of documents produced by the University of Morelos. I classified institutional documents into three categories: internal documents, documents for external communication, and personal files (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992). Internal documents (e.g., curricular documents, technical guidelines, minutes, regulations, and memos) revealed information about the official chain of command and internal rules and regulations. They provided clues about leadership style and potential insights about the aspects of social life that participants think of as relevant to enact their everyday professional duties. Documents for external communication referred to materials produced by the organization for public consumption: newsletters, manuscripts, yearbooks, and the public statement of philosophy. This material was useful to understand the official perspectives on programs, administrative structure, and the values of those who administer the university. Finally, I collected personal files which represented perspectives of the organizational members. I collected academics' files, which included written examples of reports of evaluation forms they had to submit as part of their participation in the institutional programs in operation. I obtained these documents by applying for them through staff members or through the university's official website.

Texts are institutionally situated, goal-oriented, and conventionalized forms of social action and power (Luke, 1995); therefore, scholars (Fleming, 1974; Holbrook, 1997) suggest that when collecting documents as a source of information, it is important to (a) maintain the integrity of the documents; (b) pay attention to general textual

structures (i.e., sequence of parts); (c) provide contextual descriptions to evoke the natural setting in which the documents were written, their purpose, use, and the characteristics of the producers; (d) identify the lexical and syntactic characteristics used conventionally in the institutional context in which the text was formulated; (e) disclose the forms of representation of the conditions and actors that is, the ways in which documents construct a version of people, processes, and context; (f) ensure that the documenter's voice is not overwhelmed or distorted by the researcher's voice and descriptions; and (g) conduct comparisons among the different types of written documents under analysis. I paid attention to all of these recommendations when collecting and managing documentary data.

### **Data Analysis**

The analysis of data consisted of a set of interpretative and systematic strategies to answer the research questions formulated in this inquiry. Data analysis involves "working with data, organizing them into manageable units, synthesizing them, searching for patterns, discovering what is important and what is to be learned, and deciding what you will tell others" (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992, p. 153). Scholars describe the analysis of data as a flexible, intuitive, particular, and creative process aimed to make meaning of data (Agar, 1996; Crabtree & Miller, 1992; Creswell, 1998). The final process of data analysis was a process that did not begin until the end of field work. An ongoing, informal analysis did take place during data collection. Data collection and data analysis were based on a process of iteration, which involves moving through data collection and

analysis in such a way that preceding operations shape subsequent ones. Iteration implies that investigators do not perform specific research stages in a sequential manner but move back and forth between stages (Spiggle, 1994). I relied upon two parallel approaches in the process of data analysis: analytical induction and reflexive analysis.

First, I used an analytical induction approach, which involves the identification of patterns and linkages across the data as a strategy to create a coherent explanation of the events studied (Erickson, 1986). Analytical induction consists of a series of steps to develop a theory of the phenomenon under investigation. Scholars identify three broad stages in the process of analytical induction (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992; Marshall & Rossman, 1999). The first step is to organize the data in manageable units to identify regularities that lead to the generation of categories, themes, and patterns. Through analytical induction, some categories are identified from data. The second step involves a process of logical analysis, in which categories and classification schemes are crossed with one another to generate new insights or typologies for further exploration of data. The third stage involves testing hypotheses against the data, and searching for alternative explanations of data. After searching for negative cases the researcher can verify what inferences were appropriate and which of them had to be redefined.

The second parallel approach of data analysis was a reflexive analytical approach (Aunger, 1995) that accounts for the circumstantial aspects of data collection. Aunger describes the use of a reflexive analytical approach as a strategy that researchers can

use to monitor the character of and effects of their influence on what informants said or how they behave. The reflexive analytical approach is based on the concept of a data collection situation, which refers to the variability in each of the factors that could modify the quality of data elicited. Aunger suggests that the particular specification of the data collection situation must also be introduced into the final report of the research. Differential conditions of interaction with informants had to be considered in the analysis of data since the context in which the data were collected may constrain the kind of information or behavioral responses obtained from informants. Aunger emphasizes that a reflexive analytical approach demands the systematical registration (e.g., keeping a field journal) of the multiple situations in which data collection was undertaken.

I took participants' mediated action as the unit of meaning during the process of analysis. According to Gudmundsdóttir (2001) mediated activities refer to "what people do, say, and think in cultural contexts" (2001, p.227). The study of mediated action involves the examination of the kind of individual who performs the action and the cultural resources that individuals use to organize their activities and interactions with others. Tappan (2005) points out that "taking mediated action as the unit of analysis entails assuming that any human action involves an irreducible and dynamic relationship between an agent and his or her cultural tools" (p. 50).

### ***Basic Analytical Operations***

Both data reduction and the reorganization of data in more complex ways were developed through four basic analytical operations: codification, categorization, comparison, and integration (Flick, 2004; Spiggle, 1994). The continual and non-linear enactment of these operations enabled me to proceed in the construction of a coherent conceptual framework or explanation about the ways in which full time faculty negotiated their academic identity within a context of university restructuring. As it will be explained in the next section, the enactment of analytical operations was assisted through the use of Atlas.ti and concept maps. I used Atlas.ti to develop the coding scheme and to segment and codify specific units of empirical data. I use concept maps to further the processes of categorization, comparison, and integration.

Codification is the process of naming or giving labels to a chunk or unit of data (e.g., a passage of text) as belonging to, representing, or being an example of some more general phenomenon (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). Categorization refers to the process of classifying empirical data on the basis of a conceptual scheme: a category is related to a concept or a series of concepts and it embraces a set of units of meaning taken from the empirical data (Rodríguez Gómez, Gil Flóres, & García Jiménez, 1999). Categorization is based on a process of abstraction that involves going beyond the identification of patterns in the data to group them into conceptual classes (Spiggle, 1994). According to Spiggle (1994), some initial categories can be provisional,

permitting the flexible use of subsequent interpretation. The purpose of categorization is to develop a thematic structure that explains the phenomenon under investigation.

The other operations (i.e., comparison and integration) depend on an initial identification of categories (Spiggle, 1994). Once provisional categories were identified and modified through the analytical process, I engaged in comparisons and contrasts of empirical data by aligning categories and constructs in concept maps and matrices. The process of comparison leads to the integration of a theory of the events. Integration requires the mapping of relationships between conceptual elements (Spiggle, 1994). To proceed in the process of integration, I had to note that certain conditions, contexts, strategies, and outcomes tend to cluster together.

The integration process also involved continuous refutation, which consists of deliberately subjecting the identified categories, constructs, propositions, or conceptual frameworks to empirical scrutiny (Spiggle, 1994). Refutation was carried as the intentional seeking out of specific cases that disconfirmed my developing analysis. Questions formulated through the process of integration included: is this specific kind of work practice developed by full time faculty expressed in the same way across different Faculties? Are there differences in the ways in which faculty members define themselves on the basis of their affiliation to a Faculty? Do full time faculty members negotiate their academic identity in the same way across different Faculties? Is there a relationship between the forms of participation in work practices and the construction of self-definitions among full time faculty?

The construction of a coding scheme triggered the beginning of the formal process of data analysis. The development of the coding scheme was an iterative process of induction (i.e., developing concepts and constructs from the data) and deduction (i.e., refining concepts and drawing out their theoretical implications). Some codes were in the researcher's mind as a result of the literature review (See Appendix B). Other codes were discovered through analysis of the empirical data. The definition of my eight-type coding scheme was informed by the theories I selected to guide my inquiry: organizational, cultural, and professional theories.

The development of the coding scheme was informed by the series of coding categories suggested by Bogdan and Biklen (1992). I identified eight coding categories to label empirical data: institutional-valued activity codes (i.e., codes that name a segment of empirical data that offers indicators of the activities that are considered by organizational leaders and managers as relevant to define the organizational identity of the university); collective process codes (i.e., codes that name a set of activities or instances of action that may involve an intention or goal, whose definition and enactment was reported by participants as the result of group dynamics); individual process codes (i.e., codes that name a set of activities whose definition and enactment was based on individual dynamics, which although connected to group influences were reported by participants as part of an individual experience); belief-based codes (i.e., codes that name instances of the perspectives and ideas held by an individual on the basis of his or her cultural experiences); symbolic-shared codes (i.e., codes that name

instances of the perspectives and ideas shared by a group of people as a result of the dynamic they create together); social structure codes (i.e., codes that label those segments of empirical data offering indicators about the properties of the interactional structures that frame the way in which individuals develop both individual and collective processes); setting codes (i.e., codes that label segments of textual data that contain indicators of the characteristics that define the organizational structures and physical space and resources of the university in which social actors developed their most valuable activities); and strategy codes (i.e., codes that name strategies of actions that both individuals and groups developed in order to enact or implement changes in their daily activities while working at the university).

The codes that furnished each coding category were the result of predetermined coding and open coding. Predetermined coding consisted of the definition of labels on the basis of my theoretical frameworks. Open coding was the result of identifying recurrent patterns or critical events that became evident in empirical data. For example, from my reading on organizational theory I established some codes that were likely to be found in empirical data as indicators of collective processes. Thus, in my coding scheme, the family of the collective process code consisted of codes such as communication, information management, decision making, and planning. From my reading of textual data (i.e., interview transcripts, documents, field notes) and the identification of repeated patterns, I developed other codes such as disconnected membership, conflictive power, and departmental self-contention.



### ***Analytical Techniques: Mapping Cognition and Atlas.ti***

The process of data analysis was assisted by the use of software to assist the cognitive functions that are embedded in the implementation of analytical operations. I utilized Atlas.ti ([www.atlasti.com](http://www.atlasti.com)) to initiate the segmentation and codification of the interview transcripts, documents, and field notes. ATLAS.ti is “an innovative and imaginative computer software application that allows the user to study and analyze text (such as interview transcripts) and add additional coding so that it is easy to categorize or code text segments for comparisons and easy retrieval at a later time” (Pomerantz, 2004, p. 179). I used basic tasks that users of ATLAS.ti can perform. I created visible codes in the right-hand panel alongside the associated text, which is usually done by selecting or highlighting the text that one wants to code. Another task was the use of codes to retrieve, systematically, highlighted quotations associated with any individual code or a combination of codes. Finally, I recorded a series of memos that could be attached to specific highlighted quotations. These memos were running reflections on possible ways to interpret data on the basis of theoretical assumptions.

The tools offered by Atlas.ti (e.g., network view manager and code family manager) helped me with four critical tasks: (1) to identify units of meaning (Creswell, 1998) without losing the context in which the narratives or events were elicited; (2) to apply a code to the respondents’ ideas, argument chains, or topics of discussion identified as units of meaning, (3) to recognize relationships among the categories

studied, and (4) to select descriptive data to proceed in the integration of a theory of the events and show representative evidence in the final research report.

To proceed in the process of categorization I found more flexibility using CmapTools software developed by the Institute of Human and Machine Cognition (<http://cmap.ihmc.us>); this flexibility involved the style of representation and the elaboration of propositional declarations that concept maps offer. CmapTools enables users to construct knowledge models represented as concept maps. As an analytical technique, concept maps allow researchers to synthesize data through graphic representations, comparisons of cases, and thematic structures that were necessary to develop a story line of the phenomenon under investigation. Concepts maps are graphical tools that lead to the representation of knowledge through the elicitation of propositional structures (Novak, 1990; Novak & Cañas, 2006). The structure of concept maps is characterized by the hierarchical organization of concepts that are connected to each other through the use of linking words. The connections among concepts are aimed to produce propositions. Novak notes that the hierarchy of concepts depends upon the field of knowledge and the focus questions that trigger the construction of the concept map. Concept mapping permitted me to connect a conceptual framework with empirical data to answer the set of research questions.

Concept maps were both graphic and propositional representations of specific parts of empirical data. The construction of concept maps reflected different characteristics and functions (See Appendix C). More than 100 concept maps were

constructed during the six-month period of data analysis. My previous knowledge about the theory and methodology underlying the construction of concept maps was central to utilize these heuristics as an analytical technique. As a strategy for data triangulation, some concepts maps were revised and discussed with an expert in the construction and interpretation of concept maps. Additionally, I selected a subset of interview data and gave it to this expert for him to elaborate concept maps based on those data; the expert's construction of concept maps enabled me to explore similarities and differences between the expert's interpretation and representation of data and mine.

The construction of concept maps enabled me to move the process of categorization forward and, ultimately, guide the research report. I identified five central functions in the use of concept maps to conduct data analysis: a) synthesize textual data to facilitate the management, comparison, and contrast of the testimonies obtained from participants (i.e., individuals, groups, and Faculties); b) represent the beliefs and experiences reported by participants; c) acknowledge and organize concepts from the literature review which were identified as useful to interpret empirical data and develop an argument; d) register thematic structures that captured the patterns and characteristics of empirical data; and e) structure a story line of the cases. Neither the construction of the different types of concept maps nor the identification of their various functions was a linear process. My sense-making of data, the identification of focus questions, and my reading of scholarship dictated the decisions regarding the construction of concept maps.

In addition to the initial segmentation and coding of empirical data that enabled the use of Atlas.ti, I realized the necessity of finding a strategy that facilitated the management of the approximately 1000 pages of textual data. I concluded that global descriptions of the various sources of information (interview, documents, and field notes) would enable me to proceed in the comparison of cases (i.e., interview transcripts): first comparing individuals and then groups (students, faculty members, and administrators) and university Faculties. I synthesized interview data by constructing concept maps. The construction of these maps was part of a global analysis (Flick, 2004) that could help me identify people's perspectives and forms of social action. Previous studies have shown that concept mapping can be a stable and reliable tool for representing people's idiosyncrasies, belief systems, and personal theories (Coffey, Eskridge, & Sanchez Tennessee, 2004; Coffey, Hoffman, Cañas, & Kenneth, 2002; Novak & Musonda, 1991). Some of the focus questions that oriented my construction of concept maps included the following: How do academics describe themselves and their working activities? What are the kinds of institutional factors that shape academics' ways of talking about their profession and acting while they engage in university-relevant activities? What are the content and forms of the policy texts that shape academics' working life? The main focus question that triggered the construction of concept maps varied according to the type of empirical data analyzed. For example, in the case of interview data, I started the construction of concept maps by formulating questions that could help me identify the ways in which academics' professional identity

was shaped and constructed on the basis of individuals' narratives: how do academics talk about themselves and the working activities they value the most? What kind of narratives do academics use to talk about their working experiences at the university? According to academics' discourse, what factors can be identified as elements shaping their self-perceptions and working activities? The concepts I put at the top of each concept map were selected on the basis of the focus questions I defined for each type of data. I constructed various concept maps for each one of the interview transcripts, field notes, and documents.

Concept maps were central not only to reduce data but also to initiate and expand the processes of categorization, abstraction, and integration. Concept maps were constructed to link the theoretical framework (i.e., organizational theory, culture theory, professional theory, and scholarship on higher education) informing the study and empirical data. Through the construction of concept maps I identified both theoretical constructs that were relevant to the study and the relationships among those constructs on the basis of the patterns found in the empirical data. For example, concept maps about professional identity were a web of concepts and propositions that attempted to explain the dimensions of academics' professional identity, the process of development, forms of representation, and contextual factors that define it.

Researchers have described different data analysis approaches such as theoretical coding and content analysis (Flick, 2002), narrative analysis (Labov & Waletzky, 1967; Reissman, 2002), discourse analysis (Johnstone, 2002), analytical

induction (Erickson, 1986) , or open, axial, and selective coding (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Strauss & Corbin, 1998). Each approach can be enacted to accomplish specific kinds of research objectives (e.g., to identify and classify objective view points and to describe the making of social situations). However, there are three operations that are common across the various approaches of qualitative data analysis: data reduction, data display, and drawing and verifying conclusions (Miles & Huberman, 1984). The use of concept maps proved to be useful to accomplish these three basic dimensions, which are described by referring to the terms of coding and categorization. To summarize, the construction of concept maps enabled four central tasks in the process of qualitative data analysis: a) make textual data manageable in order to enact analytical operations such as codification, categorization, and comparison; b) integrate conceptual elements from the literature and units of meaning within the empirical data; c) produce different kinds of graphic representations that triggered in the researcher acts of interpretation, creativity, and insights; and d) identify a thematic structure that guides the argumentative plan for the reporting of research.

### ***Types of Textual Data and the Analytical Approach***

The textual data analyzed consisted of written and spoken texts. In what follows I explain the ways in which basic analytical operations were implemented to respond to my research questions.

***Interview transcripts: Spoken texts.*** I analyzed interview data to make sense of the ways in which academics represented themselves, their understandings of their

work, the organizational structure of the university, and institutional practices framing the formation of academics' professional identity. The analytical approach used to make sense of academics' interview transcripts was different from the transcripts of administrators and staff. Because I was interested in academics' professional identity I devoted more time to the analysis of academics' interviews. This analysis was conducted as a two-stage process: basic coding and narrative analysis. Various concept maps were constructed as a result of going through these two stages.

In the first stage of the interview analysis, I used my coding scheme to segment the transcript and identify the presence of central topics and relationships among those topics as described by the participants. The purpose was to obtain a general impression of the transcript and a comprehensive understanding of the individual as connected to a group and a larger institutional context. I used concept mapping to manage participants' transcripts with two purposes: to have a summary of the individual respondent, which would help the process of comparison and integration; and to identify the main features (e.g., topics and their order in the discourse) of the participants' narratives.

In the second stage of analysis, my purpose was to understand the core attributes of the subjectivity (i.e., identity and capacity of agency) that characterized the academics in my sample. I used Edwards' (1999) approach for narrative analysis. I understood narratives in two interconnected senses: as a particular communicative style and as performance of the discursive self. On the one hand, narrative is "a method of recapitulating past experience by matching a verbal sequence of clauses to the

sequence of events which actually occurred” (Labov, 1999; p.218). On the other hand, narratives are used to reflexively reconstruct a sense of the self (Young, 1999; Dimitriadis, 2001). Individuals are creative agents who can use their linguistic resources both to perform and to describe a self-image (Johnstone, 2002). Therefore, both the content and style of academics’ narratives constructed during interviews were considered as an opportunity for academics to make sense of their professional identities and communicate it to an audience (i.e., the researcher).

The presentation of self becomes possible through the recapitulation of autobiographical stories told in the form of narratives or texts of identity; when an individual produces a specific narrative, certain episodes are chosen and told to represent the authenticity of a certain self (Cameron, 1999; Greenhalgh, 2002; Swidler, 2001; Young, 1999). The recapitulation of past experiences is enacted on a selective basis to communicate to the listener a specific kind of identity: “the self is a discursive construction that is actively constituted by individuals out of the discourses or scripts available in their environments” (Greenhalgh, 2002; p.42). The questions that this investigation relies upon to analyze academics’ narratives included the following: What is the self that academics communicate during the interview? What stories do academics tell to ensure and to sustain the authenticity of that self?

The local circumstances of the interview were considered as a topic of analysis in their own right since the products of sociological interviewing cannot be divorced from the circumstantial detail of their production (Hester & Francis, 1994). Because I left to



participants the decision to choose the site for the interview, it was appropriate to analyze possible connections between the sites they selected and the forms of self-representation they communicated through their narratives.

***Documents and field notes: Written texts.*** Written texts were codified and categorized on the basis of the coding scheme. The categories used to code field notes depended upon the theoretical orientation that I brought to the project and the quantity of thematic repetition that I found on those notes. I followed the analytical suggestions offered by Fleming (1974) and Holbrook (1997) to analyze my set of documentary data. I identified the ways in which general textual structures (i.e., sequence of parts) communicated or prescribed the construction of a specific style of professional identity, forms of academic life, and levels of academic achievement both at the individual and collective level. I also sought for elements that enabled me to know the contextual factors in which those official documents were written, their purpose, use, and the characteristics of the producers.

In the analysis of official and unofficial texts I followed the three reading strategies suggested by Keats (2009): general reading, specific reading, and relational reading. Through general reading, the reader examines the text to obtain a holistic content and to search for the meaning or meanings embedded in the text. During this kind of reading I elaborated concept maps to represent the initial and more global impressions of such aspects as unusual features, metaphorical representations, reflexive comments, and focused attention. After completing the general reading, I engaged in a

process of specific reading which involved exploring the parts of the text that contributed to shaping the meaning of the whole and the aspects that were relevant to the research question. The specific reading of the text enabled me to examine the six dimensions noted by Keats (2009): (a) the self of the narrator (e.g., cultural perspectives, unique symbols or references used, identity representations, reflexivity); (b) perspective (e.g., narrative viewpoint of experience); (c) issues of attention (e.g., single or diverse experiences recounted, subjects described); (d) sequence (e.g., how events are told, flashbacks, events omitted); (e) time (e.g., stretches of time in which experiences are conveyed, summaries of periods of time), and (f) context (e.g., place or location). Finally, relational reading involved a reading for relationships between texts that focus specifically on connections, parallels, and differences between the multiple texts. The purpose of this type of reading was to identify how texts are related and influence each other. Keats (2009) emphasizes that patterns or themes can arise by noting phrases, words, or perspectives that a participant uses frequently. Two types of relational readings were explored: intratextual readings and intertextual readings. The former explores the relationships between the texts of the single participant and the latter explores relationships between specific types of texts across a group of participants.

### **Issues of Validity and Reliability**

The production of knowledge had to be understood as an inherently subjective and negotiated process; thus, the objectivity of qualitative research refers to the

accurate description and understanding of observable phenomena (Clifford, 1986; Geertz, 1973; Marcus, 1994). Objectivity in qualitative research is broken down into two concepts: validity and reliability (Dewalt & Dewalt, 2002). Reliability refers to “the extent to which a method gives consistent results across a range of settings, and if used by a range of researchers” (Wellington, 2000, p. 200). Validity “refers to the degree to which a method , a test or a research tool actually measures what is supposed to measure”(Wellington, 2000, p. 201). Within the interpretative methodological approach, the validity and reliability of a study are based on the researcher’s ability to show both the non-neutral and actively constructed nature of the observation and analysis of the object of study (Agar, 1996; Hammersley & Atkinson, 1983; Johnson, Chambers, Raghuram, & Ticncknell, 2004). Both collaboration and reflexivity were critical elements that were at the core of the strategies I used to ensure the validity, reliability, and generalizability of the investigation.

I used the strategies suggested by Merriam (2002) for promoting internal validity and reliability. The first was triangulation, which involves the use of multiple sources of data and data collection methods to confirm findings. I also used member checking, which refers to taking data and tentative interpretations back to the people from whom they were derived and asking if they were plausible. A third strategy was peer review examination, which consisted of the establishment of discussions with colleagues regarding the process of study, the congruency of findings with the raw data, and tentative interpretations.

The adequate engagement in data collection was the fourth strategy for promoting validity and reliability. I devoted a significant amount (i.e., seven months) of time to collect data from observation, interviews, and documents. During that time period I sought discrepant or negative cases of the phenomena. A fifth strategy was to seek for maximum variation: purposefully seeking variation or diversity in sample selection. Finally, I used an audit trail as a strategy to promote validity and reliability; it consisted of a detailed account of the methods, procedures, and decisions points in carrying out the study. This set of strategies was also useful to ensure the generalizability of the study.

In qualitative research generalizability is related to the capacity of the users of the research or readers to determine the extent to which findings from one study can be applied to their context. In order to facilitate the reader to transfer findings from one study to his or her present situation, the researcher must provide enough detail of the study's context so that comparisons can be made. Providing rich, thick description is a major strategy to ensure external validity or generalizability in the qualitative sense (Merriam, 2002).

### ***Collaborative Dialogue***

The object of study is materialized through situated field relationships: the various relationships that the researcher creates with the informants in a specific context to answer a research question (Clifford, 1986). To provide a representation of the social world, the researcher is continually engaged in the construction of dialogic

encounters with informants; therefore, any form of analysis aimed to answer a research question is a constitutive achievement (Pollner, 1991; Garfinkel, 1967). According to Shryock (1997) a dialogic encounter is based on the idea that people with different cultural backgrounds can meet each other and engage in acts of reciprocity through which all parties enrich their perspectives or world view. Therefore, a reflexive researcher understands the value of his or her interactions in the field and the necessity to recapitulate and analyze the way or ways in which these were enacted. Dialogic encounters enable the researcher to contrast and confront their ideas with those of others (Shryock, 1997). The maintenance of dialogic encounters both inside and outside the field aided in answers to my set of researcher questions. My relationships and collaborative dialogue with participants in the field consisted of a set of negotiated structures to produce data and analyze them. Thus, this study was the result of dialogue and collaborative work between four parties: informants in the field, scholars, scholarship about academics, and me.

Researchers have documented that collaboration with participants is relevant to develop a fair interpretation of the events studied (Florio-Ruane, 2001); therefore, I arranged to organize and engage participants who were willing to collaborate in preliminary data analysis. I shared some of my understandings of the whole landscape or specific events with participants (i.e., staff members, administrators, and academics) who were knowledgeable of the setting. Sharing my interpretations with them was a strategy to ensure that in the process of interpretation I was taking into account

significant conditions, events, or variables that could have implications for the information provided by participants. I tested some of my inferences by sharing them with the interviewed faculty members to identify whether or not there was something missing or misunderstood in my interpretations of their perspectives about their work, self-perceptions, and working context. The collaboration with participants was central to find insights and/or to address problematic conditions in the interpretation of specific segments of the descriptive data. Sustained dialogue with other scholars who were studying the academic profession in Mexico also provided me with opportunities to explore multiple interpretations of the data, identify units of meaning, and pursue relevant connections across indicators.

The process of collaboration in the preliminary analysis was an object of study as well. I took field notes about the ways in which preliminary analyses were conducted during some informal conversations with staff, academics, and specialized scholars studying the topic of academics in Mexico.

***Reflexivity: The Researcher as Object of Study***

Another source of validity is reflexivity or the researcher's self-monitoring. The use of reflexivity is a methodological stance to examine the effect of the researcher's subjectivity in the construction of knowledge and its validity (Marcus, 1994). Robertson (2002) emphasizes that by reflecting upon oneself is a strategy that social researchers can use to understand how their vulnerability, multiple roles, and new connections illuminate deeper meanings about personal, theoretical, and epistemological aspects of

the research question. Hufford (1995) points out that the basic purpose of reflexivity is to emphasize the authorship of the researcher in the construction and representation of the object of study.

The enactment of reflexivity can be accomplished when the researcher is able to integrate personal narratives and ethnographic descriptions in a discourse that represents the polyphonic and collaborative nature of the relationship between the researcher and the participants (Clifford, 1986). According to Clifford (1986), the kind of writing that a reflexive researcher has to produce is a detailed vernacular record of customary life, covering myth, ritual, and complemented by an autobiography. Clifford points out that this form of textual representation is a discursive practice in which multiple voices are evoked and integrated. I adopted a reflexive approach by describing the character of my subjectivity as connected to the larger social context (Marcus, 1994); I saw myself as a cultural being situated in a specific context and related to a specific social group(s) and influenced by larger forces. According to Lenzo (1995), the reflexive researcher writes as a strategy to understand that she or he is a person writing from a particular situation at a specific time, that she or he is not trying to write a single text in which everything is said to everyone.

Following Lenzo (1995) and Greenbank (2003), I monitored myself to make sense of (a) the way in which each participant engaged in the field relationships to create and sustain the object of study; (b) the ways in which I derived and developed ideas, arguments, and processes of analysis; and (c) the effects of the multiple roles (i.e.,

curricular consultant, researcher, doctoral student) I played during my field work and how these could have affected the collection, analysis, and interpretation of data. I paid special attention to the ways in which my identity as researcher and perspectives changed through relationships with the participants and other scholars. For self-monitoring, I used a “journal for self-understanding” (Cole & Knowles, 2000). In the journal, I recorded personal reactions towards fieldwork events, reflections, feelings, questions, decision making process, and changes in the research design. The use of the journal was helpful to represent the ways in which I constructed my role as researcher during the entry to the field, the process of data analysis, and the writing of the text. As suggested by Johnson et al. (2004), four self-reflective questions guided the journal’s entries: Who am I as a researcher in this specific moment? Why am I doing this work? How do I engage in dialogue with others? How did people respond to my presence?

To communicate my multiple roles in the construction, maintenance, and interpretation of the object of study I implemented “the use of a transgressive self” (Lenzo, 1995) as a rhetorical device to represent “the researcher-as-selves” and the existence of competing discourses. This rhetorical device was aimed to represent the fluid self-positioning of my participation in the site and my multiple relations with informants. I utilized two styles of self-referring: I, me, my (i.e., first-person singular pronouns) to represent myself as a curricular consultant working with academics and as a person engaged in the research process, and We, our, us (i.e., first-person plural) to represent myself as part of a group of researchers interested in making sense of the



university and the academic profession in Mexico. The rhetorical devices that I utilized to promote the enactment of reflexivity were informed by the formulation of questions such as the following: who speaks, who writes, when and where, with or to whom, under what historical and institutional constraints.

I gave particular attention to the way in which my fluency in the Spanish language helped me to understand aspects of social life that could not be evident to people in a foreign social group (i.e., country). In the process of analysis, I relied upon U.S. scholarship on higher education and the academy as a profession as a heuristic tool to make the familiar strange: to identify the peculiarity of the Mexican setting. The analysis of data that has been collected through the use of Spanish and the idea of having to present my findings to a U.S. audience compelled me to think continually about possible ways to translate terms, processes, and experiences that can be commonly understood in the Mexican context and yet can be incomprehensible for a foreign audience such as U.S. scholars. The constant attention to a foreign audience forced me to be highly conscious of the way in which cultural dimensions and the use of Spanish are intertwined to address and interpret the object of study.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### THE CONTEXT FOR THE NEGOTIATION OF ACADEMIC IDENTITY

This study examines the context and practices through which full time faculty members<sup>5</sup> negotiate their self-definition as academics. This chapter addresses the first research question of this study: what is the socio-cultural context in which full time faculty members at the University of Morelos (UM) negotiate their academic identity? The explanatory approach used in this chapter includes both an analytical and descriptive dimension. Units of data to present the evidence were taken from interviews with 21 full time professors working in nine different university Faculties, 7 academic administrators in the central administration at UM, and 2 university officers. Other sources of empirical data used to validate the series of narratives that informants provided during interviews included institutional documents and quotations from the researcher's journal, which was written during the process of participant observation.

Two main findings are explained. First, full time faculty who identified themselves as researchers noted that it was difficult to sustain and negotiate their academic identity as researchers within a university whose core organizational structures such as mission and goals, bureaucratic apparatus, and normative framework were ambiguous and inefficient to the extent that they did not encourage research work as a core element of academic life. Second, full time academics negotiated their academic identity within two types of Faculties whose differences were based on their

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<sup>5</sup> I use the terms full time professors, full time faculty, and academics to refer to a specific academic subgroup at UM labeled by the university community as PROMEP professors.

cultural orientation and social structure to organize academic life. These two types of Faculties included parochial and modern Faculties. Each type of Faculty provided different academic structures for the negotiation of professional identity.

Findings are presented in two broad sections. The first section presents the characteristics of three core organizational structures at UM: organizational mission and philosophy, the bureaucratic apparatus, and the normative framework. Full time professors from all university Faculties and academic administrators described these organizational structures as problematic to develop academic work and improve educational services. The second section of the chapter provides an analytical description of the socio-cultural factors of parochial and modern Faculties. Based on the information provided by informants in interviews and field notes, I explain the academic values and practices as well as the structures of interaction in ten Faculties selected as the sample of this study. As mentioned in Chapter Three, names of informants presented both in this and following chapters are pseudonyms.

### **Organizational Structures at the University of Morelos**

Full time faculty members, university officers, and academic administrators were asked to describe the scenarios of a typical day of work and the main features of the organization of academic life at UM. Beyond their job position and affiliation with university Faculties, all 26 participants of this study noted three main characteristics of the core organizational structures of the university. The first characteristic was the insufficient attention to and fulfillment of the university mission and goals. The second

characteristic was the discretionary implementation of the university's normative framework. The third and last characteristic of organizational structures in the central administration of UM was related to the existence of irrational and overwhelming bureaucratic processes that complicated the implementation of academic practices.

### ***University Mission and Goals***

Informants of this study emphasized that although the present administration endeavored to declare the mission and goals of the university in official documents produced since 2007, traditional practices among university officers at UM were characterized by the lack of attention and fulfillment of these mission and goals. The university's mission and goals were written statements communicated in institutional documents; however, informants did not perceive academic life as guided by or constructed on the basis of a specific mission or set of goals.

The present administration of the university defined the function of the university in institutional documents such as the university by-laws and the Plan for Institutional Development 2007-2013 (PIDE). In the university by-laws, released in May 2008, the mission of the university included "to promote social change through science, education, and culture." In the PIDE, written in 2007, the purpose of the university consisted of "creating, transmitting, and implementing both knowledge and culture. The university function is to promote social change and the comprehensive development of individuals, which involves critical thinking, professional qualifications, and ethics." Full time faculty members acknowledged that the development of the PIDE every six years

was part of the incipient efforts to define the university mission and educational philosophy to guide academic life. However, faculty members asserted that the construction of documents to define academic life exerted limited influence in the construction of academic life on a daily basis.

This university does not have a real goal or direction to define institutional development. There is a document, the Plan for Institutional Development (PIDE)...[A]ll the strategies, steps, procedures described in that document are irrelevant because nobody really cares. (Dr. Bianca Aguilar, Faculty of Sciences)

Dr. Bianca Aguilar attained her doctoral degree in biochemistry at National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM). Dr. Aguilar was both dean at UM and a full time professor in a Faculty with one of the largest numbers of full time professors. Dr. Aguilar emphasized that the Faculty of Sciences has its particular mission and goals: “we want to create a research oriented Faculty;” however, she struggled to understand the way in which the definition of the university mission in the PIDE was used to organize academic practices across Faculties and fulfill goals of social progress, comprehensive human development, and knowledge construction.

Full time academics who entered UM after obtaining their doctoral degrees in large research universities both in Mexico and abroad claimed there was a lack of clarity about the ways in which administrative processes, the hiring of personnel, and decision-making mechanisms were organized to fulfill the university mission and specific academic goals. Full time academics did not understand the way in which the purpose of

the university, as defined in institutional documents, was used to organize and improve academic practices. Instead, full time professors perceived a climate of disorganization in the construction of university life.

When I was hired in 2003 as a full time professor, I was shocked by the disorganization prevailing in the university. Faculties worked on an individual basis: each one of them did what they wanted to do according to their own criteria. There were no agreements, no collective goals, and no institutional vision. (Dr. Manuel Garcia, Faculty of Medicine)

Dr. Garcia had worked in the Faculty of Medicine for 6 years. The Faculty of Medicine relied in the main on part time professors. Dr. Garcia obtained a doctoral degree in neuroscience in a research university in Germany. He also worked as a part time faculty member for 18 years in one of the largest research universities in Mexico, the National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM). Multiple times during the interview, Dr. Garcia emphasized that the prevailing conditions of limited interaction and communication among Faculties and the difficulty to establish collaborative projects hindered a shared understanding and implementation of the mission and purpose of the university.

Other full time faculty members concurred with the comments offered by Dr. Garcia. Dr. Georgina Pacheco was a full time professor who worked in the Faculty of Human Communication. She earned her doctoral degree in education at a research university in Spain. Dr. Pacheco noted that it was difficult to identify the ways in which

the university mission and goals were used to guide the construction of educational services and academic practices at UM.

Each Faculty works on its own terms, on the basis of the particular vision of the dean or the group of professors of the Faculty...[D]uring the process of curricular design, each one of us did what we thought was the right thing to do... [I]f university officers say “we are going to adopt a competence-based approach,” then it could be easier to integrate each professors’ work, but here everyone works on an individual basis...[T]here is no clarity about the processes; rather, it is about trying to survive the demands imposed by national policies.

Dr. Pacheco expanded the comments offered by Dr. Garcia by explaining the ways in which the lack of attention to the organizational mission and goals influenced the definition of academic practices in Faculties and the alignment of academics’ research projects with a larger institutional project. Dr. Pacheco noted that inconsistencies in the implementation of university mission and goals caused fragmentation among university Faculties: “Each Faculty works in its own terms, according to the particular vision of the dean or the group of professors.” The construction of academic practices at UM was not viewed as a collective project in which each university Faculty had a clear understanding of its role and contribution to the mission and goals of the university. Instead, Faculties worked on the basis of the particular projects that deans and academics selected and implemented.

Dr. Pacheco emphasized that the lack of attention to the university mission statement and goals hindered the alignment of academics' research work with a larger institutional project: "If university officers say 'we are going to adopt a competence-based approach,' then it could be easier to integrate each professors' work, but here everyone works on an individual basis." Similar to other full time professors who participated in this study, Dr. Pacheco conveyed that it was difficult to identify the ways in which her particular research activities were connected with the overall mission of the university.

The narratives provided by full time faculty members were echoed by academic administrators who also talked about the ambiguity of the university mission and goals. Juan Navarro was an academic administrator who had worked at UM for 10 years. Juan explained that the disorganized incorporation of full time faculty members into the academic structure of the university since the 1990s was caused by the lack of ability of university officers to articulate academic life on the basis of the university mission and goals. Without accurate attention to the mission and goals of the university it was difficult to organize the process of hiring and management of full time professors.

When the Program for Faculty Enhancement (PROMEPE) was released in 1996, the university started to hire full time professors; however, university officers did not pay attention to hire professors according to the needs and nature of the series of programs offered at the university...[T]he university was fairly worried about complying with the implementation of PROMEP, which was a new federal



policy ...[Y]et, the university never devoted time to develop a document which stated its institutional vision and goals. That aspect was overlooked and forgotten.

Juan emphasized that the implementation of federal policies or programs such as the Program for Faculty Enhancement (PROMEP), which encouraged the hiring of full time professors holding both a master's and doctoral degree, was adopted uncritically because of the lack of attention to the character of the university mission and goals. Juan explained that the hiring of full time faculty members was an unregulated process in which each Faculty decided to hire a specific number of professors without reference to the institutional project developed by the central administration. The result was the unbalanced distribution of full time professors across Faculties. At UM, there were Faculties such as the Faculty of Sciences which relied on 34 full time professors with significant levels of research productivity whereas other Faculties such as Human Communication had 5 full time professors and limited research productivity as a Faculty.

The ambiguous nature of the mission and goals of the university was not only identified by full time faculty members and academic administrators but also by external evaluators. In September 2008, the Secretary of the Academic Division and the director of the office of research and graduate programs of UM attended a meeting in the offices of the Ministry of Education in Mexico City. University officers met Dr. Giselle Andrade, the director of PROMEP program, to request support in the evaluation of academic bodies. During that meeting, Dr. Andrade emphasized that one of the most

critical problems of UM was the lack of definition of the mission and goals of UM as a higher education institution.

The university should define its identity as a higher education institution. The University of Morelos has to identify its strengths on the basis of the qualification of its academic body. The problem is that the university does not have clarity about what its identity and goals are. If the university can define its identity and mission, then it will be easier to organize and integrate the work of the academic body. (Journal entry, 09-13-2008)

University officers in the present administration acknowledged that UM lacked a clear definition of the mission and goals of the university as well as a series of concrete strategies and mechanisms to construct its academic structure. Therefore, during July 2008, the Secretary of Academic Division in the central administration ordered the development of an institutional document that described the educational model of the university (*"El modelo educativo de la UAEM"*). The document explained the philosophical, educational, and organizational principles that defined the mission and goals of the university. The construction of the document took 6 months, from July 2008 to January 2009. During these months, university officers and three educational researchers worked together to identify the foundations for the construction of university life. Weekly meetings enabled university officers to think about and discuss the orientation, academic values, and strategies to construct university life.

### ***Normative Framework***

The by-laws of the University of Morelos, which were viewed by the university community as the central set of rules to legalize internal academic affairs, were issued for the first time in November 1967 and modified in May 2008. Every one of the 21 full time faculty members who participated in this study described the normative framework of UM (i.e., the university by-laws) as an ambiguous series of norms whose implementation was irregular and based on discretionary action. Some deans and full time faculty members worked on the development of specific norms to regulate academic practices in their particular Faculty; however, full time faculty members were uncertain about the content of the university by-laws, the effects of the bylaws upon the development of specific academic practices, or the nature of sanctions under cases of academic misconduct.

Full time faculty members noted that not all actors of the university community were aware of or comprehended the rules governing the university's internal affairs, which in some cases triggered a defective definition of academic practices. Professor Rocio Diaz described the ways in which professors' ignorance of rules to define academic structures caused serious problems in the design and implementation of graduate programs in the Faculty of Arts.

We have been working on the modification of graduate programs in the Faculty. Professors who worked here before created a lot of problems with the doctoral program; they did not follow any guidelines about how to construct an

educational program; they did not communicate their decisions to the dean; they did not respect any rule. Professors worked according to their common sense and customary practices. My perception is that norms do not permeate the life and activities of all people working at this university.

Full time academics were required to participate in faculty assemblies and committees to develop planning models or define academic structures such as educational programs; however, many full time academics ignored the rules governing the processes and specific mechanisms through which academic life could be constructed. Members of the academic community used what they referred to as common sense every time they could not understand the content and logic of the university by-laws.

Dr. Pacheco, who worked in the Faculty of Human Communication, noted that discretionary action was a core element in the implementation of the university by-laws. University actors implemented university regulations according to their individual perspectives and conditions. Thus, the implementation of university regulations was not homogeneous but diverse as a result of individuals' ideologies and interpretations of the law.

Some people in this university respect rules whereas others overlook them...[C]ustomary practices and personal ideologies, rather than official norms, define academic life at this university. There is a lot of ambiguity within the university by-laws; every person interprets rules differently. For example, there are no specific guidelines to integrate academic committees.

Full time academics noted that the lack of precise norms to define academic life and the discretionary implementation of the by-laws created confusion and imbalance in the construction of academic practices. Full time academics did not know how to proceed in the definition of academic structures. As noted by Dr. Pacheco, academics were uncertain about aspects such as the procedures to construct academic committees aimed at monitoring the implementation and progress of educational programs both at the undergraduate and graduate level.

### ***Bureaucratic Apparatus***

All interviewees noted that the bureaucratic system aimed at supporting for the arrangement of academic activities was both irrational and inefficient. Full time faculty members complained about the problematic conditions under which they had to develop three types of activities: academic planning and curriculum design, the administration of federal funds to conduct research projects, and the planning of academic work.

Dr. Joaquin Acosta from the Faculty of Medicine emphasized that the bureaucracy and the administrative procedures of the university had detrimental effects on the development of planning practices to improve academic life. In addition to his research and teaching activities, Dr. Acosta was coordinator of graduate programs in his Faculty. Dr. Acosta dealt with the bureaucratic apparatus of the university on a daily basis because of multiple academic administrative activities he was required to do: monitor the development and implementation of the new master's and doctoral

programs; oversee the proper registration of students; coordinate the accreditation of programs; and, establish interorganizational networks with other Faculties, both within and outside the university.

The most serious problem of the university is its bureaucratic system. The present conditions under which we have to develop administrative concerns and make decisions are awful. We always have problems to obtain information about the performance of the university. Without information available about the present conditions of the university, it is very difficult to engage in planning processes.

Similar to other full time professors, Dr. Acosta complained about the amount of time he had to invest in order to obtain any kind of information or instrumental support from university officers and staff in the central administration. Dr. Acosta visited the office of the academic administrator of the graduate division once a week in order to solve problematic issues related to graduate programs in the Faculty of Medicine. Dr. Acosta spent between one or two hours weekly in order to discuss and find solutions to different kinds of issues.

Full time academics endured the inefficiency of the bureaucratic system of UM during the enactment of not only service but also research activities. When full time faculty were asked about the most difficult part of their work as academics, many of them noted that dealing with bureaucratic procedures to perform their research activities was one of the most frustrating aspects. Grants that full time professors

obtained to conduct research projects were managed by the central administration of the university; thus, full time faculty worked with administrative staff to use their funds for the acquisition of equipment, travel expenses, or hiring students as research assistants. In the interview with Dr. Israel Salgado from the Faculty of Agriculture, he described the difficulties in managing the grants allocated to conduct research projects.

Administrative processes are extremely tedious and slow...[I]f we need to buy equipment for our laboratories or office, the process takes forever. Sometimes we cannot wait for the administrative process to take place; thus, we have to invest our money to do our research work. The problem is that sometimes we are not reimbursed for the expenses we made. The university is a chaos; staff members do not know how to conduct administrative process, they lost documents: files or applications. There is no certainty about how long an administrative process can take. It can be a week, three months, or a whole year.

The experience of Dr. Salgado was common among other full time faculty. During interviews, academics emphasized that the bureaucratic system of the university created considerable frustration and anxiety every time they needed to address the demands of their work.

Participants noted that the bureaucratic system of the university was inefficient because it did not have enough administrative staff and because it relied on unqualified personnel. "Administrative staff does not provide adequate attention to full time professors; they do not understand what research is about. They do not understand that

we have experiments in our laboratory that cannot be interrupted,” said Dr. Garcia from the Faculty of Medicine in one of the meetings to discuss the design of the master’s program in molecular biology. To ensure the appropriate development of administrative procedures, full time faculty performed multiple activities in addition to their research, teaching, and service. Dr. Vanessa Rodriguez from the Faculty of Pharmacy noted that full time faculty had to perform administrative work to ensure the development of educational programs.

University officers have to realize that the administrative structure of this university is poor and outdated. In our Faculty we have neither a secretary nor an administrative assistant who supports the coordination of graduate programs or helps professors to acquire the materials they need to do their everyday activities. Every faculty member has to overcome his or her concerns and needs in any way possible, without the support of administrative staff. Faculty members have to compensate for the shortfalls of the administrative system.

Dr. Rodriguez emphasized, as did other full time faculty, that if full timers wanted to achieve their goals they had to invest time and effort to repair the lack of instrumental support to enact administrative processes.

Members of the administrative staff confirmed the inefficiency of the university bureaucracy. Tina Caballero was the accountant of the Office of Academic Affairs; she managed research grants for full time faculty. Tina described the problematic aspects of administrative procedures.



We attempted for one year to buy a computer. The office of material acquisitions was chaotic; people in that office lost the applications of full time professors. They did not have a follow-up system to track the status of orders. There was a lot of disorder because many people in that office were new; they did not know how to proceed. At this moment, we have a lot of problems because we received funds from PROMEP. We have to spend all that money during one academic year. If we do not spend that money, then the Ministry of Education will take all that money away from us. It is already six months after the beginning of the academic year and we cannot spend the money because of absurd requirements from the financial office here at the university. This problem affects researchers because at the end of the year they will have to write a report explaining how they use the funds they received.

Academic administrators, university officers, and full time professors emphasized that it was imperative to modify the current administrative procedures and bureaucratic system of the university in order to ensure the efficient management of academic practices and to facilitate academic work among full time professors.

### **Parochial and Modern Faculties: Convergence of History and Innovation**

I use the labels parochial and modern Faculties to describe two different scenarios and academic structures in which full time professors negotiated their academic work and professional identity. Full time academics who started to work at UM during the last decade of the 1990s did not use the term parochial and modern

Faculty to talk about the academic unit where they worked; however, they described two types of Faculties with different kinds of values, practices, and forms of interaction. In each type of Faculty, full time professors found different ways to construct their academic practice. In interviews and informal conversations, participants of this study stressed that UM consisted of two parallel universities (i.e., two types of Faculties) whose characteristics derived from the historical evolution of the university and the adoption of federal policies for university restructuring since the 1980s. Dr. Pamela Pacheco from the Research Center of Biotechnology explained the historical evolution of UM and the construction of the two types of universities.

During the 1990s, the university started becoming a new university, mainly with this idea of integrating new full time professors. There was also an increased interest in the development of the graduate division...[W]hen new faculty members entered the university through the Faculty Enhancement Program (PROMEP), a generational gap was created. You can identify two universities that co-exist: the old and the new university.

Dr. Pacheco had worked at UM for 30 years. Her long experience as a dean and full time faculty at UM enabled her to observe and experience changes at the university over a prolonged period. She, similar to other full time faculty and academic administrators, stressed that a particular event that triggered the construction of two types of Faculties or universities was the hiring of full time professors as part of the Faculty Enhancement Program (*Programa de Mejoramiento del Profesorado*, PROMEP) during 1996.

As experienced in many other public state universities in Mexico (Gil-Antón, 1994, 2003), the hiring of full time faculty before 1996 occurred indiscriminately at UM; individuals holding a bachelor's degree could work as professors giving classes to undergraduate students. However, during the late 1990s, public state universities were required to increase the hiring of full time professors with doctoral degrees and research productivity both at the national and international levels. In 1996, PROMEP was created.<sup>6</sup> The program aimed to increase the number of full time professors with doctoral degrees in public universities, encourage research, teaching, service, and tutoring activities as part of the core functions of academic work, and develop and consolidate collegial interaction and collaborative work among academics in university Faculties.

Dr. Estela Gonzalez from the Faculty of Agriculture described two academic subgroups at UM: old and new professors.

The academic body of this university is heterogeneous: there are some full time and part time professors who were at the university before us [PROMEP professors] and had strong political power. They are old professors. We [PROMEP professors] have different political conditions...[A] feature that is common among new professors is our interest in research...[O]ld professors are more interested in sustaining traditional practices; they pretend to teach, not all of them of course, some of them are interested in doing authentic work.

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<sup>6</sup> [http://www.ses.sep.gob.mx/wb/ses/programa\\_de\\_mejoramiento\\_del\\_profesorado](http://www.ses.sep.gob.mx/wb/ses/programa_de_mejoramiento_del_profesorado)

As described by Dr. Gonzalez and other informants of this study, most of “old professors” were mainly interested in teaching at the undergraduate level. Old professors did not do research. Old professors were practitioners who started to work at UM between 1954 and 1980; as pointed out in the literature (Gil-Antón, 1994, 2003), they were pioneers of the institution and defined basic organizational structures of the university. Pioneer practitioners at UM consisted of part time faculty and a small number of full time faculty who did not engage in research and were appointed by the university president and the academic union.

The “new professors” described by Dr. Gonzalez held doctoral degrees granted by large research universities either in Mexico or abroad. New professors were full time faculty mainly interested in conducting research projects and publishing at the national and international level, although teaching was part of the institutional responsibilities of new professors, they identified researcher as the core role of their academic work. Most of the teaching activities among new professors were enacted at the graduate level. The university community used two labels to identify members of the two academic subgroups. Old professors were called *profesores de carrera*, whereas new professors were identified as *profesores-investigadores* or PROMEP professors. PROMEP professors perceived themselves as different from old professors. PROMEP professors defined themselves as organizational actors that entered the university to instill a climate of modernity based on research activities.

### ***Cultural Values and Practices in Parochial Faculties***

Four out of the ten academic units that shape the sample of this study were parochial Faculties. The Faculty of Medicine, Human Communication, Architecture, and Agriculture had an academic culture based on a teaching orientation; the main goal was to provide instructional services to students. The definition of academic activities focused on the development of undergraduate programs. The academic union influenced the definition of the academic life of the Faculty. Strategic planning was not considered as valuable in the organization and improvement of the academic performance of the Faculty.

***Faculty body.*** According to institutional statistics, the number of PROMEP professors (i.e., full time faculty) in the four parochial Faculties was distributed in the following way. The Faculty of Medicine relied on 14 full time faculty and 130 part time faculty members. In the Faculty of Human Communication there were 5 full time faculty and 27 part timers. There were 13 full time faculty and 101 part time faculty members in the Faculty of Architecture. Finally, in the Faculty of Agriculture there were 19 full timers and 49 part time faculty members. In parochial Faculties, the number of part time faculty was significantly larger than the number of full time professors.

In one of the meetings to design the master's program in the Faculty of Medicine, the coordinator of graduate programs explained that in his Faculty there included 14 full time professors and 130 part timers. Part timers in these Faculties focused on teaching at the undergraduate level and did not engage in research

activities. Full time professors described the composition of the academic body of parochial Faculties and the participation of part time professors in the definition of academic activities as.

When I entered the Faculty, there were 2 full time professors; now there are 8 full time professors. There are too many part time faculty members. I would like to change that...[B]ecause of the lack of full time professors we could not sustain the master's program; we did not have enough professors. (Dr. Carolina Hernandez, Faculty of Architecture)

It is very difficult to work along with part time faculty who give classes at the undergraduate level. Part timers do not have time to participate in research activities in this Faculty...[T]he interaction between full time and part time faculty is complex because part timers just come to give classes and they leave immediately because they have to attend other higher education institutions or other Faculties...[I]f a professor does not have time to participate in meetings or discuss relevant matters, then it becomes difficult to contribute to the development of the Faculty. (Dr. Salvador Salazar, Faculty of Human Communication)

Part time faculty in parochial Faculties did not participate in the definition of academic structures because they had little time to engage in activities other than offering undergraduate courses. Full time faculty had to engage in research, teaching, and

institutional service (e.g., committee work) to be able to design and improve educational programs and to formulate academic regulations for the implementation of educational programs, evaluation committees, and Faculty boards.

***Teaching-orientation and focus on undergraduate programs.*** In parochial Faculties, the construction of graduate programs and research activities as a collective purpose was in an initial stage. Full time faculty in parochial Faculties emphasized that their colleagues (part time faculty) and deans did not support the development of research activities. Academic life within parochial Faculties focused on the development of instructional services for undergraduate students. Dr. Salvador Salazar from the Faculty of Human Communication expressed his frustration when he entered the Faculty and realized that research activities, which he perceived as the core of his academic work, were not supported by the dean of the Faculty

There are two priorities in this university: administrative issues and everything related to teaching...[D]eans of some Faculties, such as this, do not know about the culture of research; they do not understand the nature and challenges of research activities...[T]his is a university whose organization is based on classical traditional values that exclude research as part of the academic culture.

Other full time professors from parochial Faculties indicated that deans neglected the integration of research activities as part of academic life. Dr. Carolina Hernandez described the marginal role of research work in the Faculty of Architecture.

The dean should realize that academic activities in this Faculty are not about giving classes at the undergraduate level exclusively. Teaching is an important activity; however, research is important as well. Our dean does not understand the role of research in this Faculty; thus, there are no strategies to integrate teaching and research activities...[W]hen I saw the annual report that our dean sent to the central administration, I realized that research activities are an appendix of the Faculty; research is not a central component of the Faculty.

The high proportion of part time faculty who focused on instructional activities was an influential condition for the construction of the teaching-oriented academic culture of parochial Faculties. In a meeting (July 23, 2008) to develop the master's program in molecular biology, Dr. Salazar explained that it was difficult to increase research activities in the Faculty of Medicine because part timers only had time to give classes to undergraduate students. Part timers did not invest time in activities such as developing educational programs at the undergraduate level or creating graduate programs.

The typical faculty member in this Faculty is a physician who works with patients during the morning and give classes in the remaining hours of the day. For this kind of faculty, giving classes in this Faculty is the least important of his or her priorities. Some faculty members like giving classes in this Faculty. However, the trend is that faculty members do not care about the definition of activities other than teaching their courses in the Faculty. (Journal entry, 07-23-2008)



Parochial Faculties were established before the 1980s. The main purpose of these Faculties was to provide professional training; these Faculties were not created to promote research activities. Institutional memoirs that recorded the testimonies of university presidents from 1954 to 1976 show that during the first years of the establishment of the university, the central concern was to educate students to become professionals. Research activities were almost non-existent. In a manuscript issued by the university to celebrate its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary, a university president who worked from 1982 to 1988 described the orientation of the academic life of the university.

When I started my period as university president, my biggest concern was to address the shortages we have. The university lacked infrastructure. Most of our students were in the undergraduate level, the graduate division was an undeveloped project. (Manuscript, Hernández-Telléz, 2004; p. 45)

The main mission of the university during the first decades after its creation was the expansion of the undergraduate division. The development of research and the construction of the graduate division was an institutional project that started during the 1980s. Thus, parochial Faculties, which were established during the first decades of the history of UM, focused on offering instructional services to enable undergraduate student to attain a bachelor's degree.

Although parochial Faculties sustained a teaching orientation, some deans and full time faculty members initiated changes to modify the academic orientation of Faculties. In all four parochial Faculties, PROMEP professors (i.e., full time faculty)

worked on the development of graduate programs and research projects to instill a new academic orientation. Not all PROMEP professors in parochial Faculties found immediate support from deans and colleagues in their Faculties; however, they were certain that they wanted to modify the exclusive focus on teaching activities. The new coordinator of graduate programs, Dr. Emiliano Alonso from the Faculty of Agriculture, explained the initiatives to modify the existing academic conditions of the Faculty.

Our dean said: “There has been an important growth with regards to infrastructure. Now we have to focus on the development of the academic dimension: to improve graduate programs” ...[T]he dean encouraged the process of accreditation in the Faculty. For the first time, in 15 years, programs were evaluated by an external agency...[W]e obtained 32 comments from the evaluation.

Professor Alonso explained that to improve prevailing academic conditions in the Faculty of Agriculture he decided to appoint a curricular design committee shaped by four PROMEP professors who participated in the construction of the master’s and doctoral programs. Professor Alonso along with four PROMEP professors worked more than 12 months to construct the graduate division of the Faculty.

***Intervention of the academic union.*** One of the central characteristics of parochial Faculties was the intervention of the academic union in the definition of academic activities. The academic union (*Sindicato de Trabajadores Académicos de la Universidad Autónoma del Estado de Morelos, SITAUAEM*) was created in 1976.

According to the union's mission statement retrieved on the official website of the university, the academics' union was created "to ensure optimal conditions for the enactment of academic work which involved a fair work contract, adequate infrastructure, academic freedom, and support to engage in a process of professionalization." Part time faculty members were the largest proportion of the union's active members. Academic administrators and full time academics who participated in this study emphasized that the role of the academics' union was detrimental for the construction of academic life in parochial Faculties in two areas. First, the union intervened to ensure the hiring of professors who, in many cases, did not have the professional qualifications to give classes in the Faculty. Second, the union hindered the development of an internal evaluation system<sup>7</sup> to assess the instructional performance of part time faculty giving courses at the undergraduate level. Without a system to evaluate the nature of the instructional service provided to undergraduate students, it was difficult to remove faculty members who were not performing their

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<sup>7</sup> UM did not have an internal evaluation system that targeted the quality of the instructional practice of part time faculty members. UM undertook preliminary efforts to implement and institutionalize a teaching evaluation system; however, the implementation of the assessment instrument was neither mandatory nor implemented on a regular basis across all Faculties of the university. Full time faculty members were required to comply with federal evaluation systems that were related to federal strategic programs such as PROMEP and SNI. CONACYT and the Ministry of Education assessed both the instructional practices and the research productivity of full time faculty members; however, the emphasis of evaluation was placed upon research productivity. The evaluation of full time faculty members was thus externally oriented. The results that full time faculty members obtained from the process of evaluation managed by CONACYT and The Ministry of Education had a direct influence on the increase or decrease of earnings that were additional to the base salary that full time faculty members at UM received. Since the base salary of full time faculty members was fairly low (i.e., approximately 1000 dollars per month), professors endeavored to obtain high evaluation result that enabled them to increase the amount of their additional earnings.

teaching activities properly. Dr. Gonzales from the Faculty of Agriculture described her frustration with the influence of the union upon the definition of academic activities.

It is inconceivable to me the level of involvement of the union into academic issues. The union does not have academic criteria to make decisions...[I]t is difficult to believe that the union can stop evaluation processes and hire unqualified faculty to give courses. This situation is very irrational and absurd to me; I think that when it comes to academic concerns, the union is a big obstacle at this university.

Dr. Gabriela Pacheco from the Faculty of human communication emphasized the climate of exclusion she experienced within her Faculty as a result of the role of the union in the hiring of academics in her Faculty.

The union plays a central role in the hiring of part time faculty working at the undergraduate level in this Faculty. Sometimes, we [full time faculty] are neglected as candidates to give classes at the undergraduate level. If there is no person who owns the course, then we can apply to give that course.

Other academic administrators supported the opinions of full time professors. Juan Navarro was coordinator of academic services; he was responsible for monitoring the hiring process of full time and part time professors at UM. Navarro had to work closely with members of the union to proceed in the selection and contract of applicants. He explained the relationship between the union and the academic performance of Faculties.

[Faculties with accredited programs] are characterized by the reduced participation of the union in academic issues. The Faculty of Science is accredited: there, professors are not unionized and full time professors give classes in the undergraduate level. Psychology is a similar case: the union had no central participation in the assigning of courses. Pharmacy is the same situation: in that Faculty there is no union participation. But in many other Faculties, the union is who decides who can give classes in the undergraduate level; that is the reason why those Faculties have not been able to achieve positive outcomes.

The intervention of the union in parochial Faculties was evident because of the large number of part time professors who were unionized. When academic administrators were asked to think about the reasons why university presidents could not undertake direct confrontations with the union in order to improve the academic performance of the university, a representative answer was: "Well, you know, year after year the union always threatens university authorities with striking if they do not receive what they expect it: they want a regular or larger number of courses to be offered by part time academics."

***Academic planning.*** Full time professors working in parochial Faculties emphasized that it was both difficult and frustrating to develop their academic work within a Faculty which did not have an academic tradition based on academic planning. Most of full time professors hired after 1996 conducted their graduate studies at large

research universities in Mexico City or abroad; therefore, they worked in larger universities where planning practices and efficiency were core values of university life. Dr. Juan M. Garcia stressed that the academic climate within the Faculty of Medicine was highly disorganized. The dean did not formulate a plan to define academic activities. Dr. Garcia, similar to other full time professors in parochial Faculties, expressed concern about the informal ways in which academic activities were organized within their Faculties.

This is not an academy; this is a town-like environment. There is no governance structure, no academic structure, and no political structure in this Faculty.

Rather, what you find are people who say “This is my territory; I do whatever I want whenever I want”...[H]ere, people are late to meetings, cancel at the last minute. It seems to me that people here do not take things seriously.

Full time faculty in other parochial Faculties supported Dr. Garcia’s perceptions. Dr. Gabriela Pacheco in the Faculty of Human Communication emphasized that even though there were written documents describing process of planning, everyday life in the Faculty was not constructed on the basis of specific goals and mechanisms to achieve those goals.

[Working in this Faculty] has been weird. In the dean’s official discourse, she seems to be interested in establishing research as part of the goals of the Faculty; however, it is really complicated to enact research activities in an authentic way...[P]urposes are not implemented in real life; goals are stated only

in documents. In the last two years I have been participating in the design of the documents for Comprehensive Program for Institutional Strengthening (PIFI) and we have not received any extraordinary funds from the federal government. Full time professors in parochial Faculties struggled to develop their research activities when deans did not develop planning strategies to integrate research as part of the mission and academic activities of the Faculty.

Although planning practices were not central in parochial Faculties, full time faculty tried to develop plan models as part of federal programs such as the Comprehensive Program for Institutional Strengthening (*Programas Integrales de Fortalecimiento Institucional*, PIFI) released in 2001.<sup>8</sup> This program encouraged higher education institutions to develop an organizational culture based on strategic planning to promote organizational improvement and quality in education. Each academic year, universities are required to create an institutional document that contains policies, goals, and strategies of action to implement goals. Dr. Carolina Hernandez in the Faculty of Architecture described her participation in planning practices and the problems she found.

I participated in the Comprehensive Program for Institutional Strengthening (PIFI)...[I]t was really hard for me to make sense of the process...[T]he other problem is that there is no information. I asked for data in my Faculty and they did not want to help me...[T]he information was scattered; nobody knew about

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<sup>8</sup> [http://www.ses.sep.gob.mx/wb/ses/programa\\_integral\\_de\\_fortalecimiento\\_instituci](http://www.ses.sep.gob.mx/wb/ses/programa_integral_de_fortalecimiento_instituci)

financial resources, student populations, graduation rates, or statistical information... [T] he process was viewed as irrelevant. The dean wanted to comply with the document but nobody really cared about its implementation.

The narrative of Dr. Hernandez was consistent with the other full time professors in parochial Faculties. All of them expressed concern about the lack of information and support every time they endeavored to formulate some kind of plan or model to organize the academic activities of the Faculty or to integrate their work into a larger institutional project.

### ***Social Factors in Parochial Faculties***

Full time professors who worked in parochial Faculties at UM explained that the social climate of their Faculties was both fragmented and conflictive. Structures of interaction, leadership style, and the patterns of communication among members of the Faculty were problematic. Both tensions and confrontation between faculty members and deans were common within parochial Faculties.

***Communication and interaction patterns.*** Academic activities were difficult to organize because of problematic conditions to communicate and work with other colleagues or deans in parochial Faculties. Problems of communication between full time professors and deans were related to the circulation of ambiguous messages and the covering up of information. Full time faculty members emphasized that they were unable to receive accurate information about the dynamics, resources, and needs of the Faculty. Academics also complained that deans did not provide clear messages about



the academic activities taking place within parochial Faculties. In various interviews with full time faculty, they used the expression “schizophrenic language” or “schizophrenic climate” to describe their difficulties to make sense of the forms of dialogue and communication within their Faculties. Dr. Joaquin Acosta from the Faculty of Medicine explained what he meant by “schizophrenic language” and the ways in which ineffective forms of communication triggered a sense of frustration and uncertainty in the development of academic work.

There is a schizophrenic language all the time in this Faculty. We make decisions during meetings; then, when the meeting is over, the actions that follow are not related at all with the agreement that we just made...[A]t this moment there is a clear division between full time professors and the authorities of the faculty. They hide information from us on regular basis...[L]ast month external evaluators visited us. The dean told anything about it; we could not prepare things to obtain a good assessment. I do not understand why the dean did not tell us that evaluators were coming.

The comments of Dr. Acosta were acknowledged in the central administration.

Academic administrators were aware of the tensions and conflicts in the Faculty of Medicine. In meetings intended to discuss the accreditation of graduate programs, the academic administrator of the graduate division and the director of graduate programs and research often expressed their concerns about the conflictive climate in the Faculty

of Medicine and the need to find strategies to support the activities of full time professors working on the curricular design committee.

Full time faculty members in parochial Faculties also expressed concerns about the unwillingness of deans to provide accurate information to full time academics about decision making processes within the Faculty. Dr. Carolina Hernandez noted that the lack of communication between the dean and full time professors hindered the opportunities to implement and develop planning activities in the Faculty of Architecture.

Dr. Gomez and I worked on the formulation of the planning model of the Faculty ...[T]hey did not inform us what happened with the planning model: if the model was either approved or not, when the model had to be implemented, what kind of financial resources we had to implement the model, and how those funds could be invested. The dean says nothing...[T]he problem is that if the planning model is not implemented in time we are sanctioned, [the Ministry of Education will not provide federal funding]...[I]nformation does not circulate among people in the Faculty. We are ignorant of many issues. I view this situation as a huge problem.

Full time faculty members viewed problems of communication with deans as a deliberate action from authorities to hinder their participation in the construction of academic activities.

In addition to problems of communication with deans, full time faculty members struggled to engage in dialogue with part timers and old full time faculty members who did not undertake research activities. Dr. Israel Salgado in the Faculty of Agriculture explained that problems of communication with colleagues stemmed from the different ideological perspectives and styles of academic work held by members of each academic subgroup.

Dr. Monarres is an old fashioned and very conflictive professor. He is a person who does not help in the development of activities here in the Faculty. If he does not agree with something that one is doing, he does not address the problem or discuss it directly. Instead, he starts gossiping and creating obstacles. Sometimes we do not know how to deal with him. When we began to work on the design of our graduate program, Dr. Monarres did not like any of our proposals; he misused information and gave wrong messages to the dean.

The description offered by Dr. Salgado was validated by Dr. Jose Martinez who talked about ideological perspectives among faculty members who were not PROMEP professors.

Some professors who have been working in this Faculty for a long time have a very romantic perspective about agriculture as a career; they talk about the heritage of the Mexican revolution and the ownership of land, those kinds of things. These professors do not like participating in evaluation and accreditation

processes because they perceive evaluation practices as expressions of neoliberalism. (Journal entry, 01-11-2009)

The different perspectives that old and new professors held in parochial Faculties such as Agriculture made communication among academic colleagues difficult. Full time professors expressed regret that problematic communication hindered their opportunities to work with other professors for the betterment of academic life and the development of research activities.

***Leadership and decision making.*** Full time faculty members in parochial Faculties complained about deficient leadership among deans and the unilateral decision making in the definition of academic activities. Deans were described as people who did not have enough knowledge and professional training to organize academic functions (i.e., teaching, research, and service) and improve the quality of educational services. Deans in parochial Faculties held either a bachelor's or a master's degree. Full time faculty explained that deans' shortfalls not only harmed the academic growth and improvement of Faculties but also hindered their personal work. Deans struggled to understand the nature and requirements of research activities, which were the core of academic work among full time professors. Dr. Juan M. Garcia described the effects of the dean's deficient leadership upon the development of academic activities.

To work in this Faculty is quiet frustrating...[N]obody is interested in improving academic performance. Every professor is his own boss and works individually. The dean does not support anybody...[I] have been working alone on the design

of the master's program...Students complain about [bad professors] all the time but the dean does nothing.

Dr. Georgina Pacheco in the Faculty of Human Communication described the narrow interest of deans in the construction of graduate programs to encourage the development of research activities within the Faculty.

The dean was not interested in constructing the master's program. If we [Dr. Salazar and I] had not worked in the process of curricular design, the development of the program would have lasted forever...[I]t is really hard to try to change something in this Faculty; there are very few colleagues who want to participate and make improvement.

In parochial Faculties, full time professors had to work in isolation to develop projects for the improvement of academic life in the Faculty. They received limited support from deans.

Problems of leadership within parochial Faculties involved not only limited support and interest among deans to improve academic activities but also the construction of authoritarian forms of leadership based on the exclusion of full time professors in decision-making processes. Full time professors explained that one of the reasons why tensions and conflicts existed within Faculties was related to the dictatorial behaviors of deans who wanted to impose their perspective without taking into account the opinion or expertise of full time professors. Dr. Salvador Acosta from the Faculty of

Human Communication described the climate of exclusion in decision-making processes that full time professors experienced within the Faculty.

In some moments we are required to participate into the definition of academic activities in the Faculty whereas in others we are ignored entirely. Our opinion is not asked...[I] am not invited to make any decision about what faculty is going to be hired.

Another professor from the Faculty of Human Communication validated this sense of exclusion experienced among academics and explained the dictatorial approach that the dean enacted to define academic activities within the Faculty.

We do not want any kind of unqualified professor to be admitted to this Faculty. But we cannot make the final decision. When we have arguments with the dean she always tells, "I am the one who makes decisions here" (Dr. Georgina Pacheco, Faculty of Human Communication)

The descriptions provided by full time professors were repeated during informal conversations and during meetings to discuss the accreditation of graduate programs. During one of the meetings with full time professors participating in the curricular design committee to design the master's program in the Faculty of Human Communication, Dr. Sandoval explained that the conflict of leadership within the Faculty triggered conditions of isolation and individual work.

There were projects that Dr. Pacheco and I have suggested to the dean. We wanted to conduct research about the way students learn and develop some

workshops. However, the Dean was not interested; she stopped our project. I am not sure if she was not interested at all or if she did not understand the project. Anyway, I'd rather do my own things, without letting her know. If I tell her, she is going to hinder my work. (Journal entry, 09-22-2008)

Authoritarian behaviors were not exclusive of the Faculty of Human communication; full time professors from the Faculty of Medicine and Architecture described similar situations to that provided by Dr. Acosta and Dr. Pacheco. Dr. Garcia, from the Faculty of Medicine, noted: "What you find [in Faculty like this] are people who say 'this is my space where I can exert my power; I do whatever I want whenever I want.'"

### ***Cultural Values and Practices in Modern Faculties***

Four Faculties and two Research Centers out of the ten academic units that shape the sample of this study were modern Faculties. The Research Center on Environmental Education, the Research Center on Biotechnology, and the Faculties of Sciences, Pharmacy, Psychology, and Arts were characterized by their recent establishment as academic units of the university. The origins of modern Faculties were connected to the process of educational modernization promoted by the federal government during the late 1980s (Aguerrondo, 2004; Ibarra-Colado, 2002; Silva, 2000). Although full time faculty in modern Faculties noted that they needed better infrastructure, all but the Faculty of Arts had new buildings and better infrastructure than parochial Faculties. In modern Faculties, the number of full time faculty members

was greater than in parochial Faculties. The four Faculties and two Research Centers sustained a research-oriented academic culture that emphasized the development of research projects, the recruitment of graduate students, publication of articles and books, the connection between the undergraduate and graduate division, and the accreditation of master's and doctoral programs. The organization of academic life within modern Faculties was based on strategic planning.

**Academic body.** According to institutional statistics, the number of full time faculty members in modern Faculties was distributed in the following way: the Faculty of Sciences had 34 full time faculty and 25 part time faculty; the Research Center on Environmental Education had 30 full time professors and no part timers; there were 21 full time faculty members and no part time faculty in the Research Center on Biotechnology; the Faculty of Pharmacy had 16 full time and 27 part timers; the Faculty of arts and the Faculty of psychology each had 17 full time professors. The Faculty of Arts and the Faculty of Psychology had 41 part timers and the Faculty of Psychology had 69 part time faculty. As mentioned above, full time professors entered UM as part of PROMEP; they were holders of doctoral degrees, and defined themselves as researchers who engaged in teaching and service activities as part their work responsibilities. Dr. Eloisa Lopez from the Faculty of Environmental Research described the typical composition of the faculty body within modern Faculties.

Here [in the Research Center of Environmental Education] all faculty members are full time professors. Most of them are outsiders; they come from other



states such as Veracruz, Mexico City, Morelia. Some of them are foreign immigrants or they did their graduate studies in the United States or Spain. Thus, our professors have varied and rich perspectives. Sometimes such diversity can be challenging because everybody wants to be the leader but our experience has been good.

Dr. Pamela Pacheco, Director of the Research Center on Biotechnology, described full time professors as people who instilled a sense of modernity into the university. Dr. Pacheco, similar to other full time faculty members emphasized the high levels of training and credentials that characterized this population.

This research center has faculty members who belong both to the old and new university; however, all of us have a doctoral degree. The new university is shaped by all these new PROMEP professors who hold doctoral degrees and are members of the National System of Researchers. Some of the old professors worked hard to enroll in graduate school. Old professors such as me kept studying to attain the master's and the doctoral degree. We are 21 full time faculty members in this center.

Full time faculty members in modern Faculties were concerned with satisfying national requirements of research productivity, teaching, service, and mentoring. Both the productivity and performance of full time professors were assessed on the basis of the criteria established by federal programs such as PROMEP and the National System of Researchers (*Sistema Nacional de investigadores, SNI*). The National System of

Researchers (SNI) was established in 1984. According to the official website of the National Council of Technology and Research (CONACyT)<sup>9</sup>, the system was created to acknowledge, through economic incentives and a system of membership, the participation of academics in the processes of knowledge construction and the quality of their research activities and productivity.

***Research orientation and emphasis on graduate division.*** Full time faculty members and deans in modern Faculties endeavored to maintain research activities as central components in the definition and organization of academic activities. The construction and/or strengthening of graduate programs was one of the most common initiatives through which full time academics ensured the maintenance of the research-oriented academic culture within modern Faculties. Although full time professors in modern Faculties were interested in consolidating their graduate programs, they did not neglect the development of educational services at the undergraduate level. Dr. Bianca Aguilar, who was the dean of the Faculty of Science, stressed that the main purpose of the Faculty was the organization of structures to sustain research activities.

When this Faculty of Science was created, the mission was to prepare students to be able to do research...[T]his Faculty operates as a research center. We have 30 full time faculty members; all of them do research. We were the first Faculty constructed with this kind of structure; the number of part time faculty members is smaller than the number of full time faculty...[W]e want to have students who

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<sup>9</sup> <http://www.conacyt.mx/>

enroll in graduate programs and do research...[W]e work to have successful research projects and publish in international journals...[O]ur undergraduate programs are accredited.

Dr. Aguilar outlined three structures necessary for the attainment of research productivity: a significant number of full time faculty members, accredited undergraduate and graduate programs, and students who were willing to participate in research activities.

Other full time professors in modern Faculties confirmed that the three elements mentioned by Dr. Aguilar were central for the enactment of a research-oriented academic culture. Dr. Susana Rocha described several of the central features of the Faculty of Pharmacy. The Faculty aimed to provide high quality education services based on the accreditation of programs developed by full time professors.

We want our student to be able to excel in the labor market and do research; we want our programs at the undergraduate and graduate division to be accredited.

We are really interested in strengthening our graduate programs. We already have a doctoral program accredited by CONACyT. Full time professors participated in the construction of the doctoral program.

During informal conversations and meetings with full time faculty members, they noted that for them it was relevant to preserve and strengthen the research orientation of their Faculties to ensure their professional status. In one of the meetings to discuss the accreditation of the master's program in the Research Center on Biotechnology, a

full time professor emphasized: “In addition to the master’s program we already have, we have to develop the doctoral program. In the long run, it will be beneficial for all of us...[A]cademics who work in graduate programs accredited by CONACyT receive higher scores in evaluation processes either to become members or maintain membership into the National System of Researcher” (Journal entry, 11-18-2008)

***Intervention of the academic union.*** In modern Faculties, the academic union did not intervene in the definition of academic activities. Central issues related to the kind of faculty giving classes, the evaluation systems<sup>10</sup> to assess instructional services, and the nature of courses and programs offered in the Faculty were defined by deans and full time professors. During interviews, when deans and full time professors were asked about the role of the union within the academic life of the Faculty their answers were clear: “We do not have the participation of the union in the definition of activities in the Faculty.” Dr. Bianca Aguilar, dean and full time professor in the Faculty of Sciences, explained that her Faculty was not affected by the series of detrimental habits triggered by the academic union in other Faculties.

In our Faculty, nobody owns courses; courses are open to any professor who is qualified to give classes. Courses are not property of a person. Many other Faculties in this university live with that problem: part time faculty become

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<sup>10</sup> In addition to the federal evaluation system through which full time faculty members were assessed, PROMEP professors at the graduate level developed internal mechanisms to assess the instructional performance of full time faculty professors in graduate programs. As part of this internal mechanism, students were required to assess the instructional performance of their full time faculty. Full time faculty members described the implementation of this evaluation mechanism as a strategy to monitor the quality of teaching in graduate courses.

owners of specific courses...[O]ur Faculty was created on the basis of a different tradition. In other Faculties, part time faculty members earn a salary on the basis of the number of courses in which they can offer; thus they endeavor either to keep or increase the courses they have. This Faculty consists of full time faculty primarily.

Other full time professors in modern Faculties confirmed the absence of intervention of the union in the definition of academic activities. Dr. Pamela Pacheco, dean and full time professor in the Research Center on Biotechnology, highlighted that decisions about academic issues were made by full time faculty members.

The union does not make any decision about our graduate programs. The graduate division is supported by full time academics; they are responsible for giving courses in the doctoral program. We need to rely on full time faculty with appropriate qualifications to achieve positive assessments during the accreditation process.

Not only full time academics but also academic administrators knew that modern Faculties did not allow the participation of the academic union in the organization of structures to define the academic life of Faculties. The academic union did not have a central role in the definition of academic activities within modern Faculties because deans encouraged the participation of full time academics in the definition of Faculty regulations and academic activities such as the design of educational programs and the hiring of new professors.

***Academic planning.*** Strategic planning was a central value for the organization of academic activities in modern Faculties. Full time professors emphasized that planning practices provided certainty for the development of their work and the improvement of their Faculties. Full time professors found greater opportunities to incorporate their work projects and activities into Faculty and institutional projects when the academic life of the Faculty was based on planning practices. Dr. Eloisa Lopez, from the Research Center on Environmental research, described several components of the planning practices in her Faculty: the nature of their plan model, planning goals, and the role of participants.

We have a big project which constitutes our main point of reference to organize our individual and collective work. The project was developed by 20 out of 30 researchers who participate in this Faculty ...[T]he main idea of doing a project like this was to identify common goals, to improve our work conditions, to improve the academic performance of the Faculty, to develop partnerships with local agencies, and to bring together people from different disciplinary backgrounds.

Similar to the description provided by Dr. Lopez, other full time professors explained that planning practices in modern Faculties were relevant to maintain research activities as central components for academic life.

Planning practices were not only relevant for the organization and improvement of the Faculty as a collective but also for the definition of academics' personal

professional plans. Dr. Susana Rocha explained that her incorporation to the Faculty was part of a larger plan in which her position as full time professor was defined on the basis of the specific needs of the Faculty.

The creation of this Faculty was based on strategic planning. Our previous university president had a clear vision about what the Faculty was expected to be. The hiring of faculty members was enacted carefully. Our dean was a person with experience about how to coordinate academic life. She had a clear plan of development for this Faculty. When I joined the Faculty she justified and explained the purpose of my participation in this Faculty. I was not assigned randomly.

As described by Dr. Rocha, other full time academics noted that the success of strategic planning in the modern Faculty relied on two central factors: good leadership and the collaborative participation of colleagues.

### ***Social Factors in Modern Faculties***

Full time professors who worked in modern Faculties at UM explained that the social climate of their Faculties was defined by good leadership and a supportive climate based on collegial work. Explanations provided by full time faculty members were confirmed during observation of meetings to develop educational programs. Full time professors in modern Faculties worked with colleagues and deans to improve academic activities. Forms of interaction and communication were productive and displayed few problems. Full time professors emphasized the presence of a productive workplace

when their Faculty was supported by deans who behaved as academic leaders and were concerned with the improvement of the academic life and the construction of collegial work. Both tensions and confrontations between faculty members and deans were uncommon as part of the social dynamics observed within modern Faculties. Deans in modern Faculties enabled the participation of full time faculty members in decision-making processes to define academic activities.

***Communication and interaction patterns.*** Communication among full time professors, their deans, and colleagues was clear and less problematic than in parochial Faculties. Dialogue based on the clear interchange of ideas was common within modern Faculties. Full time professors explained that they could engage in direct communication with their deans and other colleagues in order to address any relevant academic issues within the Faculty. Dr. Vanessa Rodriguez, from the Faculty of Pharmacy, explained the form of communication between full time faculty and the dean.

Professors always express their opinions and they push the dean to improve the Faculty. Professors say to the dean “We need to modify the master’s programs; we need to improve the undergraduate programs; and we have to participate in the accreditation process.”

Dr. Rodriguez explained that communication between the dean and full time professors was central to ensure the accomplishment of academic activities. Full time faculty monitored and assessed the decisions and activities initiated by the dean. Every time



members of the faculty assembly did not agree with the dean's actions, they discussed it with him and other colleagues.

Dr. Eloisa Lopez from the Research Center on Environmental Education explained that sometimes it was difficult to be in agreement with other professors because of the diversity of ideologies and disciplinary backgrounds; however, there was a shared willingness to engage in dialogue to define common goals.

Professors in this Faculty are willing to participate...[A]mong professors there are some differences of opinion, sometimes we argue with one another, but after a while we are happy and together again, we keep working...[W]e meet to work on our project continually.

Full time faculty members described their Faculties as places where they could voice their ideas and make suggestions to improve academic life. They acknowledged that the process of communication was not without complications; however, they identified conditions to engage in dialogue to discuss academic concerns on the basis of their expertise as academics.

***Leadership and decision making.*** The academic performance of modern Faculties was supported by efficient strategies of leadership enacted by deans. Deans were key organizational actors that strengthened the research-oriented academic culture and the participation of full time academics in the construction of the Faculty. Deans did not take on a dictatorial form of authority; they were willing to share their

power with full time professors. Thus, full time professors participated in the definition of academic life and regulations for the Faculty.

In one of the meetings to discuss the evaluation results of the accreditation process of the master's program in the Faculty of Pharmacy, Dr. Vanessa Rodriguez explained that the interest of the academic body of the Faculty to achieve positive evaluation remarks was part of their efforts to offer high quality educational services and programs. Dr. Rodriguez emphasized that their concern with the quality of the academic life of the Faculty was initiated and sustained by both the former and the present dean of the Faculty.

Since the origins of the Faculty, it has always had excellent leaders. We had Dr. Rosales...[S]he encouraged collegial work...[S]he was a visionary; she defined long term goals. Dr. Rosales endeavored to comply with federal policies: she was concerned with the accreditation of programs, the development of the graduate division, and hiring full time academics...[O]ur present dean has followed the pathway that Dr. Rosales developed. The dean also promotes collegial work.

(Journal entry, 07-28-2008)

Not only Dr. Rodriguez but also Dr. Rocha emphasized that the academic strengths and virtues of the Faculty of Pharmacy were connected to the style of leadership of their former dean who supported the research-oriented academic culture of the Faculty. The dean in the Faculty of Pharmacy encouraged compliance with federal policies for university restructuring by increasing the number of full time professors, establishing

planning practices and collegial work, and ensuring the accreditation of educational programs. During informal conversations with academic administrators, faculty confirmed the positive effects of leadership upon the academic life of the Faculty of Pharmacy, which was acknowledged as one of the Faculties with the best indicators for academic performance across the university.

The development of other Faculties such as Arts illustrates the relevance of the participation of deans in the design and improvement of academic activities. Although the Faculty of Arts was characterized by an academic body with a significant number of full time faculty members, the Faculty did not attain adequate levels of academic performance until 2007. The Faculty did not have accredited programs at either the undergraduate level or the graduate division. The administrative system of the Faculty was problematic and full time professors were not organized to work on the definition of academic activities collaboratively. Dr. Leticia Rubio explained that the initiatives for change and innovation during the past three years were the result of the work project of the present dean.

The dean has played a central role in the process of change of the Faculty. She has a doctoral degree and she has a clear vision about the purpose and orientation of the Faculty. She was a former part time faculty here, then she worked as Faculty chair, and finally she became a full time professor and dean...[S]he helped with the process of curricular design of the undergraduate programs...[B]ecause of the number of years she has been here, she knows the

evolution and dynamic of the Faculty ...[T]he dean has worked very hard to improve this Faculty.

As described by Dr. Rubio, deans in modern Faculties were holders of doctoral degrees. In addition to their administrative position, deans were appointed as full time faculty members. Thus, deans were knowledgeable of the needs and demands for the integration of three central functions of academic work: research, teaching, and service.

Deans viewed other full time professors as their colleagues rather than subordinates. Thus, deans tried to incorporate other full time professors into the definition of academic dynamics and decisions within the Faculty. Deans in modern Faculties enabled the construction of academic leadership as a form of authority based on the participation and expertise of full time faculty. The description of Dr. Vanessa Rodriguez explained the nature of academic leadership in modern Faculties.

Full time professors define the orientation of this Faculty; we make the central decisions here. We make decisions about curricular design, the definition of Faculty norms...[S]ometimes part time faculty participate in the decision making process, but their participation is very rare.

In modern Faculties such as Pharmacy, Sciences, Arts, Biotechnology, Environmental Education, full time academics perceived themselves as having a central role in the definition of academic regulations and education programs. Dr. Eloisa Lopez described her participation in the definition of the academic orientation and the form of work within the Research Center on Environmental Education. She explained that the dean

and full time professors worked together in the organization of a project that integrated the various perspectives and strengths of the members of the faculty body.

All professors who work here participated in the design of the project. Thus the project, which is going to be coordinated by our dean, is a product of every one of us. The project is flexible; we can change it. However, there is a shared commitment to achieve the goals stated in the project.

Shared authority rather than an authoritarian form of control was a distinctive feature among modern Faculties. The explanation provided by Dr. Pacheco is a suitable illustration of the ways in which academic leadership were constructed within modern Faculties.

Let's say that 25% of full time professors in this research center are individualistic; the remaining 75% work in collaboration...[W]e have a common goal; we work together. That is the reason why we have been able to accredit our master's program. There is a shared project and there is a leader who is suggesting the direction...[W]e are certain that we have to work as a team...[I] know that power cannot be centralized. Everyone has to participate. I, as a dean, always work side by side with my colleagues, so they can see that I am also working hard...[W]e have to communicate clearly...[A]ll information has to be shared.

Deans such as Dr. Pacheco had a clear understanding about the relevance of collaborative work and endeavored to promote it. One of the central goals among deans

in modern Faculties at UM was the accreditation of educational programs, specifically master's and doctoral programs. Thus deans ventured to organize their academic faculty body and work with them to achieve the accreditation of programs. During weekly meetings to work on the development of graduate programs, deans from modern Faculties worked along with full time members participating in curricular design committees. Deans provided opinions, searched for information about how to improve educational programs, and shared ideas with the faculty members to obtain their approval for curricular initiatives.

### **Summary**

Two principal findings of this investigation were explained in this chapter. Full time faculty identified as researchers explained the difficulties in sustaining and negotiating their academic identity as researchers at the university. Full time academics negotiated their academic identity within two types of Faculties—parochial and modern. Each type of Faculty provided considerably different academic structures and norms for the negotiation of professional identity. The next chapter extends this discussion to answer the second research question: what are the practices that enable full time faculty to negotiate their academic identity? Whereas chapter four describes the series of organizational and socio-cultural factors that framed the negotiation of academic identity, chapter five explains the activities through which full time professors constructed their academic work to respond to contextual factors and sustain a self-definition as researchers. Findings are organized to show the ways in which full time

faculty members negotiated their academic identity through an active participation in institutional service activities that diminished their dedication to research. Full time faculty members engaged in committee work as a strategy to address problematic contextual factors and sustain their self-definition as researchers.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **THE CONSTRUCTION OF ACADEMIC WORK: PRACTICES FOR THE NEGOTIATION OF ACADEMIC IDENTITY**

Chapter four described the socio-cultural context in which full time faculty members (i.e., PROMEP professors) at UM negotiated their academic identity. UM had comprehensive organizational structures that affected the ways in which full time faculty members developed their work; however, full time professors endeavored to sustain a self definition as professionals within two specific academic structures: parochial and modern Faculties. Each type of faculty provided different socio-cultural conditions for the maintenance of academic identity among PROMEP professors. This chapter expands the findings of the study by answering the second research question: What are the work practices through which full time faculty negotiate their academic identity at UM? Chapter five explains the series of activities full time faculty members participated in as part of their academic functions at the university and the ways in which their participation in these activities intervened in the negotiation of their academic identity.

Three main findings are explained in this chapter. The first finding is related to the ways in which full time professors in parochial and modern Faculties at UM perceived and defined their three central academic functions: research, teaching, and service. Full time faculty members viewed research as the most important and satisfying of their academic functions. Teaching was viewed as an activity that full time professors



in this study were not enthusiastic about, yet had to engage in as part of their academic role. Finally, full time professors viewed service activities as both a burden that hindered their opportunities to perform their research and teaching functions and a necessary part of their work if they wanted to improve the academic performance of the university. To maintain their self-definition as academics, full time faculty members had to participate in evaluation processes to assess their performance and productivity in each one of their three academic roles. Research productivity and effective teaching were central dimensions for evaluation.

The second finding is related to the participation of full time faculty members in institutional service as part of their academic work. In the work contract of full time professors, service activities were expected to have a peripheral role in professors' workload (i.e., 10% of 40 hours per week); however, in everyday practice, full time faculty members' participation in committee work became as relevant and demanding as either research or teaching. Although full time professors in both parochial and modern Faculties stressed their reluctance to participate in committee work, they engaged actively in institutional service activities in order to create organizational conditions that facilitated the development of research and teaching. Full time faculty members participated in curricular design committees aimed to coordinate the design and accreditation of graduate programs as part of the process of university restructuring. Participation in curriculum design committees required full time faculty members to learn educational principles and strategies to develop graduate programs.

The third finding suggests that the enactment of institutional service activities has a detrimental effect on the ways in which full time faculty members developed their research and teaching activities. Both the professional status and remuneration of full time faculty members in parochial and modern Faculties became at risk when full time faculty members had to postpone their research and teaching agenda to satisfy institutional service activities. Full time faculty members in parochial Faculties had to deal with these detrimental effects without support from their colleagues or deans. Full time professors in modern faculties were unsatisfied with the effects of participation in institutional service activities; however, they felt supported by their colleagues and deans.

### **Definition and Organization of Academic Functions**

Full time faculty members in parochial and modern Faculties conveyed that teaching and mentoring, research, and service were their core academic functions; however, they struggled to find a balance in the number of hours devoted to each academic function. Institutional documents were clear about the number of hours that full time faculty were required to devote to research and teaching; yet, these documents were ambiguous in noting the number of hours that full time faculty had to dedicate to service activities and what these activities specifically entailed. The university by-laws indicated that full time faculty members had to work 40 hours per week: approximately 28 to 32 of those hours had to be devoted to research and about 8 to 12 hours to teaching and tutoring. The by-laws did not refer to the specific number of

hours that full time academics had to dedicate to service activities as part of their 40-hour workload. Dr. Estela Gonzalez from the Faculty of Agriculture gave a representative illustration about the ways in which full time professors talked about their engagement in research, teaching, and service activities.

The work contract points out that we have to work 40 hours per week, which consists of 50% research, 30% teaching, 10% tutoring, and 10% service...[T]here is a continual effort to maintain these percentages; one says “I am going to focus on research, I will avoid getting involved in service activities that take a lot of time;” but at the end one has to participate in committees both inside and outside the faculty because it is necessary for the university functioning.

As described by Dr. Gonzales, full time faculty members provided similar percentages on the distribution of each academic function in their workload. The 18 full time professors interviewed concurred with three conditions related to their work practices: first, their status as academics was based on their engagement mainly in research activities; second, their participation in institutional service activities was difficult to define and carry out on a daily basis; and finally, the maintenance of an optimal balance in the number of hours devoted to each academic function was a problematic process.

Full time faculty members who entered UM during the 1990s perceived research as the most important of their academic functions. Dr. Georgina Pacheco from the Faculty of Human Communication emphasized that her decision to become an academic at a public state university was related to her interest in conducting research.

My plan was to work at a university as a strategy to do research. I knew that this university did not have a good academic level, but I decided to work here anyway. Last year I was totally disappointed with all the problems going on in this Faculty. However, the research grant that I got from CONACyT kept me motivated to work. Doing research is what I am interested in. If I could, I would only focus on research, attending to conferences, and working with students.

Full time professors in this study were trained, through their graduate studies, to engage in research activities and become productive scholars both at the national and international levels. As a result, these professors looked for opportunities to conduct research, acquire research grants, and mentor graduate students as future researchers.

As explained in the previous chapter, the majority of full time faculty members in parochial Faculties, experienced frustration when the climate of the Faculties where they worked did not support research as part of the academic functions of the faculty. Dr. Israel Salgado from the Faculty of Agriculture described the typical way in which PROMEP professors perceive themselves, the relevance of their research activities, and the difficulty they experienced in adapting to the organizational climate at UM.

PROMEP professors come from prestigious universities. We are members of the National System of Researchers, and we have received research grants. When we were done with our graduate studies and started to search for a job in the labor market, the expectation was “I will work at a university, I will do research, and I will apply for research grants.” As graduates, we have an ideal. Then, we

entered to this university and it was a total shock. We have been trained to do research and we have to give classes as well...[Being at this university] is not the ideal we expected; however, we keep working because we can develop opportunities to do research here. I like doing research pretty much; sometimes I do not like teaching. Teaching is hard.

Dr. Salgado described experiences common among other faculty members interviewed in this study: the difficulty of adapting to a small university where the development of research activities was embryonic and asymmetric across the university campus.

Consistent with literature about professors' roles and workload (Grubb, et al., 1999; Lane, 1985), all full time faculty members in this study stressed that teaching was the second most important job-related activity after research. When full time faculty members were asked to choose which job activity was the most satisfying, all of them concurred that it was research. Dr. Carolina Hernandez from the Faculty of Architecture described her limited interest in teaching.

I do not like teaching really...I like research better. I like to stay at my office to read and write. However, I have to give classes, a lot of classes actually. Yet, teaching is part of my job responsibilities. I do not know whether or not I am a good instructor. My students told me that they learn in my classes.

In informal conversations and interviews full time faculty members indicated that part of their limited interest and satisfaction with teaching activities was related to the lack of instructional training. All full time faculty members had doctoral degrees in different

disciplinary areas; however, approximately 90% of them did not take any training courses related to education, instructional techniques, or pedagogy. Although 2 out of 18 full time faculty members were enthusiastic about teaching, the total of PROMEP professors concurred that teaching was part of their institutional responsibilities and they had to accept this condition.

Full time faculty members at UM were also required to take part in institutional service that involved committee work to improve the academic performance of the university. All full time faculty members who participated in this study were reluctant to participate in institutional service activities. Full time professors explained that service activities were troublesome because of the excessive administrative work and time required. The main concern among PROMEP professors was that participation in institutional service activities hindered their opportunities to engage in research. Dr. Estela Gonzalez explained the reasons for her lack of enthusiasm but resignation to participate.

There is campus committee work that takes a lot of time, for example the modification of educational programs...[I]f we cannot finish our research duties because of all the service activities we do, then we have to work in the afternoon, the weekends, at night, anytime...[T]he work on the development of the master's and doctoral program of this Faculty required a lot of time. However, someone has to do it. Committee work requires time; thus, one has to find more time.

All full time professors stressed that the main reason for their negativity toward service was a function of the excessive administrative work involved in the committee work. Full time professors acknowledged that service activities, such as the design of educational programs, were relevant for the academic functioning and performance of the university.

In December 2008, during a meeting to discuss the process of curriculum design at the graduate division, the academic administrator of the Office of Research and Graduate programs explained the difficulties they had in persuading full time professors to participate in curriculum design committee work. The following is an excerpt<sup>11</sup> of the conversation between the academic administrator (A) and the curriculum consultant (B). The discussion addressed the second phase of the process of accreditation of graduate programs. Here, the administrator acknowledges the negative views of full time professors toward committee work and the approach he has to take to compel full time professors to work.

A: Full time professors know that the new institutional policy is to accredit as many graduate programs as possible; thus, they have to participate and help us.

B: How did you asked them to participate? What did you say to them?

A: I told them that [the curriculum design committee] would involve a lot of work but they would be able to handle this if they worked in collaboration with other colleagues.

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<sup>11</sup> This quotation was part of the field notes taken during the researcher's role as participant observer.

B: How did they react to your comment?

A: They were very hesitant to participate; they complained that in addition to the work in the curriculum design committee, they would have to perform all their regular research and teaching workload. We told them, “We understand your concerns, but there is no option. We have to accredit our programs. In the long run it is going to be convenient for you to work in an accredited program.”

Although full time professors lacked enthusiasm for participating in committee work, there were institutional pressures that impinged upon them. Full time professors viewed service activities as problematic because committee work led to an imbalance in their workload. As it will be explained in the following sections, engagement in service activities, such as curriculum design, required more than 4 hours of the 40 hours per week required by the employment contract. Indeed, service activities took significantly more hours of their time, and thus they were obliged to perform their research activities over and above the stipulated employment contracted time.

All full time faculty members indicated that they worked more than 40 hours per week to meet indicators of performance and productivity in each one of their academic functions in order to conform to expectations federally and institutionally for state public universities. Furthermore, full time professors both in parochial and modern Faculties complained about the demands of the evaluation processes used to maintain their professional status. Full time faculty members were assessed to determine their level of productivity as scholars at national and international levels, the effectiveness of



their instructional practice, and their participation in institutional service activities. Full time professors from different Faculties noted the “overwhelming” demands of an evaluation system that required them to produce knowledge and publish, give classes, and serve the institution. Dr. Eloisa Lopez from the Research Center in Environmental Education noted that her value as a professional was linked to her participation in evaluation processes.

We cannot avoid evaluations; we have to participate. Sometimes I want to cry; it is too much work. [The pressure of evaluation] makes you feel mediocre sometimes if you do not produce what you are expected to do.

Full time professors such as Dr. Lopez worked intensely to perform all their academic functions and satisfy national indicators of productivity and quality. Dr. Estela Gonzalez, from the Faculty of Agriculture, concurred with the opinion expressed by Dr. Lopez. Dr. Gonzalez described the distress that evaluation caused academics.

If you choose to become a full time professor, then you have to participate in evaluation processes. [Being evaluated] is a lot of pressure and stress because you have to write. Writing is always stressful, but you have to write in order to publish in peer reviewed journals. We have to devote more than 40 hours per week to be able to publish.

Although full time faculty members were made discontent by with a system of academic evaluation that created pressure and distress, they noted that their status and salary as researchers depended upon the quality of their productivity as scholars. Full time

professors were assessed by CONACyT, the Ministry of Education through the Program for Faculty Enhancement (PROMEP), and the university itself on a yearly basis to improve base salaries and provide supplemental earnings.

### **Institutional Service Activities as an Academic Function**

Full time faculty members were hesitant about their participation in institutional service activities; however, the 18 full time faculty members who participated in this study were appointed by their deans to participate in committee work in order to create organizational conditions that facilitated research and teaching. Full time faculty members accepted participation in curricular design committees aimed to coordinate the design and accreditation of graduate programs as part of the process of university restructuring. Full time faculty members worked on curriculum design committees while maintaining the required number of hours they had to devote to teaching, research, and mentoring responsibilities. Dr. Carolina Pacheco, from the Faculty of Architecture, expressed concern about her participation in the curriculum design committee and the problems in sustaining her other academic functions: research and teaching.

We have to comply with teaching activities, the research projects funded by PROMEP, and the internal evaluation system here at the university. We have our responsibilities with the National System of Researchers. So, how are you supposed to do all these things? And we also have to do this curricular design thing.

All full time faculty members who participated in curriculum design committees emphasized that the nature of the institutional service activities they were required to perform increased the pressures that professors had to deal with on a daily basis in order to achieve optimal levels of individual productivity and effective performance in research and teaching.

When asked about the reasons they participated in committee work, full time faculty members explained, “We want to construct a better university; someone has to do it.” Full time faculty members expressed regret about UM’s ineffective organizational structures (i.e., bureaucratic system, clear mission statement, and normative framework) for facilitating the enactment of institutional service activities; however, they viewed their participation in committee work as a central element to the improvement of academic performance at UM. The answer from the director of the Research Center in Biotechnology is representative of the reasons that full time professors at UM used to explain their participation in committee work.

We are concerned with providing good education to our students. We are interested in complying with the indicators required by CONACyT and PROMEP...[W]e search for doctors who belong to the National System of Researchers...[W]e want to upgrade our programs, to increase graduate rates, to enable students to conduct research, do their dissertations on time, and publish. If we do all of that, then we achieve higher levels of productivity which in turn enable us to receive more federal funds.

Full time faculty members explained that in spite of the difficulties embedded in the development of institutional service activities, it was necessary that someone works to improve the academic structures at UM.

PROMEP professors expressed mixed feelings about their participation in committee work. On the one hand, they knew that the development of institutional service activities was critical to promote academic competitiveness. On the other hand, full time faculty members knew that involvement in committee work required them to invest a substantial number of hours that could otherwise be used for research or teaching. Dr. Israel Salgado from the Faculty of Agriculture described both the positive and negative aspects of his experience in the curriculum design committee.

I worked on the curricular design of graduate programs. I worked on writing the document. It was a satisfying and challenging experience. We found oppositional behaviors among our colleagues at the Faculty; we had to deal with some conflicts. At the end, we were able to make agreements. I know that implementing curricular initiatives will be difficult; however, it is necessary to continue this process. We have to find solutions if we want to change things in this Faculty of Agriculture.

Beyond the problematic issues that full time faculty members who participated in curricular design committees found, they emphasized their commitment to the construction and improvement of academic life at UM. Faculty tried to account for the positive outcomes that their participation in committee work would bring to the

university and themselves as professors in the long run, even though in the short term they did not see personal benefits from their involvement in committee work.

### ***Origins and Nature Committee Work***

Both curriculum design and accreditation of educational programs in the graduate division was a central concern and goal for the central administration beginning in 2007. Rodolfo Ocejo, the Secretary of the Academic Division, explained that in January 2008, the university president required Dr. Oscar Tamayo, Director of the Office of Research and Graduate Programs, to work along with deans and full time faculty members on the renewal and accreditation of master's and doctoral programs in their Faculties.

During informal conversations with the academic administrator of the graduate division, she explained that during May and June 2008, Dr. Tamayo and deans from various Faculties at the university appointed a curricular design committee comprised of full time faculty members (i.e., PROMEP professors) to work on the creation of new master's or doctoral programs, and the renovation of existing programs and their accreditation. Deans had the final decision with regards to the nature and composition of curriculum design committees. The number of full time faculty members per committee was different across Faculties. In some Faculties, such as the Faculty of Agriculture, four PROMEP professors participated. In the Faculty of Human Communication, the curriculum design committee consisted of two PROMEP professors.

Full time faculty members received no additional compensation to their salary for their participation in the process of curricular design and accreditation.

From July 7<sup>th</sup> to August 20<sup>th</sup>, Dr. Tamayo, the director of Office of Research and Graduate Programs, had weekly meetings with deans and curriculum design committees to talk about institutional policies, the necessity of improving the academic competitiveness of the university in the graduate division, and the expected results for the process of accreditation. From August to December 2008, full time faculty members in curriculum design committees worked on the development of master's and doctoral programs both in modern and parochial Faculties.

The entire process of curriculum design and the accreditation of master's and doctoral programs in the graduate division lasted 19 months, from June 2008 to March 2010. The findings in this chapter are based on the observation of the patterns of participation of full time faculty members in curricular design committees during the first 6 months of the total period of time that the process lasted. These six months were the first stage in the process of accreditation of graduate programs. During this time, full time professors from 10 Faculties worked on the creation and modification of 12 graduate programs (i.e., master's and doctoral).

The six-month period of curriculum design in which PROMEP professors participated consisted of three processes. The first involved writing an extensive document (approximately 150 pages) that described the nature, purpose, and curricular structure of the master's and/or doctoral program. As part of the second process,

members of the curriculum design committee had to discuss the curricular initiatives described in the document (i.e., educational program) with their colleagues and collect their opinions. Finally, once the document was discussed within each Faculty, members of the curriculum design committee applied for approval of the initiatives from authority bodies at the university. The curriculum design committee had to defend the nature of the educational program and justify whether or not the programs contained originality, pertinence, quality, and effectiveness.

### ***Dynamics and Practices of Committee Work***

There were two central practices that full time faculty members developed as part of their participation in curriculum design committees. Each practice entailed different requirements and challenges for full time faculty members. The first practice was information seeking which consisted of self-initiated learning activities aimed to understand issues of curriculum theory and how to design an educational program. The second practice was the discussion of ideas with colleagues within Faculties. Full time professors had to communicate the nature of the curricular initiatives developed by the curriculum design committee and receive feedback and a sense of general agreement.

Full time faculty members in curriculum design committees attended weekly meetings with a curricular consultant in the central administration to learn how to define the components and structures of the master's and/or doctoral program to be accredited. As part of the expected outcomes of these meetings with the curriculum

consultant<sup>12</sup>, full time faculty members had to write a document (i.e., approximately 150 pages) that explained the educational program: educational principles guiding it, justification for its creation, instructional techniques, student evaluation techniques, curricular map, infrastructure, and other elements. During meetings with the curriculum consultant (i.e., the researcher as participant observer), PROMEP professors realized that they lacked knowledge about how to design an educational program. Common questions asked by full time faculty members during meetings included: “What is a learning experience exactly?” “What do you mean by learning environment?” “How can we identify the educational approach we want to use to design our master’s and doctoral program?” “I do not really understand what a curricular map is. Could you explain this to us?” “How can we decide the number of credits per course?” “What is an instructional technique?”

Members of curricular design committees engaged in activities of self-initiated learning to address their lack of knowledge about curriculum, education, and learning theory, elements that served as a frame of reference to develop an educational program. Self-initiated learning experiences included the reading of articles and books about education, teaching, and curriculum. They also included talking to other professors at the university who had experience in the development of educational programs, searching for federal and institutional policies and statistical information that

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<sup>12</sup> As part of the process of participant observation, the researcher’s role as curriculum consultant was based on daily interactions with faculty members from different Faculties. The purpose of these interactions was to support full time faculty members in the process of curriculum design of graduate programs.



provided a framework for the development of their curriculum initiatives, and locating and analyzing examples (i.e., documents) of accredited educational programs developed in other Faculties at UM or in other universities. Dr. Vanessa Rodriguez from the Faculty of Pharmacy explained the difficulty she found with her work in the curriculum design committee. She talked about her lack of knowledge to develop an educational program and the way in which she addressed the situation.

I realized that to [develop a master's and doctoral program] we have to know about disciplinary areas and topics that we did not study before: credit systems, educational policies, criteria for curricular design, social relevance and social impact...[I] had to invest a lot of time in learning about this new stuff which I had no idea...[I]f I had studied education I could have written a research article about all my experience in this process; unfortunately, I did not study education.

Similar to Dr. Rodriguez, other full time faculty members from other Faculties described that they had to gain knowledge of educational topics. In November 2008, during a meeting aimed to discuss the development of the master's program in natural sciences, Dr. Pamela Pacheco, from the Research Center in Biotechnology, described the activities she did in order to develop the new program.

I talked to coordinators of other graduate programs. I asked them how they developed their program. Conducting interviews to find out information was not part of my job; yet, I think that it is necessary to listen to other experiences and

learn from them. I asked them, “What are you doing?” “How is your program working? Has the program evolved? I went to the offices of CONACyT in Mexico City to ask about a couple of concerns I had with regards to our specific conditions...[A]fter all that, we wrote the document. We have to invest a lot of time because the field of education is not our area of expertise.

Dr. Alonso described the sources of information that he and the other members of the curriculum design committee collected to develop the master’s and doctoral program of the Faculty of Agriculture.

I looked for information and read a lot of things. When the curriculum consultant gave us her comments, we did not understand many of them. We did not know how to address her observations. We said “let’s find a similar program to develop some preliminary ideas.” I have various files in my computer with all the information we collected. I burned three CDs with all the information we gathered to write the justification of the program. Sometimes we read a lot of text in order to write only one page. It was exhausting

Full time faculty members had a strong disciplinary background in areas such as biology, biochemistry, politics, arts, humanities, or geography; however, they struggled to grasp educational terms such as “flexible curriculum” or “learning experience.” Each time these academics searched for information that enabled them to develop the curricular structures for a master’s or a doctoral program they were engaged in self-

initiated learning. Full time professors in both parochial and modern faculties reported similar forms of self-initiated learning activities.

The second practice developed by full time faculty members who worked on the development of master's and doctoral programs was the discussion of curriculum initiatives with colleagues in their Faculties. The purpose of discussions was for the curriculum design committee to obtain approval, support, and feedback from their colleagues. Members of curriculum design committees devoted time to develop strategies for the negotiation of agreements and effective mechanisms to present information to their colleagues. The discussion of curricular initiatives was experienced by those on curriculum design committees from parochial and modern Faculties in distinctive ways.

In parochial Faculties such as Medicine, Architecture, Human Communication, and Agriculture, full time professors had to learn to overcome tensions between and oppositions among colleagues in order to continue the process of development of master's and doctoral programs. When members of curriculum design committees in parochial Faculties were asked to describe their experience in the design of graduate programs, the majority recalled the negotiation of conflicts and tensions as part of their central activities during the process of curriculum design. Dr. Jose Martinez from the Faculty of Agriculture described his participation in the curriculum design committee and the main components of his experiences: his appointment as a member of the committee, the nature of participation of some of his colleagues, the outcomes, and the

challenges. Dr. Martinez noted that discussion with colleagues was part of the process to develop their graduate programs.

I was required to participate in the curriculum design committee. I said yes...[I] worked along with other three full time professors on the formulation and editing of the document of the master's and doctoral program. I experienced all the phases of the process. I think the experience was satisfactory; however, there was resistance within the Faculty. It was not easy; there was a lot of confrontation with some colleagues. Fortunately, at the end we addressed the diversity of perspectives.

Dr. Emiliano Alonso, another full time professor from the Faculty of Agriculture, expanded the comments offered by Dr. Martinez. Dr. Alonso described the negotiation strategies that he developed during the discussions with his colleagues in order to obtain approval and support from them.

At the beginning, all professors wanted to impose their particular perspective about how to modify the [master's and doctoral] program, then I realized that I had to work as a mediator. I allowed everyone to express his or her opinion to create a climate of trust. I realize that we had to listen to everyone and be patient. There were meetings in which we did not make any decision; we spent most of the time arguing. At the end, we started to understand each other's perspective...[O]nce we formulated an initiative about the program, I explained it to the other professors of the Faculty in detail: "This is going to be a flexible

educational program; you will be able to participate in the program. At this moment, I cannot tell you what class you are going to give.” I presented the curricular initiatives in the best way possible...[S]lowly, our colleagues realized that there was nothing wrong or prejudicial with the changes we suggested; they realized that everyone could participate...[I]f during the process someone had a suggestion, if a professor said, “I think you have to include something like this,” I told him, “Would you mind writing your suggestion in one or two pages”

As described by Dr. Alonso, the discussion of curricular initiatives within Faculties required members of the curriculum design committee to make sense of their role in the development of graduate programs (“I realized that maybe I had to work as a mediator”) and to consider strategies to negotiate their suggestions and integrate the feedback of their colleagues. Dr. Alonso pointed out the relevance of strategies such as “listen to everyone,” “let them express their ideas,” and “present the curricular initiatives in the best way possible.”

Similar narratives were conveyed by PROMEP professors in other parochial Faculties such as Human Communication. Dr. Salvador Salazar explained the conflicts they overcame and the strategies he and Dr. Georgina Pacheco used to design their master’s program.

The creation of the master’s program was the result of all our effort to encourage everyone to support the project...[W]e undertook various risks and conflicts...[P]eople in the faculty were afraid to change things...[W]e had to insist

on the benefits of the project...[T]he dean did not want to create the master's program...[T]he support we received was intermittent; our goal was to develop forms of collaboration, to create opportunities of reflection, argumentation, and presentation of different ideas to make decisions.

Both the narrative of Dr. Alonso and Dr. Salazar illustrate several of the primary strategies that full time professors who were curriculum committee members had to learn and sustain in order to negotiate the acceptance of their curricular initiatives within their Faculties. Strategies of negotiation consisted of activities to promote dialogue, reflection, and mutual understanding among colleagues and deans. In parochial faculties, the use of negotiation strategies enabled full time professors in curriculum design committees to reduce the feelings of threat that some of their colleagues in their Faculties perceived during the development of graduate programs.

Members of curriculum design committees in parochial Faculties requested support from Dr. Oscar Tamayo, the Director of the Office of Research and Graduate Programs, to mediate conflictive situations or the lack of collaboration and support from deans and other colleagues. Multiple times from July to December 2008, Dr. Tamayo attended meetings in Faculties such as Medicine, Agriculture, Architecture, and Human Communication to explain to the faculty assembly of each Faculty the relevance of the process of curriculum design and the necessity of their participation and support in the activities developed by the curriculum design committee.

Curriculum design committees in modern Faculties, in contrast, did not experience climates of tension and conflict in developing their initiatives to create or modify master's or doctoral programs. In modern Faculties, full time faculty members found support and collaboration from their colleagues because they were interested in the improvement of graduate programs. PROMEP professors in curriculum design committees in modern Faculties noted that part of their decision to participate in institutional service activities was based on the social support their colleagues could provide. Dr. Veronica Rodriguez, from the Faculty of Pharmacy, emphasized that the development of graduate programs was highly demanding; however, she accepted the work because her colleagues agreed to support her.

Professors in this Faculty seek the greatest benefit for our Faculty...[O]ur basic principle is collaborative work...[As part of the curriculum design committee] I had to coordinate modifications to our master's and doctoral programs...[I] have been working on this for two years already...[T]he academic assembly appointed me...[M]y colleagues promised to support me, I accepted the position because they were going to help me...[T]his work is not related to my field of expertise, which is chemistry. Certainly, working on the development of our graduate programs requires me to use time that I could use to do my research.

Although members of curricular design committees in modern Faculties did not have to deal with conflicts and tension, they had to devote time to establish forms of dialogue and to coordinate the participation of their colleagues. Dr. Eloisa Lopez, from the

Research Center in Educational Environment, described the process through which they worked with colleagues in the research center to obtain their opinions.

We [the curriculum design committee] are working on the formulation of regulations for our master's program. We invited our colleagues to participate in the process. We told them that they had a month to let us know their comments, suggestions, and doubts about what we were doing. They did not respond to our call immediately; we had to send the message three times...[W]e took notes of the comments they sent; however, we did not receive a lot of feedback. When we finished the final draft of the regulations, we e-mailed it to them again. We received more comments this time. We are working on integrating the feedback they gave us.

The process of communication described by Dr. Lopez was time-consuming; it required members of the curriculum design committee to think about strategies to make the process of development of graduate programs a public process so that all their colleagues could know about it. The discussion of curriculum initiatives in modern Faculties required full time faculty members in the curriculum design committee to learn strategies to communicate with colleagues effectively: send clear messages to everyone, formulate direct questions, integrate the opinions provided by others, and convene meetings.

Although full time faculty members in modern Faculties did not experience major conflicts or confrontations with their colleagues and dean, they had to invest time



in the enactment of negotiation strategies that encouraged and organized the participation of their colleagues. Full time professors who developed the master's program in natural sciences devoted one day (i.e. from 10:00 a.m. to 4:p.m.) to discuss curricular initiatives with their colleagues. Members of the curriculum design committee chose a convenient date and place for everyone; they rented a conference room, and ordered food. During the discussion all participants in the meeting read and discussed the progress (e.g., ideas, written paragraphs, sections to be expanded or deleted) of the document that described the master's program. In modern Faculties, the work organized by members of curriculum design committees was facilitated by deans because it was expected that deans would work with faculty members to discuss curriculum initiatives.

Both self-initiated learning (i.e., information seeking practices) and negotiation strategies (i.e., discussion practices) consisted of a series of activities that full time faculty members in curriculum design committees created to ensure the development of master's and doctoral programs. As described by the majority of full time professors in curriculum design committees, the process of learning and implementing these activities required a substantial time commitment. Contrary to the statements in the employment contract, institutional service did not consist of 10% of the workload (i.e., 4 hours per week) of full time professors who participated in curriculum design committees. Members of curriculum design committees spent at least 10 hours or more of their week to work on the development of graduate programs: they had to meet the

curriculum consultant (i.e., the researcher as participant observer) once per week, locate and read articles, books, or websites to learn about education topics, write a 150-page document, engage in discussion with colleagues, gather colleagues' opinions, and edit the final draft of the document.

### ***The Effects of and Justification for Committee Work***

The enactment of institutional service activities was detrimental for full time faculty members in parochial and modern Faculties. The forms of participation described above led to an imbalance in the workload of full time faculty members. This imbalance turned into stressful work conditions, the delay or cancellation of research activities, and potential loss of salary as a result of the lack of research production. Although the development of graduate programs was beneficial for the Faculty as a group, faculty members as individuals were affected negatively by the time they invested in committee work. Dr. Vanessa Rodriguez in the Faculty of Pharmacy explained the effects of her participation in the development of the master's and doctoral programs of her Faculty

This is the last year that I will participate [in the development of graduate programs]. I am going to apply for my sabbatical. If I do not do it, I will lose my membership in the National System of Researchers (SNI). If I want to preserve my earnings and be promoted to the next rank position in the SNI, then I better hurry up and publish. I know that institutional service and administrative activities do not provide any rewards, perhaps some minimal benefits...[T]hose

professors who do not participate in service activities have greater productivity in research than I do.

Other members of curriculum design committees described similar experiences. Dr. Guadalupe Rosas worked mainly by herself on the development of the new master's and doctoral programs in the Faculty of Psychology. Because of the level of work involved as the sole person involved, Dr. Rosas wanted to end her role in the development of graduate programs. However, neither the dean nor the university president accepted her resignation; thus, she was obliged to continue to work on the process of curriculum design. Dr. Rosas resigned herself to carry out this committee work. She talked about the negative effects of committee work upon her job-related activities.

Participating in campus committee work has had very a negative influence upon my work...[Institutional service] takes time away from me; I learned to adapt to this situation. What I have to do is come to the university on Saturdays to compensate for the time I lost by doing service activities...[I] have to mentor a student; she has to finish her dissertation. Sometimes I have to stay in my office until 10 p.m. to dedicate a couple of hours to work with her during the afternoon. After my meetings with her I continue doing institutional service activities.

Dr. Pamela Pacheco, from the Research Center in Biotechnology, described a similar job dynamic as the one outlined by Dr. Rosas.

I tried to avoid participation in committee work as it affects my other responsibilities. I work on that with my assistant. However, I have increased the numbers of hours I spend at the university. In previous years, I worked from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 or 6:00 p.m.; nowadays, sometimes it is 9:00 p.m. and I am still here. I had to modify my schedule to avoid my committee work affecting my teaching hours and my research projects.

Although male full time faculty members also modified their work agenda to compensate for the time invested in committee work, female full time professors emphasized that their domestic activities made their efforts to compensate for the lack of time more complicated. These female academics in curriculum design committees expressed their dilemmas: "In addition to the activities I have to perform here, I have to deal with my husband, my children, and house cleaning." "My children complain that I do not spend enough time with them; I feel guilty." "I have to find a spot in my agenda to attend to my son's school." "At the end of the day, when my two young daughters finally go to bed, I can work on my project, and then I have to get up at 5:00 a.m. to prepare my children to go to school."

All PROMEP professors in parochial and modern faculties expressed their concerns about the amount of time they lost as a result of their participation in committee work and the stress they experienced on a daily basis. Full time professors on curriculum design committees worked more than 40 hours per week in order to satisfy the requirements of research, teaching, and service. When professors did not

find opportunities to compensate for the time they invested in committee work then their research productivity and the effectiveness of their teaching became jeopardized. PROMEP professors who did not meet indicators of research productivity (i.e., publications) and effective teaching (i.e., positive teaching evaluations) obtained negative evaluations by CONACyT and the Ministry of Education, the two central federal agencies that conducted the academic evaluation of state public universities. Participants in this study explained that full time faculty members who obtained low scores in federal evaluations lost supplementary earnings, which was a significant issue due to the poor base salary that full time professors earned at UM.

In spite of the negative effects of committee work upon the work agendas of full time faculty members of curriculum design committees, they explained that the reasons to maintain their participation in institutional service activities was based on their commitment to improve the academic life of the university by emphasizing the relevance of research. PROMEP professors in parochial and modern Faculties conveyed that their participation in the development of graduate programs was central to improve academic practices and values at UM. Dr. Georgina Pacheco, from the Faculty of Human Communication, explained that her participation in committee work aimed to validate research as a central part of academic life in the Faculty.

The development of the master's program is beneficial not only for us as professors but also for the Faculty as a group...[I]t is exhausting but we have not stopped working any single day...[S]ometimes I would like to stop doing this

committee work and focus on doing research, but we cannot accept the perspective of the dean [her exclusive focus on giving undergraduate courses]. It is not beneficial for the faculty; we have to legitimize the relevance of our research work.

Dr. Joaquin Acosta also noted that his involvement in committee work was a strategy to participate in the definition of the academic activities and functions of the Faculty of Medicine.

To participate in the development of graduate programs involves monitoring the performance of graduate students, the management of research projects among faculty members, and academic administrative issues. Let's say that I decided to participate [as member of the curriculum design committee] because I wanted to ensure the construction of optimal conditions in the Faculty of Medicine. I wanted to participate in the decision making for the construction of programs.

PROMEP professors in modern Faculties expressed reasons similar to the opinions expressed by faculty members in parochial faculties to make sense of their involvement in committee work. Dr. Vanessa Rodriguez in the Faculty of Pharmacy decided to participate in the curriculum design committee as a strategy to facilitate her colleagues' work with graduate students.

Our colleagues know that committee work is fairly demanding; not everyone wants to participate...[W]hen I decided to participate [in the development of the master's and doctoral program] I knew that I would gain no immediate reward

for all the work I have been doing. However, it was necessary to modify our graduate programs...[W]e struggle to organize our work within the current curriculum structure. Our students have excessive course loads. Besides, the rules governing the programs are ambiguous. The programs needed to be improved.

PROMEPE professors engaged in committee work because they identified potential benefits not only for their Faculties and the university as a collective but also for themselves. All full time professors in this study concurred that the development of graduate programs facilitated the performance of research and teaching activities. During informal conversations with PROMEP professors, the majority of them explained “If we obtain the accreditation of our programs then we gain federal funds and we can guarantee scholarships for graduate students. If more students enroll in our programs, we have more people to work with.” Full time faculty explained that the greater the number of graduate students enrolled in their programs and the increase in the budget, the more social and instrumental support Faculty gain for research activities. From the perspective of full time professors who worked on institutional service, the development of graduate programs enabled them to protect and sustain their professional status.

PROMEPE professors defined themselves as researchers. Thus, they were concerned with the consolidation of academic structures that ensured them opportunities to engage in research activities. The creation or improvement of graduate

programs was a practice and process through which full time faculty members could make decisions to ensure the development of research as part of the academic life of Faculties.

One plausible interpretation is that the extensive participation of full time faculty members in institutional service activities was a personal decision exclusively: PROMEP professors participated in curriculum design committees because they wanted to improve the academic life of their Faculties and the university. However, there were also structural factors that compelled full time faculty members to sustain their participation in the development of graduate programs. Both PROMEP professors and academic administrators acknowledged that the criteria to define the participation of faculty members in institutional service were ambiguous. As it was described above, the selection of full time professors to become members of curriculum design committees was discretionary. Deans in each Faculty decided who and how many members had to work on the development of graduate programs. At UM there was ambiguity about the procedures and rules to develop the process of curriculum design and accreditation at the graduate level.

When the Secretary of the Academic Division in the central administration was asked about the norms and procedures to define the participation of full time faculty members in the development of graduate programs, Dr. Rodolfo Ocejo explained that there were no specific guidelines to define the creation, functions, and participants of curriculum design committees.



I think that each one of our Faculties determines its own strategies to modify and improve their educational programs...[I]n some Faculties they create committees; in others the dean of the Faculty works by himself in the design of undergraduate and graduate programs. In some Faculties, the dean and professors hire a curriculum expert who does all the work...[I] certainly think that it is necessary to create a homogenous procedure. We need to organize the process in order to avoid that the work would be concentrated in few people. [The development of programs] has to be a collaborative work.

The ambiguity in the regulation of curriculum design processes in Faculties was confirmed during one conversation between the curriculum consultant (A) and Isabel Castellanos (B) who was the academic administrator of the graduate division. Mrs. Castellanos talked about the lack of rules to define the participation of full time faculty members in committee work.

A: It is not clear to me the procedures through which full time professors of curriculum design committees are selected to participate in the development of graduate programs. Do you know something about the process of appointment?

B: I am not sure. What I know is that the dean of the Faculty and Dr. Tamayo appointed the committee. My perception is that they selected those full time professors who have become good at doing committee work. I say this because I see that the same professors who are in curriculum design committees are also working in other types of committees doing more work. I think that deans and

Dr. Tamayo say, "This professor already knows about administrative process, policies, actors, and requirements; he or she will know how to do this other job."

Consistent with the findings described in Chapter Four, the comments of Dr. Ocejo and the conversation between the curriculum consultant and the academic administrator show that the lack of a clear normative framework to regulate academic affairs created ambiguities as to the ways in which full time faculty members were required to participate in institutional service.

Full time faculty members engaged in excessive committee work for two reasons. The first reason was that they were motivated to create better educational opportunities for students and improve the academic life of the university. The second reason was because committee work was concentrated on a limited number of full time faculty members due to the lack of regulations to define the ways in which faculty members were required to participate in institutional service. Dr. Israel Salgado, from the Faculty of Agriculture, described his interpretation of the structural reasons that led to the concentration of work among a few full time faculty members.

We, as professors, focus on conducting our research projects. However, people from the central administration come from the top and say "we need to do this; we have to work on that." We asked them "It is ok. Tell me where the institutional development plan is." You know, some sort of document that says "this year our goals in the accreditation of programs." The problem is that there is no plan and the work is concentrated on few people. If you make an

assessment of the activities that faculty members are doing in each one of the Faculties, you will find that 12 out of 30 full time professors in a Faculty are doing most of the committee work.

Full time faculty members knew that personal and organizational factors influenced their becoming members of curriculum design committees. PROMEP professors were aware of the difficulties and consequences of their participation in committee work; yet, they worked on the development of graduate programs under the assumption that the accreditation of master's and doctoral programs would be beneficial for them as professionals and for the university as a higher education institution.

### **Summary**

This chapter described the practices of academic work through which full time faculty members negotiated their professional identity. The chapter explains the ways in which PROMEP professors viewed and described their participation in each one of their three academic functions: research, teaching, and service. Although research was viewed as the most relevant academic function, it was found that full time faculty devoted as much time to institutional service as they did to research activities. The reasons, practices, and effects of the participation of full time faculty members in committee work were explained in this chapter. Central to the findings are (a) the demands embedded in the practices of committee work, (b) the imbalance in the workload of full time professors, (c) the effects of committee work upon the productivity of full time faculty members, (d) and the personal and organizational

reasons that mediated the concentration of institutional service activities in a relatively small number of full time faculty members.

Chapters Four and Five presented the context and academic practices through which full time faculty members (i.e., PROMEP professors) negotiated their academic identity. The last chapter of findings, Chapter Six, answers the third research question: What are the characteristics of the academic identity of full time faculty? Chapter Six expands the findings by focusing on a micro unit of analysis. Findings in the next chapter are organized to show the identity claims that PROMEP professors developed as part of the process of negotiation of their academic identity in a context comprised of parochial and modern Faculties where committee work became an academic function as relevant as research.

## CHAPTER SIX

### CLAIMS OF SELF-DEFINITION AND THE MAINTENANCE OF THE PROFESSIONAL SELF

Previous chapters explored the context and practices through which academic identity is negotiated among full time faculty members (i.e., PROMEP professors). Chapter Four explains the construction of two types of academic structures (i.e., parochial and modern Faculties) that provided specific socio-cultural conditions for PROMEP professors to develop their daily activities. Chapter Five addressed the reasons, patterns of participation in committee work, and the effects of PROMEP professors' engagement in service activities. Central to the findings was the excessive amount of time that PROMEP professors devoted to institutional service. The employment contract of full time faculty members at UM noted that institutional service has to be a minimal part of professors' workload; however, participation in committee work became a demanding practice that hindered the development of research and teaching.

This chapter addresses the forms of self-definition that PROMEP professors developed within the academic structures at UM and through their academic functions. Empirical data in this chapter are organized to answer the third research question formulated for this study: What are the characteristics of the academic identity of full time faculty? Two broad findings are presented. First, PROMEP professors both in parochial and modern Faculties communicated three types of self-definitions (i.e., identity claims). The second finding is related to the mechanisms through which identity claims were sustained and negotiated.

### **Making Sense of the Academic role: Self-definitions as Identity Claims**

PROMEP professors who participated in committee work both in parochial and modern Faculties communicated three types of self-definitions (i.e., identity claims) to make sense of their role as organizational actors and professionals at UM: The academic as researcher, the academic as change-maker, and the academic as saturated worker. Each type of identity claim was developed on the basis of specific motivations and had particular emotional implications. The relation among the three identity claims was explained by PROMEP professors in parochial and modern Faculties differently.

#### ***The Academic as Researcher***

All PROMEP professors who participated in this study defined themselves as researchers with a specific area of expertise in a disciplinary field. As noted in Chapter Four, PROMEP professors held a doctoral degree that was obtained in a large research university either in Mexico or abroad. At UM, traditional university professors who worked from the 1950s to the 1980s did not engage in research activities as a result of the academic orientation and historical evolution of the university; thus, PROMEP professors overemphasized the research orientation of their academic work to differentiate themselves from the group of professors who were at UM before the 1980s. PROMEP professors referred to themselves as researchers to emphasize the boundaries between old and new tendencies in the configuration of the academic body of the university. PROMEP professors conducted research and offered courses, mainly, at the graduate level whereas *profesores de carrera* (i.e., part time faculty and a 10% of

full time faculty) focused on teaching at the undergraduate level exclusively. *Profesores de carrera* did not conduct research. Dr. Estela Gonzalez in the Faculty of Agriculture described herself as a PROMEP professor who embraced new academic values and practices that were not part of the traditional forms of organization at UM. Dr. Gonzalez entered UM in 2001; she obtained her doctoral degree at the National University of Mexico (UNAM).

The Faculty of Agriculture started to change when we [PROMEP professors] entered. PROMEP professors come from different places; we have a different perspective; and we have developed different ways to make sense of academic work. We have had ideological confrontations with people who were already here when we came.

Similar to Dr. Gonzalez, other professors in the Faculty of Agriculture emphasized the ideological differences that PROMEP professors held as part of their formation as researchers. Dr. Israel Salgado discussed some of the main concerns among PROMEP professors: accreditation of programs, research grants, and strategic planning.

We are not unionized faculty; we have not been allowed to participate in the academic union...[T]he academic union has traditions and norms that do not match with the way in which PROMEP professors work. We have a different way of thinking: We apply for grants to give scholarships to our students, conduct research, and acquire equipment. We think that the development of our Faculty has to be based on planning models. We are concerned about the accreditation

of our graduate programs. These are the kinds of academic aspects that are relevant for us.

PROMEP professors viewed their role as researchers as a component of the process of modernization of the public university in Mexico. They were critics of traditional ways in which academic life was organized at UM and advocated the construction of new forms of academic activities on the basis of values such as planning, evaluation and accreditation, internationalization, research networks, and academic productivity.

PROMEP professors' claim, "I am a researcher," was both a form of differentiation from the others (i.e., part-timers) and a strategy to position themselves as advocates of academic modernity. In relation to the findings presented in Chapter Four, PROMEP professors viewed themselves as part of a social-historical period in which university restructuring emphasized the performance of research activities as part of the efforts to modernize higher education in Mexico.

PROMEP professors described research as a high status profession and a challenging activity that demanded intellectual effort and continual learning to overcome contextual demands and personal frustration. Faculty members noted that their role as a researcher led them to both positive and negative emotional reactions. On the one hand, PROMEP professors explained that their engagement in intellectual activities was a source of motivation and satisfaction because they expanded their creativity and learning processes. On the other hand, PROMEP professors indicated that they experienced high levels of stress and anxiety when they did not find social and



instrumental support at UM for them to respond to institutional and federal demands of academic productivity. Dr. Sara Rocha, from the Faculty of Pharmacy, discussed the positive and negative aspects of her role as a researcher. Dr. Rocha identified personal “freedom” and learning as satisfying aspects of her role as a researcher whereas continual pressure and stress were viewed as a source of personal frustration.

[Working as a researcher] is a privileged work...[I] have access to a field that I am interested in learning about; I have access to knowledge. It [being a researcher] enables me to think, to be updated...[I] would say that research allows one to do whatever one wants; it gives you freedom...[T]here is also a significant amount of pressure and stress: we have to invest more than the official 40 hours we are expected to work.

All PROMEP professors noted that the role of researcher was a stressful one. Their dealing with personal stress and frustration was a central ingredient in their everyday work practices. The majority of PROMEP professors conveyed that the climate of competition prevailing in the academic world, not only at the national but also at international level, was a central source of work stress. PROMEP professors expressed discomfort when their role as researchers was driven by evaluation concerns entirely. Dr. Pamela Pacheco, from the Research Center in Biotechnology, talked about the risk of becoming an alienated researcher subordinated to the climate of accountability at the university.

Sometimes, we engage in competition and we start thinking about scores and ranks exclusively. We become small soldiers that have to manufacture knowledge and students. The mandate, not only in this university but in all universities, is to publish articles, books, and chapters. Sometimes, the quality of the article does not matter anymore; what it is relevant is to have it published.

The majority of PROMEP professors expressed concern about becoming alienated researchers who worked exclusively to meet criteria of academic productivity dictated by evaluation entities in the local, national, and international context. According to PROMEP professors, the alienated researcher was characterized as a professor who worked to gain the highest scores on the basis of his or her productivity; this kind of researcher engaged in competition to achieve the highest rank positions, without thinking about the role and relevance of their work to address social concerns. As it will be explained in the next section (i.e., the academic as change-maker), PROMEP professors in this study rejected an alienated professional identity by emphasizing their social commitment to improve academic life at UM.

PROMEP professors were dissatisfied with the demands and affects of federal and institutional evaluation systems; however, they acknowledged that their professional identity as researchers was linked to federal programs such as PROMEP and the National System of Researchers, which were managed by the Ministry of Education (SEP) and The National Council of Science and Technology (CONACyT). Both CONACyT and SEP established evaluation criteria to determine who qualified both as a PROMEP

professor and a member of the National system of Researchers. To become members of the National System of Researchers and PROMEP professors, full time faculty members were required to produce and publish peer reviewed articles, book chapters, and/or books; conduct research projects funded by either a national or an international agency; develop research networks both at the local, national, and international level; and mentor graduate students. PROMEP professors expressed that to sustain their role as researchers they had to satisfy evaluation criteria. Dr. Juan M. Garcia, from the Faculty of Medicine noted: "I am member of the National System of Researchers; thus, I have to publish a specific number of articles and attend international events every year. I also have to send my report of the research project funded through PROMEP."

PROMEP professors wanted to become productive researchers because organizational discourses and institutional policies both inside and outside the university were developed to reward the researcher role. Salaries and promotion mechanisms were based on evaluation systems that assessed the quantity and quality of research productivity (i.e., funded projects and publications). Thus, professors endeavored to engage in individual and group activities that enabled them to increase their research productivity. Examples of these activities were publication of articles and books, development of research networks, and participation in the development of graduate programs. In the Office of Research and Graduate programs, the central administration kept records of the individual and group productivity of each one of the approximately

440 PROMEP professors at UM. Full time professors endeavored to expand their institutional profiles as researchers.

### ***The Academic as Change-maker***

PROMEP professors described themselves not only as researchers but also as full time faculty members committed to transform and improve academic functioning at UM. The self-definitions that PROMEP professors communicated to emphasize their commitment to the construction of academic life resembled the notion of change-maker, which refers to “a type of practitioner who seeks to make a highly proactive, interventionist and strategic contribution policy and practice” (Caldwell, 2003, p. 999). The construction of the academic as a change--maker among full time faculty members was based on their participation in institutional service and their interest in responding to federal mandates for university restructuring. Dr. Jose Martinez, from the Faculty of Agriculture, provided a representative explanation of the ways in which PROMEP professors framed their understanding of the organizational structure of UM and their responsibility as members of the academic body to construct academic life.

Administrative mechanisms in this university are very ineffective...[W]e need to create better administrative processes...[W]e, as academics, have to be proactive. If there are no conditions, then we have to find ways to create conditions and achieve what we want. One has to be versatile; one has to deal with the demands of the context. If the federal mandate is accreditation of programs, then we have to focus on that...[I] have always had a fighting spirit; I

am not going to let other people tell me that we [as a university] are incompetent.

Similar to Dr. Martinez, Dr. Georgina Pacheco, from the Faculty of Human Communication, described the need to promote change at UM. She noted that a weak academic environment required the academic body to create strategies to improve present conditions.

If one is a critic of the [university] system, then one has to show greater participation, responsibility, commitment, and efficiency in work. Being a critic involves a cost. If I do something to improve the faculty, then my work has to be effective and efficient. Participation in the construction of something demands investing more time, more effort, more dedication... [I]t is strenuous, but it also has the satisfaction of creating new conditions and possibilities. If we do not receive credit from our effort at this moment, hopefully in the long run the institution will acknowledge our effort...[I]n my opinion, conflict and change go hand in hand; I do not think that change can happen without conflict.

Both Dr. Pacheco and Dr. Martinez expressed a strong sense of institutional responsibility and commitment to their role as members of the university. Both conveyed their willingness to collaborate in the improvement of the Faculty of Agriculture and the Faculty of Human Communication, respectively. The infrastructure of the Faculty of Agriculture was extremely weak: full time professors have small offices, deprived laboratories, and impoverished classrooms. However, Dr. Martinez worked

along with Dr. Israel Salgado and Dr. Emiliano Alonso to develop research projects aimed to attract actors from the industry sector. In the Faculty of Human Communication, the participation of full time faculty members and the development of research activities were minimal; full time professors in this Faculty were resigned to their condition because of the inadequacy of leadership and the lack of support to research activities. Yet, Dr. Pacheco and Dr. Salvador Salazar worked in the development of a master's program to facilitate the construction of the Faculty's academic orientation based on research.

In addition to embryonic efforts to connect research to industry, full time faculty members as change-makers constructed their academic identity through their involvement in institutional service. Committee work was viewed as one of the practices that enabled the modification of academic structures and functions at the university. Dr. Vanessa Rodriguez explained what she understood as committee work and her commitment to improve the academic structures of the university through their participation in the development of graduate programs.

[Committee work] requires us to do a lot of activities: make negotiations here and there...[I] participated in the curriculum design committee because I have the conviction to improve things. I want to construct something that is valuable. Obviously, if work conditions are inadequate, then the demands are greater....[I] have done committee work for two years already...[I]f I were more indulgent

with myself, then I would quit all this committee work...[I] am totally stuck with my research activities.

PROMEP professors who devoted a significant part of their time to participate in committee work emphasized that their main motivation to sustain their participation in institutional service was their commitment to improve academic functions at UM.

As change-makers, PROMEP professors held an anti-bureaucratic orientation and their interest in creating institutional rules and policies was directed to strengthen the quality of academic life. PROMEP professors became change-makers because they identified the necessity of creating regulations and structures that facilitated the development of academic functions at UM. Dr. Leticia Rubio, from the Faculty of Arts, described her role as an agent of change in her Faculty. She had worked in the Faculty for 9 years. She entered UM as a part time faculty member, then she became a full time professor, and finally she was appointed as Dean of the Faculty of Arts. During all her years working at UM; Dr. Rubio participated in committee work continually. As a dean, Dr. Rubio defined herself as a person committed to improve the academic structure and functions of her Faculty. When Dr. Rubio became dean she not only sustained her research and teaching responsibilities but also committed herself to strengthen the academic dynamics of the Faculty of Arts. Two faculty members of the Faculty concurred that Dr. Rubio was an agent of change that encouraged various modifications to the functions and structure of the Faculty. Dr. Rubio described her initiatives to change the academic and administrative structure of the Faculty.

When I became dean, I had a talk with some professors who were concerned with the future of the Faculty of Arts. We decided that the academic structure was not functional anymore; I modified it...[W]e had three departments within the Faculty: classical arts, visual arts, and art history; however, we merged two of those departments, classical and visual arts, to provide more cohesiveness...[W]e also created a commission that oversees the implementation of educational programs.

Dr. Rubio explained that her decision to change the organizational chart of the Faculty was intended to enable full time faculty members to make decisions with regards to the definition of academic activities. Dr. Rubio highlighted that the academic life of the Faculty of Arts could not be defined by part time faculty members who did not have work conditions (e.g., salary and schedule) to participate actively in the construction of the Faculty.

Other change-makers emphasized their efforts to create normative frameworks to facilitate the performance of their academic functions. Dr. Eloisa Lopez, from the Research Center in Educational Environment, described her participation in the design of guidelines to regulate the functioning of the research center.

I am working, along with some colleagues, on the formulation of rules and guidelines with regards to the composition of the faculty assembly and its voting rules...[W]e are also working on the formulation of regulations for the academic



affairs of the research center as well as the series of rights and responsibilities academics have.

PROMEPE professors who described themselves as change-makers emphasized that commitment to the construction and improvement of academic life at UM was not a value embraced by the majority of part time and all full time faculty members. Only a reduced number of full time faculty members participated in institutional service as part of the effort to promote organizational change actively. Dr. Estela Gonzalez described her commitment to public education as a factor that enabled her to seek the improvement of academic functions at UM.

The construction of the Faculty [of Agriculture] is still an isolated effort. There are some professors, like me, who are interested in the upgrading of the Faculty; however, it is not a shared goal among other colleagues. There is limited support to initiate changes. Our work on the design of the master's program is an attempt to improve conditions. Hopefully, this work is going to trigger some other forms of development...[I] think that it is crucial to strengthen the public university; we need to construct this university as a place to educate young people who can manage the future of this country.

As change-makers, PROMEPE professors, such as Dr. Gonzalez, described themselves as individuals concerned with the common good: "It is crucial to strengthen the public university; we need to construct this university as a place to educate young people who can manage the future of this country." Change-makers wanted to develop beneficial

conditions and resources that enabled both students and the faculty member to perform better in their academic activities. As emphasized by Dr. Gonzales, the commitment to the construction of better academic conditions at UM was evident in the participation of PROMEP professors in the development of graduate programs: “This work on the curricular design of the master’s program is an attempt to improve conditions. Hopefully, this work is going to trigger some form of development.” Participants in curriculum design committees noted that it was beneficial for the university community to work in collaboration with colleagues to ensure the accreditation of graduate programs. However, PROMEP professors expressed concern about the marginal participation of other members of the faculty body, which slowed down the construction and improvement of academic life.

As change-makers, PROMEP professors were committed to the construction and improvement of the academic structures of the university. PROMEP professors described themselves as individuals who could formulate goals, overcome constraints, and initiate changes in the institutional structures they inhabited. Dr. Pamela Pacheco outlined the role of the academic as a professional who can make decisions within a university context that works as a constraining structure.

Sometimes one thinks that the university holds all the power; however, full time faculty members are people who can make decisions. The only reason why I have not left this university is because I still believe that it is possible to generate optimal conditions for academic life. As time goes by, if nothing has changed,

then what we have to realize is that there is a traditional culture that predominates. If there is no change, then there is a culture in which people do not expect to generate change. I think that it is central to embrace the possibility of change not only as part of the life of this university but also a part of one's life.

Similar to Dr. Pacheco, Dr. Guadalupe Rosas, from the Faculty of Psychology, viewed herself as a person with authority and ability to engage in projects and overcome institutional constraints. The agency expressed by Dr. Pacheco and Rosas was a personal characteristic found in the narratives of PROMEP professors who became change-makers as a result of their participation in institutional service.

I like to get things done on time and efficiently. I am a person who is tolerant of frustration and when I have a goal I endeavor to achieve it. I started this project [the development of the master's and doctoral program] and I will not stop until I finish it. I choose my challenges in life...[I] want to say "my participation and work were critical to create the master's and doctoral program...[O]ur Faculty needs to gain the accreditation of graduate programs, I will persevere through it.

Dr. Rosas addressed tensions, limited support, and lack of time to carry out the development of graduate programs in her Faculty; yet, she endeavored to complete the process of curriculum design and accreditation. Although PROMEP professors were aware of the organizational constraints to enact their academic functions, they viewed themselves as people who could modify their work environment. As change-makers, PROMEP professors selected behaviors to generate changes in their Faculties. As

described in Chapter Five, the development of master's and doctoral programs was one of the strategies through which change-makers committed to the construction of better academic conditions at UM. In the narratives of change-makers, full time professors did not view themselves as individuals subordinated to forms of structural power (e.g., deans); they were critics of the values and practices of the central administration at UM as well as to those forms of bureaucratic or ideological imposition that hindered their opportunities to engage in research and effective teaching.

### ***The Academic as Saturated Worker***

PROMEP professors defined themselves as professionals with saturated agendas that required them to navigate multiple scenarios and develop their professional and personal abilities. Full time faculty members at UM played various roles in order to satisfy their multiple professional responsibilities. As saturated workers, PROMEP professors represented themselves as tireless and omnipotent professionals capable of sustaining overwhelming workloads. The narratives that PROMEP professors used to describe and justify the maintenance of saturated agendas included expressions such as "I am a masochistic; this is very hard but I keep doing it," "I have a perfectionist personality." The narrative of Dr. Eloisa Lopez from the Research Center in Educational Environment is a representative illustration of the ways in which PROMEP professors described the overwhelming nature of the multiple demands of their academic work.

My biggest problem is that I tend to participate in all kinds of activities.

Unfortunately, I have invested a lot of time in institutional service, which I would

like to stop doing. I have an administrative position; I participate on the faculty board; I participate on an academic commission...[I] am always involved in doing something...[E]very day I have a full agenda. The problem is that I am falling behind with my research duties. By the way, I am editor of a scientific journal in the United States as well...[I] have to admit, I am passionate about working. Perhaps I am a perfectionist or it is self-imposed pressure.

Dr. Lopez participated in the curriculum design committee actively. She attended weekly meetings aimed to talk about the design of the master's program in Natural Sciences. Frequently, she ran from one venue—classroom to meeting room—to another to be on time for meetings. It was common to see her eating sandwiches in hallways because she did not have enough time for a more conventional lunch.

PROMEP professors represented themselves as saturated workers because of the multiple activities they were required to perform in order to meet criteria for academic productivity: they gave classes, tutored students, conducted research activities, wrote and published articles and books, managed research groups and networks, participated on campus committee work, participated in professional associations, applied for grants, and did administrative work. PROMEP professors worked as teachers, researchers, organizational leaders, academic administrators, curriculum designers, grant seekers, institutional policy makers, and solicitors. PROMEP professors acknowledged that the enactment of various roles was central in their profession; however, they described the experience as problematic and frustrating. Dr.

Jose Martinez noted the multiplicity of roles he performed and offered his opinion about the way in which the performance of these roles affected his research.

[Evaluation systems] require us to sustain excessive workloads. We have to do science in addition to many other activities...[W]e have to invest time in administrative issues and we were not hired for doing so. At least 50% of our work time has to be devoted to research, but we are not meeting the criteria. Here I have played the role of policemen, nurse, pest control specialist, and secretary...[T]he university hires a full time faculty member, who works not only as a researcher but a teacher, administrator, and even a laboratory technician; it is not clear what our role is.

Similar to Dr. Martinez, Dr. Carolina Hernandez, from the Faculty of Architecture, described her experience as a saturated worker who managed her time to perform multiple activities and satisfy evaluation demands.

We have to do many activities: We have to split ourselves in one thousand pieces to satisfy all of them. Many of us, who are researchers, have to please various masters: PROMEP, CONACYT, and the university itself. We have to be attentive to know what they want; it is exhausting...[I] spent one whole year trying to obtain a research grant...[I] participated in a campus committee to develop the planning model of the Faculty of Architecture some months ago...[D]oing all the work to formulate the planning model was crazy. Sometimes I did not know what to do; I wanted to cry...[T]o satisfy evaluation criteria, I have

to teach three or four courses per semester...[I] have to participate in the development of the master's program as well. I think that curriculum design is part of service. And I have to do research. How do they expect us to do everything?

Dr. Georgina Pacheco, from the Faculty of Human Communication, conveyed her difficulty with maintaining multiple roles in order to satisfy evaluation demands. Dr. Pacheco described the overwhelming feelings of moving back and forth between different activities.

I do not like to engage in administrative issues and committee work; sometimes even teaching is difficult for me—it is hard. With all the activities we have to do, indeed, there is a limited amount of time to think, read, and conduct research. What should I do? I have not been able to write anything. I start feeling worried. I have to comply with CONACyT and PROMEP. I wonder, “At what time will I be able to do all what I have to do?” I have a lot of things to do; it creates anxiety. I do not want to do a poor job with my students.

Similar to Dr. Martinez, Dr. Hernandez, and Dr. Pacheco, the majority of PROMEP professors expressed concern over the maintenance of their saturated work agendas. The performance of ancillary roles (i.e., technician, secretary, or administrator) and excessive institutional service were particularly irritating for PROMEP professors, because they did not view themselves as being trained to perform roles that were not connected to research.

Although PROMEP professors expressed their discomfort with the enactment of multiple roles, the notion of full time faculty members as omnipotent professionals became institutionalized as part of the dynamics and character of academic world at UM. On the one hand, PROMEP professors accepted heavy workload because they wanted to achieve high levels of academic productivity. On the other hand, academic administrators in the central administration of UM encouraged the creation of saturated agendas for full time faculty because they conceptualized PROMEP professors as professionals whose expertise enabled them to address any kind of issue. From the perspective of administrative staff, academics were expected to perform efficiently in all their various functions: teaching, research, and service. Juan Navarro, the coordinator of academic services in the central administration, explained the typical perception that university officers and academic administrators held with relation to full time faculty members as omnipotent professionals

Researchers have been trained exceptionally well: They were recipient of grants from CONACyT...They [PROMEP professors] were trained in high quality universities both nationally and internationally...[A] good researcher is good at doing everything: research, teaching, tutoring, networking, and service...[W]e want this university to be competitive, which requires that the academic body creates knowledge, educates students, and participates in service. Service is also an important function.



Among academic administrators at UM, there was an underlying assumption that work devotion had to be a core value of academic work; thus, it was expected that full time faculty members could deal with saturated work agendas because they had knowledge and expertise to do so. PROMEP professors and administrative staff noted repeatedly “that [heavy workloads] is what academic life is about,” “that is what professors at universities are supposed to do.” Both the existence of evaluation systems that demanded high levels of research productivity and the conceptualization of PROMEP professors as professionals with outstanding capacities to perform academically encouraged the construction of the full time faculty members as a saturated workforce. As described in Chapter Five, one of the clearest practices through which the notion of the saturated worker was sustained at UM was the participation of PROMEP professors in committee work to develop graduate programs.

### **Strategies of Action for the Negotiation of Identity Claims**

The academic as researcher was the identity claim that PROMEP professors regarded as the most important because this enabled them to gain institutional acknowledgment, professional status, and financial stability. The other two self-definitions, change-maker and saturated worker, were parallel identity claims that PROMEP professors constructed to protect and sustain their self-definition as researchers. PROMEP professors participated as agents of change and endured a saturated workload as a strategy to ensure research productivity. On the one hand, full time faculty members promoted change through their participation in committee work

aimed to strengthen graduate programs and encourage research. On the other hand, the maintenance of multiple roles and a saturated agenda was necessary so that PROMEP professors could meet evaluation criteria.

PROMEP professors in parochial Faculties became both change-makers and saturated workers in order *to* legitimize the value and relevance of their role as researchers. PROMEP professors in modern Faculties became change-makers and saturated workers in order *to* consolidate and expand their role as researchers. In parochial Faculties the construction of identity claims consisted of a process of legitimization whereas in modern Faculties identity claims consisted of a process of consolidation and expansion of the academic as a researcher.

### ***Responding to Identity Threats***

PROMEP professors constructed their three identity claims to respond to identity threats they perceived as part of the organizational environment at UM. Identity threats consisted of forms of patterns of behaviors through which external agencies (e.g., CONACyT), the dean of the Faculty, and non-PROMEP professors communicated a lack of understanding of and respect for the status of full time faculty members as researchers. PROMEP professors in parochial Faculties reported two types of identity threats: Dean and part time professors' underestimation of the scientific enterprise enacted by PROMEP professors and the exclusion of PROMEP professors from decision making processes managed by the Dean and part time professors. PROMEP professors

in parochial Faculties described their Faculties as threatening environments in which neither the dean nor colleagues provided support for PROMEP professors to enact their role of researcher. Dr. Israel Salgado, from the Faculty of Agriculture, indicated the ways in which his self-definition as a researcher was threatened by the contextual factors at UM.

As researchers, we come from a graduate school that is prominent; we are members of the National System of Researchers. We had good quality conditions in the place where we studied. When I finished my studies, I said “I am going to work at a university; I am going to conduct research projects; and I am going to work with CONACyT.” I had these assumptions, but I entered a place like this and it was a shock: nothing works in the way it should be.

PROMEP professors such as Dr. Salgado obtained their master’s and doctoral degrees at prestigious universities either in Mexico or abroad. They developed a strong research orientation and developed a scientific ethos. In parochial Faculties both the dean and most of the faculty members (i.e., part time faculty) had a limited understanding of and practice in research work; thus, PROMEP professors developed a sense of threat or discomfort because they had to endure and overcome lack of collegial support and several difficulties to develop their research.

PROMEP professors in parochial Faculties expressed that the expertise they had as researchers was neither acknowledged nor valued within their Faculties; thus, they were excluded from decision making processes that influenced their working conditions.

PROMEPE professors in parochial Faculties did not have significant representation in authority bodies, which led them to have limited participation in several aspects of the academic life of the Faculty. Dr. Georgina Pacheco, from the Faculty of Human Communication, outlined some mechanisms of exclusion enacted within the Faculty.

It is difficult to deal with the ideological differences between the dean and us [PROMEPE professors]. I think that the ideological differences between us are one of the reasons why we are excluded from decision making processes. In some instances we are required to participate in the dynamics of the Faculty whereas in others we are ignored entirely. Our opinion is not taken into account when new faculty members are hired to work in this Faculty...[W]e cannot vote to pass any decision discussed within the Faculty board...[H]owever, when the Faculty is required to fill out institutional forms and reports then we are required to participate; it is schizophrenic.

Dr. Salvador Salazar who also worked in the Faculty of Human Communication concurred with the interpretations of Dr. Pacheco. Dr. Salazar also perceived a lack of support and acknowledgement for their professional status and work from non-PROMEPE professors and the dean.

There is a lack of validation of our work. They [dean and some colleagues] believe that our job is really easy. They do not understand that doing research requires us to do other activities in addition to working in an office. We have been really busy trying to write the document that describes the curriculum

initiative of the master's program; that was the reason why we have not been here lately. Yet, some of our colleagues believe that we are not interested in what is going on in this Faculty.

PROMEPE professors in other parochial Faculties confirmed the interpretation of Dr. Salazar and Dr. Pacheco. Dr. Carolina Hernandez, from the Faculty of Architecture, explained the marginal role of research within the dynamics of the Faculty and the limited opportunities for participation offered to PROMEP professors.

The graduate division of this Faculty is isolated from the undergraduate division; it should not be that way...[I]n this Faculty, we [PROMEPE professors] are viewed by some of our colleagues as weird people...[T]he dean wanted to increase the rate of student enrollment; however, nobody told us about that project or how we could participate...[S]ometimes I feel excluded. I do not like the way in which academic life is managed in this Faculty. If you read the annual report of the dean, then you would realize that research was an appendix in the academic structure of the Faculty. Research is not perceived as a central function of the Faculty...[I] think that we, researchers, are important. I wonder, "why are we overlooked when it comes to making decisions that are going to be influential on our everyday activities?"

As described by Dr. Salazar, Dr. Pacheco, and Dr. Hernandez, PROMEP professors in parochial Faculties endeavored with some frustration to find an environment that

acknowledged the nature and value of their research career and their self-identification as researchers.

In addition to academic structures that did not include research and researchers as components of academic life, PROMEP professors in other parochial Faculties conveyed their experiences related to the lack of esteem for both their work and image as professionals. Dr. Juan M. Garcia, from the Faculty of Medicine, described the way in which the process to assign physical space and furniture for full time professors became an expression of the lack of respect and support for their work. Dr. Garcia participated in the process of curriculum design and accreditation of the master's program in molecular biology. In spite of the committee work he performed to improve academic life as well as the performance of the Faculty, Dr. Garcia viewed himself as neither welcomed nor valued within his Faculty.

The Faculty of Medicine has a new building. I used to have an office to work on the activities related to the coordination of the master's program. When we moved to the new building, they [the dean and collaborators] took that office away...[W]e almost had to beg for a new office ...[I]n the new office of the dean all furniture was new. In the meantime we did not have an office. After a couple of weeks, we finally located a room; yet, all our furniture is old and broken. I do not want to complain about it; however, this kind of action made me realize the way in which our leader in the Faculty views both the role of full time faculty members and the improvement of our graduate programs...[T]hey gave us a

room with no furniture; they told us: “in the corner over there, you can check some furniture we are going to throw away; you can choose whatever you think that can be useful for you.” This is the kind of treatment that we receive; this is the kind of appreciation toward research and full time professors.

PROMEPE professors in parochial Faculties such as Medicine, Human Communication, Architecture, and Agriculture perceived clear expressions of the lack of acknowledgement of their expertise and the limited support to develop their work as researchers.

The experiences of exclusion and underestimation that PROMEP professors in parochial Faculties outlined were among the reasons they decided to engage in committee work. PROMEP professors engaged in curriculum design committees as a strategy to find a niche that enabled them to legitimize their position as researchers within their Faculties. The development of graduate programs enabled PROMEP professors to create a climate where research, collaborative work, planning, and evaluation could become central values for the definition of academic life. Participation in the construction of the graduate division enabled PROMEP professors in parochial Faculties to legitimize their self-identification as researchers.

In modern Faculties, PROMEP professors did not express concern over the lack of support or respect for their work and professional status as researchers within their Faculties. As described in Chapter Four, modern Faculties were characterized by the participation of a larger number of PROMEP professors who were knowledgeable of the

nature and demands of research. Modern Faculties also had leaders who valued and supported research work and modern academic values such as planning, evaluation, and collaborative work. Finally, modern Faculties experienced fewer problems related to infrastructure. In Faculties such as Sciences, Pharmacy, Psychology, and Nursing, PROMEP professors indicated that the lack of esteem or respect towards their work did not come from their colleagues and deans but from structural factors. The identity threats identified by PROMEP professors in modern Faculties were related to two conditions: the ineffectiveness of the bureaucratic system of UM and the rigidity of internal and external evaluation systems aimed to assess academic productivity.

Full time professors indicated that the role of researchers was threatened when the central administration of the university postponed the modification of bureaucratic processes to facilitate research activities. Full time faculty members indicated that working within a university that had a weak bureaucratic structure led them to devote time and effort that they otherwise could invest in research. Dr. Bianca Aguilar, from the Faculty of Sciences, noted that the bureaucratic system at UM hindered the performance of research because they had to invest time to deal with irrational administrative procedures every time they wanted to use money from their grants to acquire material for their experiments or equipment for their laboratories.

The university attempted to modify its structure by hiring PROMEP professors; however, the central administration did not pay attention to modernize the bureaucratic structure...[T]hey [university officers] said that they were going to



change administrative procedures, but nothing was modified...[I]f the university had a functional administrative apparatus, our research work would not be affected in the way it is now...[T]here will be a moment in time when full time professors refuse to keep doing campus committee work because of the quantity of administration that it entails. The central administration will have to realize that we cannot do too many activities within an administrative structure like the one we have.

The majority of PROMEP professors viewed the bureaucratic system of UM and the incapacity of the central administration to improve this system as a weakness of the university that damaged not only the organizational functioning of the university but also the opportunities for the development of the faculty body as productive scholars. PROMEP professors described a weak bureaucratic system that hindered the acquisition of resources and the functioning of processes that were central to the performance of their research.

In addition to the inefficient bureaucratic system, PROMEP professors expressed concern over the lack of sensitivity of evaluation and reward systems to the specific conditions of the university and the quality of the academic performance of full time faculty members as individuals. Dr. Veronica Rodriguez, from the Faculty of Pharmacy, outlined the way in which mechanisms to assess the academic productivity of full time faculty members overlooked the complexity of academic work.

[W]hen we are evaluated. CONACyT or PROMEP do not care what kind of committee work we did or how our work improved the university. It does not matter if we spent either twenty or five hours per week or if we participated in either one or twenty different kinds of institutional service activities; all committee work is assessed as “Does she or he participate or not?” Sometimes I wonder: why am I participating in committee work? Why am I investing so much time in developing the master’s and doctoral program? At the end of the academic year the professor who spent five hours in committee work and I who spent twenty hours per week are going to receive the same score because we both did service. When it comes to evaluations, neither the university nor federal agencies acknowledge our effort and sacrifice to obtain the accreditation of graduate programs. Although we spent time by doing service relevant for the university, we are not exempted from having to publish.

The majority of PROMEP professors in modern Faculties indicated that they risked their professional status as researchers when they obtained low scores on the research dimension of their academic work as a result of their participation in institutional service. PROMEP professors noted that one of the reasons why they obtained low scores was associated with the lack of a flexible and sensitive evaluation system that conducted a qualitative assessment of the performance of each full time faculty member as individuals with specific circumstances and forms to develop their professional career.

### ***Practices of Self-regulation***

PROMEP professors both in parochial and modern Faculties created three parallel identity claims as a strategy to respond to perceptions of exclusion and underestimation of their expertise and professional status both inside and outside their Faculties. Full time faculty members negotiated their three identity claims through mechanisms of self-regulation; they either enacted or abandoned each one of their three identity claims (i.e., the researcher, the saturated worker, and the change-maker) selectively.

Self-regulation among full time faculty members involved the definition of boundaries as to when and how long to enact each one of their identity claims (i.e., change-maker, saturated worker, or researcher) and practices associated with these. PROMEP professors were aware that they should not perform the role as change-maker or saturated worker for an extended period of time if they wanted to preserve the integrity of the role of researcher. In the narratives of PROMEP professors, the process of self-regulation was described as a continual and internal monologue through which professors reflected on their practice and selected strategies to perform their three basic academic functions effectively. Internal monologues enabled PROMEP professors to analyze and evaluate the advantages and disadvantages of enacting either one or another identity claim. Dr. Eloisa Lopez from the Research Center in Educational Environment gave a representative example of the way in which PROMEP professors talked about their mechanisms to move across their various forms of self-definition.

If one realizes how much work is involved in doing campus committee work, then one wonders “What am I doing here? I am not receiving an extra payment for doing this.” At the end I said “Ok, I will do it; it is a job; I want this university to be better. In the long run I will benefit as well” Yet, I am learning that there is a moment in which I also have to say “no” and to take care of my health and my other duties. In these last months, my arm has been numb. The doctor told me that stress is the cause of my problem..[S]ometimes my colleagues say “we need to do this and that.” It is tempting to work with my colleagues, but then I say to myself “Keep going, keep skipping meals, and drinking coffee: you want to have a heart attack, huh?”

PROMEPE professors navigated their three identity claims based on the demands of the institution and their personal projects. Because of the needs and demands of work at UM, PROMEPE professors emphasized that they would engage in more work than they could manage, which required them to sustain the three identity claims simultaneously during an extended period of time. However, when PROMEPE professors reflected on the advantages and disadvantages of maintaining various roles they concurred that they did not want to sustain excessive workloads.

Practices of self-regulation among PROMEPE professors were connected to academics’ reflection on their everyday practice. PROMEPE professors assessed their day-to-day routine to identify the losses and benefits involved in the enactment of the three identity claims. PROMEPE professors emphasized that the adequate performance of their

academic functions required them to reflect on their priorities and the ways in which they could organize their work continually. Dr. Susana Rocha described the way in which she regulated her time and work practice.

I organize my agenda on the basis of my everyday demands. I am aware that I have to pay attention to each one of the things that I have to do. The time I assign to teach in the undergraduate division is very important to me; thus I always attended my classes. Giving classes is one of my responsibilities and I do not like to be disrespectful to my students. I endeavored to be on time to give my classes even if I have meetings or committee work...[I] also try to comply with my research activities.

Similar to Dr. Rocha, Dr. Juan M. Garcia, from the Faculty of Medicine, described his efforts to organize his schedule in order to satisfy his multiple role demands.

I organize my work as effectively as I can. I am aware that I have to give classes and I have to conduct research...[I] obtained high scores in my evaluation this year because I tried to organize my time. Of course, it is difficult, I try to focus on research and avoid doing administrative stuff...[I] participate in the design of the master's program in molecular biology; thus, I did not choose to give a lot of classes this semester...[T]he last semester I gave two courses, but this semester I am not interested in having a heavy workload. I can earn more money if I give more classes; however, doing so could be risky for the enactment of my research

activities. Some colleagues of mine participated in several committees and now they have been expelled from the National System of Researchers.

Although Dr. Rocha and Dr. Garcia organized their schedules to comply with their three central academic functions (i.e., research, teaching, and service), they had to work more than forty hours per week. Thus, PROMEP professors' organization of their agenda did not mean the reduction of their workload but the identification of strategies to use additional hours for the enactment of their various activities. Dr. Vanessa Rodriguez, from the Faculty of Pharmacy, described her strategy to comply with her research activities after two years of intense participation in institutional service. She stressed the necessity of taking a sabbatical in order to compensate for the time she devoted to the development of the master's and doctoral programs of her Faculty.

This is the last year I participated [in the development of graduate programs]. I am going to apply for my sabbatical. If I do not do it I will lose my membership in the National System of Researchers (SNI). If I want to maintain my salary and be promoted to the next rank position in the SNI, then I better hurry up and publish. I know that institutional service and administrative activities do not provide financial rewards, perhaps some minimal benefits...[P]rofessors who do not to participate in institutional service activities have greater productivity in their research than I do.

As illustrated in the excerpts from Drs. Garcia, Rocha, and Rodriguez, self-regulation was a complex process that required PROMEP professor to address dilemmas continually. Full time faculty members acknowledged that within the demanding context of UM, they were easily captivated by the needs of the institution and could postpone their goals and projects. Thus, they had to think carefully about how to satisfy both the demands of the university as an institution and their individual expectations as professionals.

As illustrated above, the process of self-regulation required PROMEP professors to navigate between institutional and personal needs when they enacted their three identity claims. When PROMEP professors became change-makers they worked on the development of graduate programs to improve the academic performance of their Faculties and develop better working conditions. As change-makers, PROMEP professors also sought to satisfy personal needs. The strengthening of the graduate division in both parochial and modern Faculties was not only beneficial for the university community but also enabled full time faculty members to legitimize and consolidate their professional status as researchers. As saturated workers, PROMEP professors enacted overwhelming agendas to satisfy evaluation criteria and to ensure the high quality of academic life of the university. However, their identity as a saturated worker was also a way to satisfy personal needs such as professional prestige and financial availability. Finally, as researchers, PROMEP professors responded to institutional demands by working on university restructuring on the basis of modern academic values such as research,

strategic planning, or internationalization. At a personal level, the enactment of the role of researcher enabled PROMEP professors to pursue and experience intellectual challenges and expand their creativity.

### **Summary**

The first part of this chapter described the three forms of self-definition or identity claims that PROMEP professors communicated through their narratives and everyday practices at UM: the academic as researcher, the academic as change-maker, and the academic as saturated worker. Previous chapters provided evidence that show the sources and forms of expression of each kind of identity claim. This chapter emphasizes the features and emotional dimension of each one of the self-definitions constructed by PROMEP professors. The second part of the chapter discusses the construction and negotiation of the three identity claims communicated by PROMEP professors. On the one hand, it was found that the development of three parallel identity claims was related to the way in which PROMEP professors perceived and responded to identity threats both inside and outside their Faculties. On the other hand, findings show that PROMEP professors navigated their identity claims through processes of self-regulation that enabled them to either enact or abandon each one of their identity claims selectively. It was argued that self-regulation operated to satisfy both institutional and personal needs.



## CHAPTER SEVEN

### CONCLUSIONS<sup>13</sup>

This investigation explored the negotiation of academic identity among a group of full time faculty members who self-defined as researchers (i.e., PROMEP professors) at the University of Morelos (UM) in Mexico. The study addressed the construction of academic identity as an approach to understand the relationship between two phenomena: the forms of participation of PROMEP professors in university restructuring and the influence of university restructuring in the self-definition of PROMEP professors as professionals. The formation of PROMEP professors as a subgroup of the faculty body in public state universities in Mexico started at the end of the 1990s as part of federal programs, such as the Program for Faculty Enhancement (PROMEP), aimed to promote university restructuring. PROMEP professors are doctoral holders who are required to engage in research and participate in national and international scholarly exchange and publication networks. Distinct from previous studies on academic identity in Mexico and the U.S., this investigation relies upon a comprehensive theoretical framework to address the contextual factors, socio-cultural practices, and individual processes that enabled PROMEP professors to construct their self-definition as professionals within a climate of university restructuring.

University restructuring, which refers to changes in the economic, political, and academic structures and activities in higher education institutions (Torres &

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<sup>13</sup> The terms “full time faculty” and “full time professors” are used interchangeably and both are synonymous with the term “PROMEP professors” explained previously.

Schugurensky, 2002), is a central goal pursued by nations that expect to promote social progress and higher levels of economic productivity (Appanduri, 1996; Gumpert, 2000; Marginson, 2006; Marginson & Considine, 2000; Slaughter & Rhoades, 2004). In Mexico, initiatives for university restructuring were initiated in the 1980s. These initiatives were part of a National Education Master Plan and implemented by federal agencies such as the Ministry of Education (SEP), the National Association of Higher Education Institutions and Universities (ANUIES), and the National Council of Science and Technology [CONACyT] (Chavoya-Peña, et al., 2006). Federal initiatives consisted of programs that provided extraordinary funds for public state universities to improve conditions of infrastructure, organizational effectiveness, academics' professionalism, and accreditation of educational programs (Gil-Antón, 2003; Ibarra-Colado & Porter-Galetar, 2007; Izquierdo-Sánchez, 2000; Porter, 2003).

In Mexico, federal programs intended to promote university restructuring viewed PROMEP professors as key actors to trigger the modernization and change of public state universities (Gil-Antón, 1994, 2000, 2003). Thus, in the 1990s, public state universities hired an increasing number of full time faculty members, who had a professional background that emphasized their participation in research, as a strategy to improve the academic structure and performance of universities. However, after two decades of the implementation of federal programs, public state universities have not improved their indicators of academic achievement (i.e., student graduate rates, accredited programs, and enrollment of graduate students) significantly (Chavoya-Peña,

et al., 2006). University restructuring in Mexico has not occurred as expected by policy makers. That is, the quality of academic life in public state universities is uncertain, the levels of individualism and competition among academics are increasing, and universities tend to simulate planning and evaluation practices to comply with accountability measures, even though there is little rationality to the accompanying processes (Bonilla, Guerrero, & Juárez, 2006; Pérez, 2006; Porter, 2003).

Factors that are associated with the failure of federal initiatives to encourage university restructuring are several: organizational ineffectiveness (OECD, 2006; Porter, 2003), decreased budgets (Ibarra-Colado, 2002; OECD, 2006), lack of leadership (Cazés-Menache, Ibarra-Colado, & Porter-Galetar, 2004), and marginal participation of academics in the definition of university life (Gil-Antón, 1994; Silva, 2000). This study addressed one of the associated factors: the role of faculty members in the process of university restructuring. Previous research showed that universities lacked organizational structures to organize the work and practice of faculty members; thus, academic work degenerated into an aggregate of individual projects and efforts that contributed peripherally to the development of university life (Guevara, 2004; Ibarra-Colado & Porter-Galetar, 2007; Porter, 2003). However, there are no empirical studies that explore, from the perspective of faculty members, the meaning of being a university professor who is expected to develop a productive professional career and engage in university restructuring. This investigation attempted to address this gap by

exploring the construction of professional identity among PROMEP professors to find answers to the larger problem of the failure of university restructuring in Mexico.

The case study approach enabled an exploration of the reasons why a public state university such as UM has not managed to modify its academic structures and functions to improve academic performance (i.e., minimal number of accredited programs, ineffective teaching, and low graduation rates) even when UM relies on a significant number of PROMEP professors.

### **Summary of Findings**

Empirical data were coded and organized to explain three phenomena related to the construction of the professional identity among PROMEP professors. First, findings in Chapter Four show the ways in which the process of university restructuring in Mexico created an organizational context at UM that offered specific conditions of the negotiation of the self-definition of PROMEP professors as researchers. Second, findings in Chapter Five illustrate the participation of PROMEP professors in institutional service and the influence of their participation in committee work upon the definition of professors' work and professional identity. Third and finally, findings in Chapter Six show the forms of self-definition that PROMEP professors constructed and negotiated within a climate of university restructuring that was experienced both as a context and as a practice.

### ***University Restructuring as Context: The PROMEP Professor in the Hybrid Organization***

Chapter Four addressed the first research question of this study: What are the contextual factors for the negotiation of academic identity among full time faculty members who entered state public universities in Mexico during the late 1990s? According to the theoretical approach of this study, to understand the construction of individuals' self-definition as professionals, it is necessary to understand the components and dynamics of the socio-cultural context in which individuals are located (Abbas & McLean, 2001; Assaf, 2008; Connelly & Clandinin, 1999; Ibarra, 1999). Thus, this study explained the socio-cultural and institutional context in which PROMEP professors developed their academic work and self-definitions as professionals.

Chapter Four presented two central findings that showed the context in which the academic identity of PROMEP professors was constructed and negotiated. First, PROMEP professors noted that it was difficult to sustain and negotiate their academic identity as researchers within a university whose core organizational structures (i.e., mission and goals, bureaucratic apparatus, and normative framework) were ambiguous and inefficient to the extent that they did not encourage research work as a core element of academic life. Second, PROMEP professors negotiated their academic identity within two types of Faculties: parochial and modern Faculties. Each type of Faculty provided different academic values and structures of interaction for the negotiation of PROMEP professors' self-definition as researchers.

These findings confirm those in the literature that note that the academic structure of a university was comprised of subcultures and a variety of practices that led to, within the organization, multiple approaches in the participation of university life (e.g., González, 2002; Jermier, Slocum, Fry, & Gaines, 1991; Kezar & Eckel, 2002; Locke & Guglielmino, 2006; Sporn, 1996). PROMEP professors constructed and negotiated their professional identity within a university with a hybrid organizational identity in which practices and values of long-standing traditions and modernity coexisted. The organizational identity includes what individuals do and produce as part of their action as organizational members (Albert & Whetten, 1985; Elsbach & Kramer, 1996; Gioia, Schultz, & Corley, 2000; Golden-Biddle & Rao, 1997; Pratt & Foreman, 2000; Pratt & Rafaeli, 1997; Scott & Lane, 2000). Some components of organizational identity include institutional mission, the roles of the members of the organization, and decision-making processes. This study found that the organizational identity of UM was neither unified nor monolithic. The construction of a hybrid organizational identity at UM, which was manifest in the development of parochial and modern Faculties, was the result of a process of university restructuring that brought together federal mandates and local practices. PROMEP professors negotiated their self-definition as researchers in parochial and in modern Faculties in distinct ways.

#### **University restructuring as practice: PROMEP professors and committee work**

Culture and identity theorists explain that an individual constructs his or her self-definition based on the interactions and use of culture that he or she constructs with

others (Connelly & Clandinin, 1999; Pratt, Rockmann, & Kaufmann, 2006; Swidler, 2001). Professional identity literature points out that the construction of the professional self is linked to the kind of practices in which professionals engage on a daily basis (Casey, 1995; Erez & Earley, 1993; McAllister & Bigley, 2002). Workers use symbolic, organizational, and personal resources to navigate their work context and engage in social practices that frame experiences of personal construction and organizational functioning (Abbas & McLean, 2001; Assaf, 2008; Connelly & Clandinin, 1999; Ibarra, 1999). This theoretical perspective led this investigation to examine the characteristics of the practices in which PROMEP professors engaged in a daily basis within a climate of university restructuring to develop their self-definition as academics.

Chapter Five addressed the second research question formulated for this study: What are the practices that enable full time faculty to negotiate their academic identity? Three main findings were noted and discussed in Chapter Five. First, full time professors in parochial and modern Faculties at UM noted that their academic work was comprised of three central academic functions: research, teaching, and service. Full time faculty members participated in evaluation processes to assess their performance and productivity in each one of their three academic roles. Full time faculty members viewed research as the most important and satisfying of their academic functions. Teaching was as an activity that full time professors in this study were not enthusiastic about and yet they had to engage in teaching as part of their academic role. Finally, full time professors viewed service activities as a burden that hindered their opportunities to

perform their research and teaching functions; however, these professors acknowledged that institutional service was a necessary part of their work if they wanted to adopt research as an academic value and improve the academic performance of the university.

The second finding referred to the participation of full time faculty members in institutional service as part of their academic work. In the employment contract of full time professors, service activities were expected to have a peripheral role in professors' workload (i.e., 10% of 40 hours per week); however, in everyday practice, PROMEP professors' participation in committee work became as relevant and demanding as either research or teaching. PROMEP professors in both parochial and modern Faculties stressed their reluctance to participate in committee work; yet they engaged actively in institutional service activities in order to create organizational conditions that facilitated the development of research and teaching. Full time faculty members participated in curricular design committees to develop and establish graduate programs and obtain their accreditation. The institutionalization of graduate programs was part of the process of university restructuring. Participation in curriculum design committees required full time faculty members to learn educational principles and strategies to develop graduate programs.

The third finding showed that the enactment of institutional service activities had detrimental effects upon the ways in which PROMEP professors carried out their research and teaching activities. Both the professional status and remuneration of



PROMEP professors in parochial and modern Faculties were at risk when full time faculty members had to postpone their research and teaching agenda to satisfy institutional service activities. Full time faculty members in parochial Faculties had to deal with these detrimental effects without support from their colleagues or deans. Full time professors in modern Faculties were dissatisfied with the effects of their participation in institutional service activities; however, they noted that, in contrast to professors in parochial Faculties, they were supported by their colleagues and deans.

Findings in Chapter Five confirm that research is viewed as the highest priority among full time faculty members who work in universities that aim to cultivate a research orientation (Adams, 1998; Akerlind, 2005; Altbach, 2001; Archer, 2008a, 2008b; Askling, 2001; Austin, 2002; Blau, 1994; Chavoya-Peña, 2001; Fairweather, 1989; Gumport & Snyderman, 2002). Consistent with the scholarly literature, Chapter Five shows that research and teaching were core work practices that defined PROMEP professors' self-definition as academics (Gappa, Austin, & Trice, 2007; Rhode, 2006). Findings also validate that institutional service, which may involve the enactment of an administrative role or participation in campus committee work, is regarded by full time professors as a peripheral activity that does not provide significant benefits for academics' career development (Rhode, 2006; P. G. Taylor, 1999; Wilson, 1979).

#### ***Academic Self-definitions: Positioning in a Climate of University Restructuring***

Professional identity is comprised of a series of self-definitions that members of an occupational or professional group develop on the basis of the practices in which

they engage in their workplace (Kleinman, 1981; McKeon, Gillham, & Bersani, 1981; Pratt, et al., 2006). The construction of an occupational or professional identity is a fluid and negotiated process through which individuals develop multiple narratives that describe their role functions and respond to the challenges and demands of their workplace (Assaf, 2008; Fine, 1996; McKeon, et al., 1981; Volkmann & Anderson, 1998). Identity theorists state that identity is neither a fixed nor a stable construct (Côté & Levine, 2002; Erez & Earley, 1993; Greenhalgh, 2002). These theoretical assumptions led to the study of the kind of self-definitions full time faculty members communicated and the personal mechanisms through which they constructed and negotiated these self-definitions.

Chapter Six answers the third research question formulated for this study: What are the characteristics of the academic identity of full time faculty? Chapter Six presents two broad findings. First, PROMEP professors both in parochial and modern Faculties communicated three types of self-definitions (i.e., identity claims): the academic as researcher, the academic as change-maker, and the academic as saturated worker. The development of identity claims had specific motivations and contained an emotional dimension. The relationship among the three identity claims was explained by PROMEP professors in parochial and modern Faculties in distinct ways. The second finding was related to the mechanisms through which PROMEP professors negotiated their three identity claims. The development of three parallel identity claims was based on the responses of PROMEP professors to identity threats both inside and outside their

Faculties. PROMEP professors navigated their identity claims through processes of self-regulation that enabled them to either enact or abandon each one of their identity claims selectively. Chapter Six explains that self-regulation operated to satisfy both institutional and personal needs.

The findings presented in Chapter Six support previous studies that note that academic identity is neither a fixed nor a uniform construct (Abbas & McLean, 2001). The UM case shows that PROMEP professors developed a hybrid and fluid professional identity that included three identity claims. PROMEP professors both selected and abandoned different narratives of the self strategically in order to respond to contextual demands. PROMEP professors talked about themselves as researchers, as change-makers, or as saturated workers in order to comply with their three academic functions and satisfy evaluation criteria.

### **Developments in the Study of the Academic Profession**

This investigation contributes to the development and study of the academic profession in four central ways. Three of them refer to new forms of understanding and conceptualization of faculty members and the academic profession. The fourth contribution refers to methodological methods for data collection and data analysis.

#### ***A Re-conceptualization of the Academic Structure***

This study contributes to the re-conceptualization of the academic structure in public state universities in Mexico through the explanation of the two concepts of parochial and modern Faculties. These concepts, described in Chapter Four, provide an

explanation of the socio-cultural practices through which academic structures were constructed and the role of faculty members within this process. The relevance of these two concepts is based on their potential to explain the particular context and strategies of action through which academic actors participate in the process of university modernization initiated in Mexico since the 1980s. To develop both concepts, this investigation relied upon two actions. The first action consisted of the formulation of an interpretative framework that combines international perspectives on the study of the academic profession and the process of university restructuring. The second action consisted of the use of the interpretative framework to make sense of the social structures and cultural patterns through which PROMEP professors at UM recreated international and national mandates for university restructuring in the local context.

Existing conceptualizations of the academic structure of higher education in Mexico focus on the description of collective organizational behaviors such as strategic planning, institutional self-evaluation, formulation of institutional policies, design, and implementation of financing policies, and the integration of technology into academic life. As described in the literature review in Chapter Two, there exists no interpretative studies in Mexico that convey the features of academic structures as a social construction in which faculty members and other staff members participate. Existing literature on higher education in Mexico is mainly comprised of organizational studies that use a historical and socio-political perspective to study large federal universities such as the National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM) which has developed a

research-oriented academic life during several decades (Cazés-Menache, et al., 2004; Ibarra-Colado, 2002; Ordorika, 2003; Porter, 2003).

Present conceptualizations of the academic structure of public universities in Mexico overlook the specific features of the socio-cultural processes in which academic actors engage in a daily basis and the historical development of higher education in Mexico. Higher education policy and research rely mainly on U.S. scholarship to explain the academic structure in public state universities in Mexico (Barona, 2006; Porter, 2003). However, the use of U.S. scholarship has not been a critical adaptation of concepts and categories of analysis to make sense of Mexican higher education. Cultural and structural differences among countries require policy makers and scholars to re-conceptualize the features and construction of academics structures in public state universities in Mexico. In U.S. scholarship, central concepts such as discipline, institutional type, and department are used to explain the construction and functioning of academic structures. On the one hand, the concepts of discipline and institutional type (i.e., research or teaching oriented) are used to explain the cultural configurations that enabled the development of academic structures (Clark, 2001). On the other hand, the concept of department refers to the organizational unit in which academic specialization, interaction and networking, mobility, governance, and financing are created to enable the functioning of academic structures (Gumport, 1997, 2000; Gumport & Snyderman, 2002; Lane, 1985; Wilson, 1979).

In public state universities in Mexico, none of the three U.S.-oriented concepts have the same relevance and meaning in the construction of academic structures. The construction of academic structures at UM could be difficult to describe by relying mainly on concepts such as disciplinary affiliation, institutional type, or department. In public state universities such as UM, there are other concepts that became more significant to the explanation of the construction of academic structures and practices in the Mexican context: academic union, part time faculty, federal mandates, extraordinary budgets, and teaching-oriented academic culture. The concepts offered by the U.S. scholarship can be used as part of an analytical framework to study higher education and the academic profession in Mexico; however, there is a need to develop alternate forms to conceptualize and interpret the construction of academic structures certainly in the Mexican and likely in the Latin American context. The development of the concepts of parochial and modern Faculties is an important contribution to address this need.

Based on the findings of the UM case, academic structures can be conceptualized as socio-cultural constructions in which faculty members along with other academic administrators and university officers participate to negotiate (a) local, national, and international values as well as (b) traditional and new academic practices for university functioning and restructuring. The concepts of parochial and modern Faculty suggest that academic structures in which full time faculty members work are based on the construction of cultural values and social dynamics that include

communication, collegial interaction, leadership, and decision making among university actors. Both concepts of parochial and modern Faculties underline the participation of faculty members (i.e., part time and full time) in the construction of academic structures.

As described in this study, the concept of parochial Faculty emphasizes the construction of an academic structure characterized by seven components: (a) the central participation of part time faculty and the academic union in the definition of academic affairs, (b) a teaching-oriented academic culture based on the consolidation of undergraduate programs and the isolation of research activities within Faculties, (c) authoritarian behaviors of a Faculty's leaders and exclusion of full time faculty members from decision making processes, (d) problematic and ambiguous communication between a Faculty's authorities and full time faculty members, (e) conflictive collegial interaction encouraged by differences in ideological perspectives, (f) limited or no implementation of strategic planning for the development of academic affairs, and (g) embryonic efforts to legitimize research as a component of academic life. The construction parochial Faculties is based on dynamics of resistance and conflict that arise when new values and academic practices mandated by the federal government are required to replace academic traditions that do not honor research as an academic value.

The concept of modern Faculty, on the other hand, refers to the construction of an academic structure characterized by the following aspects: (a) central participation of

full time faculty members, who completed their graduate studies in large research universities either in Mexico or abroad, in the organization of academic life, (b) a research-oriented academic culture based on the consolidation of graduate programs and their connection to undergraduate programs, (c) academic leadership based on a leader's expertise and the participation of full time faculty members in decision making processes, (d) opportunities of dialogue and mutual acknowledgement between a Faculty's authorities and full time faculty members, (e) collegial work based on the formulation of common goals aimed to improve academic performance, and (f) the construction of academic activities on the basis of strategic planning and evaluation practices.

The concepts of parochial and modern Faculties provide an analytical framework to make sense not only of the character of academic structures but also of the ways in which PROMEP professors' affiliation to one of the two types of Faculty influence the development of their professional identity and career pathways. The two different types of academic structures created at UM are two types of socio-cultural constructions that can provide different opportunities for PROMEP professors to negotiate their self-representation as researchers, define their participation in the maintenance of the academic structure, and delineate their career pathway.

### ***Legitimization of the Professional Identity through Academic Altruism***

This investigation challenges the traditional description of service as a minor part of faculty's academic work. The argument is that in public state universities in which the



academic culture and organizational conditions are not aligned to support research, participation of full time faculty members in institutional service has two functions: to encourage university restructuring through campus committee work intended to facilitate the adoption of a research-oriented academic culture and the legitimization of the role of researcher.

This study emphasizes that participation in institutional service was a strategy of action through which PROMEP professors endeavored to legitimize and strengthen their role as researchers. Thus, academic work among full time faculty members involved not only the performance of their three central academic functions (research, teaching, and service) but also the development of strategies of action to legitimize the role of researcher of PROMEP professors within the university setting. Findings suggests that this process of legitimization was necessary for PROMEP professors to excel within a public state university that did not have a research-oriented academic tradition and yet was required, by federal mandate, to become a university with levels of academic performance similar to large research universities both in Mexico and developed countries such as U.S.

The acknowledgement of institutional service as a significant part of PROMEP professors' academics work in public state universities is relevant to promote the modification of academic evaluation systems and reward structures. In the Mexican context, faculty members are considered key actors who can foster university restructuring (Gil-Antón, 2003; Guevara, 2004; Ibarra-Colado, 2002; Ibarra-Colado &

Porter-Galetar, 2007; Izquierdo-Sánchez, 2000). Federal policies are formulated to encourage the participation of full time faculty members mainly in knowledge construction and the enactment of effective instructional techniques that lead to the improvement of academic life at the university (Ibarra-Colado, 2002; Izquierdo-Sánchez, 2000; Porter, 2003; Vidales, Sahagún, & Oca, 2006). However, federal policies do not acknowledge service as a practice through which faculty members can contribute significantly to university restructuring. Thus, academic evaluation and reward systems both overlook and underestimate the participation of PROMEP professors in campus committee work.

The neglect of institutional service as an important part of faculty members' academic work is associated with the superficial ways in which federal policies targeting academics' performance and productivity express their understanding of academics, including their work context and their functional role in the improvement of academic competitiveness. Federal policies on academic functioning and university restructuring in Mexico are an imperfect adaptation of higher education policies formulated in developed countries such as the U.S. (Barona, 2006; Díaz-Barriga, 2007; Porter, 2003). Federal policies in Mexico are based on a conceptualization of full time faculty members and academic work as defined in research universities in developed countries. However, as described in this study, Mexican academics work in organizational and socio-cultural conditions considerably different from the experiences of academics in developed countries such as the U.S.

In developed countries, full time academics who work in large research universities are professionals whose functions are clearly delimited within a context where values such as planning, research, organizational effectiveness, or accountability are not highly contested (Altbach, 2001; Leggon, 2001; P. G. Taylor, 1999; Wilson, 1979). Full time professors in developed countries do not have to legitimize their role as researchers or institutionalize central values for the definition of academic life such as planning and evaluation. Research, strategic planning, and practices of accountability have a long tradition in the U.S. higher education (Dill, 1999; Elton, 1988; Gumport, 2000; J. S. Taylor, Amaral, & Machado, 2007). In developed countries, faculty members work to legitimize other aspects of their professional identity such as occupational status (Abbas & McLean, 2001), gender (Bellas, Ritchey, & Parmer, 2001), race or ethnicity (Gregory, 2001), or disciplinary background (Murray, 2000).

In Latin American countries such as Mexico, higher education institutions has been constructed mainly on the basis of teaching, union participation, and the lack of rationalization of organization functions (Bonal, 2004; Brunner, 1989; Kells, 1996; López-Guerra & Flores-Chávez, 2006; Murillo, 2000; Orozco-Silva, 1996). Thus, the process of adoption of new academic values entails major challenges. In higher education institutions in which research, strategic planning, and evaluation are embryonic academic values, the role demands for full time faculty members are different from the role demands required of full time faculty members in developed countries. Yet, federal and institutional policies treat and assess full time faculty members as if they had the

same or similar social and instrumental support of full time professors in developed countries. The UM case illustrates that federal policies required full time professor levels of productivity and performance similar to those required of full time professors in developed countries. PROMEP professors were required to excel in their research activities within a context in which core organizational structures were ambiguous and the value of research as an academic value was under debate.

The UM case shows that PROMEP professors entered a university which possessed low levels of rationalization and imperfect understandings about research as an academic function; thus, PROMEP professors had to generate institutional conditions that not only validated but also supported their role as researchers. At UM, PROMEP professors not only had to satisfy international standards of research productivity but also create strategies to legitimize the nature and value of their research agenda. Findings in this study show that participation in institutional service became a pathway through which full time faculty members worked to institutionalize research as a central value of academic life. PROMEP professors endeavored to modify previous academic structures (parochial Faculties) and develop new structures (i.e., modern Faculties) that acknowledged and supported the enactment of research. The strategy through which PROMEP professors legitimized their role of researchers and encouraged university restructuring consisted of their participation in curriculum design committees to develop and institutionalize graduate programs and obtain their accreditation.

Findings in Chapter Five describe the case of a group of PROMEP professors who endeavored to meet federal mandates and validate their professional identity as researchers through their involvement in committee work. PROMEP professors' participation in committee work became a form of academic altruism<sup>14</sup> characterized by social commitment to improve academic performance through the design and accreditation of graduate programs and a self-centered behavior related the legitimization of one's self-definition as professional. PROMEP professors' involvement in committee work had three outcomes: benefits for the university community,<sup>15</sup> personal sacrifices (i.e., excessive workloads, decrease of research productivity, potential reductions in salary, loss of membership in the National System of Researchers, and higher levels of stress and frustration), and the legitimization and consolidation of the role of researcher as part of the professional identity of PROMEP professors.

The concept of academic altruism emphasizes the mismatch between the excessive role demands of PROMEP professors and the system of rewards at the

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<sup>14</sup> Recent approaches to the study of altruistic behavior emphasize the interplay between ethical and self-regarding considerations; thus, self-concern can lead to altruistic behavior (Hu & Liu, 2003; Monroe, 1994; Teske, 1997). Individuals can engage in altruistic behaviors as a strategy to participate in the construction of social structures (e.g., shaping the rules and institutions of collective life) that enable them to connect to and create meaning of larger social, historical, and political contexts (Teske, 1997).

<sup>15</sup> One year after the site observations and interviews conducted for this investigation, more than 10 Master's and doctoral programs achieved the accreditation as a consequence of the actions of PROMEP professors who participated for more than a year in curriculum design committees. The National Council of Science and Technology in Mexico (CONACYT) granted the title of "high-quality programs" (*programas de calidad*) to the graduate programs at UM that applied for accreditation. UM would receive extraordinary finances to sustain these programs and to provide scholarships to graduate students. Among PROMEP professors, the challenge continues with the second part of the process: the implementation, follow-up, and evaluation of Master's and doctoral programs.

institutional and federal level in Mexico. The UM case describes a reward system that does not acknowledge the participation of full time faculty members in service activities that facilitated the restructuring of the university. This study shows that public state universities such as UM, which are characterized by the ambiguity of their core organizational structures and their hybrid organizational identity (i.e., parochial and modern Faculties), require greater participation of full time faculty members to create modern academic structures and core academic values such as strategic planning and evaluation. Therefore, if full time professors are required to participate in committee work significantly, then reward systems have to be institutionalized to avoid the condition where university professors enact forms of altruistic behaviors that risk their productivity as researchers.

### ***The Unsettled Academic: Risks, Motivations, and Strategies of Self-representation***

Chapter Six describes a system of categorization that identifies the series of self-definitions comprising the professional identity among PROMEP professors. This system of categorization is based on the definition of three identity claims that explain the ways in which full time faculty members position themselves within the university setting and the process of university restructuring. Moreover, this study identifies the concept of self-regulation as the mechanism through which PROMEP professors developed the fluid and hybrid nature of the professional identity. PROMEP professors' self-regulation enabled them to satisfy both institutional and personal goals.

The three identity claims identified in this study are a system of categorization that explains the ways in which PROMEP professors negotiated their academic identity in the midst of three contextual demands: international standards for the academic profession, federal prescriptions, and local expectations. The academic as researcher was an identity claim developed by PROMEP professors to attend to institutional policies in the national and international context that reward participation in the construction of knowledge. The academic as change-maker was an identity claim developed to modify local circumstances that included ambiguity and socio-cultural factors that hindered the adoption of research and practices such as strategic planning or collegial work. PROMEP professors became change-makers who engaged in committee work to ensure the adoption of academic values that supported the construction of research as a core component of academic life. Finally, the academic as a saturated worker was an identity claim that represented the effects of national and international demands upon PROMEP professors' lives and work. PROMEP professors managed excessive workloads in order to comply with international and national standards of faculty productivity and federal-local demands for university restructuring.

Chapter Six is relevant not only because it provides a description of the system of categorization of identity claims among PROMEP professors but also because findings illustrate the processes through which the system of categorization was created and maintained within the UM context. PROMEP professors who entered UM experienced a mismatch between the construction of their role as researchers and the social and

instrumental support available in the university context to enact their role. Thus, their efforts to protect their self-definition as researchers and the possibilities to consolidate their professional career led them to create parallel identity claims that enabled them to create adequate working conditions and achieve both institutional and personal goals.

Self-regulation was a strategy that led to the fluid and hybrid nature of academic identity among PROMEP professors. Studies note the fluid and heterogeneous nature of academic identity (Archer, 2008b; El-Khawas, 2008; Henkel, 2005); however, there are few studies that provide empirical evidence to show the specific strategies through which individuals construct different narratives of the professional self and what the purposes are for these narratives (Archer, 2008b). PROMEP professors developed forms of self-regulation that allowed them to navigate their three identity claims to address multiple role demands and dilemmas. Practices of self-regulation enabled PROMEP professors to protect their professional status as researchers from threats such as underestimation, exclusion, an ineffective bureaucratic system, and insensitive evaluation systems. Through self-regulation, PROMEP professors learned to either perform or abandon identity claims on the basis of personal projects and institutional demands. The concept of self-regulation, as discussed and illustrated in this study, suggest the conceptualization of PROMEP professors at UM as unsettled academics who had to navigate multiple risks and practices and developed several abilities, self-representations, and goals.



### ***The Gathering and Interpretation of Academics' Voices***

The design of this study is innovative with regards to the methods for data collection and data analysis. A central method for data collection was a six-month period of participant observation that involved close and sustained interaction with full time faculty members. Participant observation was a strategy to triangulate data, develop forms of preliminary analysis, and test ongoing hypotheses and inferences with fieldwork participants. As described in the literature review presented in Chapter Two, studies that explore the construction of the academic profession and academic identity rely mainly on semi-structured or in-depth interviews and surveys (e.g., Akerlind, 2005; Archer, 2008a; Becher, 1989). In other cases, the lives and work of academics are explained as a combination of self-reflection and narrative inquiry as a methodological approach (Cuban, 1992; Florio-Ruane, 2001; Serow, 2000; Volkmann & Anderson, 1998). However, experiences of long periods of participant observation based on a day-to-day interaction with full time faculty members are not reported. Being a participant observer who worked as a curriculum consultant with full time faculty members during six months allowed the observation of the behaviors of fieldwork participants and the understanding of PROMEP professors' workplace as an insider.

The role of participant observer enabled the construction of an honest form of communication in which field work participants expressed comfort in conveying their emotions, concerns, fears, and goals to the researcher. As described in the findings of this study, full time professors are professionals with busy agendas; their saturated lives

can hinder the possibilities for the researcher to listen to extensive accounts that would promote a deep understanding of the multiple aspects that influence the lives and work of faculty members. The role of participant observer enabled the researcher to share a significant number of hours with full time faculty members and gain their trust and willingness to share their perspectives and information in a comprehensive way. Field participants in this study viewed the researcher as a person who understood their situation because her role of participant observer enabled her to live through and witness the difficulties they had to overcome in order to perform their work activities.

This study was also innovative in the method of data analysis. As described in Chapter Three, the analysis of empirical data was based on the use of Atlas.ti and concept maps to develop graphic representations to summarize, organize, and compare units of meaning found in interview transcripts, documents, and field notes. The use of concepts maps is not a new practice in qualitative studies (Ahmad & Ali, 2003; Ritchhart, Turner, & Hadar, 2009; Soares & Sousa, 2008); however, their use has not been reported to conduct the analysis of faculty members' narratives. The use of concept maps facilitated the representation and comparisons of field work participants' narratives, the concepts they used to describe their context and experience, and the relationships that they described among the concepts they named. Atlas-ti supported the development of concept maps, the navigation across multiple written texts, and the construction of the process of coding and interpretation. The contribution of this study

is based on the explanation, in Chapter Three, of the use of technology to enact analytical basic operations and organize evidence.

### **Implications for Practice**

According to institutional statistics at UM, during the academic year 2008-2009, part time faculty members occupied the largest percentage of the academic body at UM (i.e., 2491 out of 2928 professors); however, they participated only marginally in institutional service aimed to improve academic life. Full time professors comprised a smaller percentage of the academic body (i.e., 437 out of 2928); yet, they were expected to stimulate and procure institutional-wide improvement of academic performance at UM. The number of full time faculty members at UM who engaged in committee work that had a central influence on the improvement of UM's academic performance was minimal (i.e., 19 out of 437 full time faculty members). The small number of full time faculty members who participated in the construction of university life reveals an asymmetrical participation of the several subgroups of faculty members in the process of university restructuring. Thus, findings of this study suggest the need to examine the development of institutional policies that foster balanced participation of the members of the faculty body in institutional service aimed to improve university life.

This study provided empirical evidence and analytical tools to guide the formulation of policy aimed to regulate and reward academics' productivity and career development as related to university restructuring. Both at the institutional and federal

level, higher education policies that seek to encourage university restructuring need to consider two actions. First, policy has to incorporate new forms of conceptualization of academic structure and academics as a professional community. Second, policy has to be sensitive—and reflect this sensitivity in its recommendations—to the specific characteristics of the contexts and the differences between developed and developing countries.

Public state universities with an embryonic research orientation, such as UM, have to develop institutional policies that (a) acknowledge the relevance of institutional service for the adoption of new academic values in the construction of university life and (b) reward, proportionally, the different forms of participation of faculty members on campus committee work. Academic altruism in the UM case was based on the willingness of PROMEP professors to risk not only their research productivity but also their salaries and health. Thus, this investigation encourages the formulation of sensitive institutional policies that avoid excessive and unrealistic demands upon academics and reduce the number of threats that PROMEP professors perceive during the negotiation of their self-definition as researchers.

The formulation of institutional and federal policies that provide instrumental support for faculty members can include two actions. The first action involves the development of a reward system that understands the nature and purpose of each one of the academic functions required for faculty members according to their occupational status and professional qualifications. The second action involves the formulation of a

normative framework to regulate the participation of not only full time but also part time faculty members in service activities. This normative framework would regulate aspects such as the members required to participate in institutional service to encourage university restructuring, the conditions of participation, and the benefits available to participants.

### **Further Research**

#### **Considerations for the design of research**

This study can be expanded and improved by attending to three dimensions of the research design: the methodological approach, the nature of the sample, and the focus of observation. The case study approach requires an in-depth analysis of a specific phenomenon; thus, this approach hinders opportunities to identify tendencies of the object of study on a larger scale. This study provided a rich description of a particular group of full time faculty members (PROMEP professors) at UM; however, the study did not address whether or not the findings in the UM case are exceptional or if similarities can be found in other public states universities in Mexico. Although the study provides a comparative analytical framework to explore differences within the case (i.e., parochial compared to modern Faculties), it is necessary to expand this study through a comparative analytical approach in which the findings at UM can be compared to other university sites.

Future research that addresses faculty members as a field of study should think carefully about the nature of the sample. This study focused on a group of full time

faculty members, PROMEP professors, who engaged in committee work as part of their efforts both to participate in university restructuring and to legitimize their role as researchers. The in-depth approach of the study required investing a long period of time with field participants and their practices; thus, there were practical reasons that made the observation of other faculty groups difficult. Findings suggest that other academic subgroups (e.g., part time faculty and *profesores de carrera*) must be studied. Both the scholarly literature and the UM case point out that public state universities in Mexico have a heterogeneous academic body (Gil-Antón, 1994). Thus, future research has to consider the selection of a diversified sample. Future studies will have to address members of various groups of the academic body who participate in distinct academic functions: full time professors who do not participate in committee work, full time professors who do not engage in research, part time faculty who do not participate in committee work, part time faculty members who engage in research, and part time faculty who engage in committee work.

Finally, future research investigations have to expand the focus of the process of participant observation. This study described and analyzed a particular phenomenon that was significant theoretically: the participation of PROMEP professors who engaged in curriculum design committees. However, other academic functions performed by PROMEP professor need to be considered. The relationship among three categories of analysis needs to be addressed: academic functions such as research and teaching, the construction of identity claims, and the process of university restructuring. Future

studies will have to carry out participant observation that addresses the ways in which interactions and work with colleagues and students frame the development of the professional identity of PROMEP professors and the improvement of university life.

### **Internal, inter-institutional, and cross-cultural analysis**

This study enabled the identification of new directions in the research on faculty. Future studies should address the negotiation of the academic identity among other members of the faculty body at UM. The findings of this study show that part timers were an academic subgroup that held significant levels of authority in the decision-making processes related to the definition of academic affairs; therefore, it is critical to understand their perspectives and participation in the construction of parochial and modern Faculties as academic structures. Studies on part time faculty members at public state universities should explore the identity claims part timers communicate and their participation in the process of university restructuring. The analysis of part timers as members of the academic body would provide data that can be contrasted to the findings of this study. Comparisons between part timers and PROMEP professors are essential to have a complete understanding of the construction of academic structures (i.e., parochial and modern Faculties) in public state universities in Mexico.

Once the conceptualization and understanding of academic structure and other groups of faculty members within the UM case are addressed, future studies can examine the ways in which findings at UM can be confirmed or challenged in other university contexts. Research questions formulated for this study can be posed for other

public state universities in Mexico. The concepts of parochial and modern Faculties will have to be tested in other institutions. Research questions can include the following: Is the use of the concepts of parochial and modern Faculties a useful approach to examine the characteristics of the academic structures in other public state universities and their relationship to the negotiation of the professional identity among PROMEP professors? Is the participation of PROMEP professors in institutional service and their practices of academic altruism a common phenomenon in other public state universities? Can the three identity claims in the UM case be also found among full time faculty members in other public state universities? The same questions can be formulated to examine other academic subgroups such as part timers.

More broadly, future research can adopt a cross-cultural approach to analyze the ways in which concepts such as parochial and modern Faculties can be re-defined or adopted to explain the academic structures in other countries such as U.S., U.K., Australia, or Canada, which rely upon similar traditions for their structures and concepts of academic labor. As described above, both concepts emphasize the processes of adoption of new academic values and institutional logics for university restructuring. In developed countries, the idea of modernity and university restructuring can involve other dimensions that the UM case did not exhibit such as the integration of information and communication technology. Whereas the concepts of parochial and modern Faculties at UM emphasized the process of adoption of research as a new academic value and practice, in developed countries the concepts of parochial and



modern Faculty could emphasize the integration of technology as a new academic value and practice. Thus, the concepts of parochial and modern Faculties in developed countries could be redefined as an analytical tool to think about or describe the ways in which different departments or organizational units in universities adopt the use of technology in the construction of academic structures and the negotiation of the academic identity. Cross-cultural studies can examine the ways in which faculty members with different occupational status participate in the construction of academic structures (i.e., parochial and modern Faculty) and how they negotiate their academic identity through their participation.

As well for cross-cultural studies, there is merit in the investigation of whether or not the three identity claims identified in this study can be used to make sense of the various types of self-definitions communicated by faculty in developed countries. Future research questions can include the following: What kinds of identity claims do faculty members in developed countries communicate? What are the functions of the various identity claims constructed by faculty members? Are there similarities in the types of identity threats perceived by PROMEP professors in Mexico and faculty members in developed countries? Is the process of self-regulation a mechanism that faculty members in developed countries use to move across multiple identity claims? Are there other mechanisms?

Finally, and more narrowly, the concept of academic altruism, which in the UM case describes part of the work practices among PROMEP professors, can be tested

within rationalized organizational contexts in developed countries. The U.S. literature, for example, suggests that academic labor may be shaped more by status and resources than by altruism (Slaughter & Leslie, 1997), a claim reiterated in both Canadian and Australian scholarship (Marginson & Considine, 2000). In large research universities in these contexts, faculty members do not devote excessive amounts of time to institutional service (Rhode, 2006); thus, it is necessary to examine if different practices or forms of academic altruism are enacted as part of the research and teaching activities of faculty members in developed countries.

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## APPENDIX A

### FACULTY MEMBER INTERVIEW GUIDE

These are guides, with not all questions expected to be asked to faculty

#### 1. *Preliminary issues*

- Researcher's self-introduction
- Explanation of the research project (general characteristics and objectives)
- Questions or concerns expressed by participants

#### 2. *Personal information. A first approach to individual's positioning*

- Age
- Occupation
- Major responsibilities in the work place
- Educational background
- Workplace/ years of teaching experience
- Residential information

#### 3. *Work experiences*

- How long have you been working as a professor?
- What kinds of activities do you do on a regular basis?
- Do you feel more inclined to perform any specific kind of activity? Are there any

activities that you perceive as most important to your daily work?

- At how many universities have you worked? What kind of institutions were these?

(Describe student population, community, institution itself)

- Why did you decide to move from those universities? Why do you decide to stay at this university? Do you like the place where you work now?
- How is your relationship with administrators?
- How is your relationship with other professors?
- What do you think about the salaries that professors receive at this university?
- describe your work with your students?
- What are the characteristics of the student population at this university?
- How is your relationship with students? (Do you tutor them? Why or why not? What do you expect to obtain from your work with students?)
- How do you characterize the professional work with your colleagues and department chair?
- How did you develop your participation in research activities? Do you work with other professors? Have you been able to establish networks in other universities?
- Is it difficult to be a researcher? Why or why not?
- How do you participate in the organizational planning of the university?
- What is the most important aspect of your career as a teacher?
- What are your professional aspirations?
- What do you do when you do not know how to do something in your job?
- What did you enjoy the most in your work?
- What would you change in your work?

#### *4. Faculty's meaning perspectives*

- What does teaching involve? What is good teaching versus bad teaching?
- How do you define your students?
- What do you think is the purpose of universities? How do you perceive your institution, what are its goals?
- What is your philosophy about classroom instruction?
- What do you think about working with colleagues?
- What does research involve? What is a researcher supposed to do?
- What is the role of research activities at this university?
- What do you think about PROMEP?
- How did you learn about the program, its aims, and regulations?
- How and why do you participate in PROMEP?
- What does it mean for you to participate in the program?



## ADMINISTRATOR INTERVIEW GUIDE

These are guides, with not all questions expected to be asked to administrators

### 1. *Preliminary issues*

- Researcher's self-introduction
- Explanation of the research project (general characteristics and objectives).
- Questions or concerns expressed by participants

### 2. *Personal information. A first approach to individual's positioning*

- Age
- Occupation and major responsibilities in the working place
- Educational background
- Years working in present position
- Residential information

### 3. *Working conditions and institutional climate*

- How did you gain this position?
- Why did you choose this institution as your working place?
- Can you describe a typical day of work? What are the working conditions that you like (or do not like) at this university?
- Do you know what the mission or goals of this university are?
- What are the kinds of activities implemented to make sure that the university mission is being achieved?

- How do you describe the central structures/ administrative offices of this university?

What are their functions? What kind of people who work there? How did they obtain that position?

- How are the communications among people working in different departments?

What kind of people participate in the decision making process that affects university life?

Do you know about the partnerships that this university has established with other institutions?

- What do you know about the financial resources allocated to this university?

What do you think about the way in which the university is responding to the needs of students and the local community?

Has the university any mechanism to examine the way in which practices/ functions/ activities are developed? How do university authorities evaluate the results of the programs or initiative they implement?

#### *4. Perceptions about the academy and professors*

Can you describe the typical professor at this university? What kind of activities do professors engage in?

Do you notice any differences in the way in which professors in sciences and humanities organize their professional activities? Is the cultural orientation different in each one of these two broad disciplinary divisions?

- Do you perceive conditions of communication and interaction among professors?

Describe

- What do you think about the programs and courses offered by this university?

Describe

- How do you characterize the research, teaching, and service functions at this university?
- Do you think professors receive support from the central administration to enact their activities? Why or why not? Describe the kind of support offered? Do you know about the kind of demands or complaints that professors have?
- Do professors participate in the academic planning of the institution? How? Why?
- Do you think that the characteristics of faculty members at this university enable the institution to achieve its mission? Why or why not?
- Do you think professors need to change the way in which they work? Why or why not? If yes, what do they need to change?
- What do you know about PROMEP? Do you know its objectives? How has this program been implemented? What do you think about the program?
- How do you describe the participation of faculty members in PROMEP?

## APPENDIX B

### CODING SCHEME: CONSTRUCTION AND IMPLEMENTATION

#### List of codes

The list of codes formulated through open coding and a set of predetermined codes based on the literature review and the theoretical framework

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 1. PB <sup>16</sup> _studies_self-aggrandizement | 14. IF_philosophical basis                      |
| 2. PB_studies                                    | 15. IF_norm system                              |
| 3. PB_residence                                  | 16. IF_incorporation                            |
| 4. PB_previous experience                        | 17. IF_hiring/promotion policies                |
| 5. PB_hiring process                             | 18. IF_federal programs_nature                  |
| 6. InstDY <sup>17</sup> _transition behaviors    | 19. IF_evaluation                               |
| 7. IF <sup>18</sup> _unionization effects        | 20. IF_educational programs                     |
| 8. IF_tenure                                     | 21. IF_AW <sup>19</sup> definition_PROMEP       |
| 9. IF_teaching training                          | 22. IDY <sup>20</sup> _understanding surrealism |
| 10. IF_teaching evaluation/or lack of            | 23. IDY_sense of ignorance                      |
| 11. IF_system reward                             | 24. IDY_self-definition                         |
| 12. IF_PROMEP networking                         | 25. IDY_searching new knowledge                 |
| 13. IF_program regulations                       | 26. IDY_research evaluation                     |
|  | 27. IDY_playing various roles                   |
|  | 28. IDY_individualized solutions                |

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<sup>16</sup> PB= Personal background

<sup>17</sup> InstDY= Institutional dynamics

<sup>18</sup> IF= Institutional factors

---

<sup>19</sup> AW= Academic work

<sup>20</sup> IDY= Individual dynamics

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| 29. IDY_fear to the context                | 48. CF_no instrumental support             |
| 30. IDY_definition_student                 | 49. CF_no professionalism                  |
| 31. IDY_definition university              | 50. CF_no organization                     |
| 32. IDY_definition of AW                   | 51. CF_no leadership                       |
| 33. IDY_definition of academic<br>dialogue | 52. CF_no infrastructure                   |
| 34. IDY_comparing experiences              | 53. CF_no human resources                  |
| 35. IDY_professional skepticism            | 54. CF_negative leadership                 |
| 36. IDY_finding resources                  | 55. CF_vertical_leadership                 |
| 37. IDY_emotional expressions              | 56. CF_positive_leadership                 |
| 38. CF <sup>21</sup> _university history   | 57. CF_dept_cultural orientation           |
| 39. CF_teaching/research divide            | 58. CF_dept_goals                          |
| 40. CF_systematization of<br>information   | 59. CF_dept history                        |
| 41. CF_student performance                 | 60. CF_cultural dimension                  |
| 42. CF_overwhelming bureaucracy            | 61. CF_collective funds                    |
| 43. CF_organizational structure            | 62. CF_centralized operations              |
| 44. CF_organizational identity             | 63. CF_central office goals                |
| 45. CF_organizational chart                | 64. CF_authority bodies                    |
| 46. CF_organizational socialization        | 65. CF_academic body                       |
| 47. CF_organizational size                 | 66. CF_institutional memory                |
|  | 67. CDY <sup>22</sup> _university planning |
|  | 68. CDY_shared power                       |

---

<sup>21</sup> CF= Contextual Factors

---

<sup>22</sup> CDY= Collective dynamics

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 69. CDY_shared isolation                     | 87. CDY_conflictive power                     |
| 70. CDY_self-contained units                 | 88. CDY_communication                         |
| 71. CDY_response to change                   | 89. CDY_academic leadership                   |
| 72. CDY_research + social impact             | 90. CDY_academic interaction                  |
| 73. CDY_peer evaluation                      | 91. CDY_academic evaluation<br>process        |
| 74. CDY_outside networking                   | 92. CDY_information management                |
| 75. CDY_outcomes of faculty<br>participation | 93. CDY-policy implementation                 |
| 76. CDY_no organizational<br>socialization   | 94. C-I-DY <sup>23</sup> _status construction |
| 77. CDY_no collective planning               | 95. C-I-DY_disconnected<br>membership         |
| 78. CDY_negotiation of structures            | 96. C-I-DY_goal integration                   |
| 79. CDY_inter-dept_networking                | 97. AW <sup>24</sup> _tutoring                |
| 80. CDY_implementation of plans              | 98. AW_teaching                               |
| 81. CDY_graduate division<br>construction    | 99. AW_stress_evaluation                      |
| 82. CDY_depreciation of academic<br>status   | 100. AW_self-negotiation                      |
| 83. CDY_dept_planning                        | 101. AW_research                              |
| 84. CDY_dept_evaluation practices            | 102. AW_official definitions                  |
| 85. CDY_decision making                      | 103. AW_no social commitment                  |
| 86. CDY_continuity/reproduction              | 104. AW_health cost                           |
|  | 105. AW_CurrD <sup>25</sup>                   |

---

<sup>23</sup> C-I-DY= Collective-individual dynamics

<sup>24</sup> AW= Academic work

- 106.AW\_CurrD\_reasons
- 107.AW\_CurrD\_previous efforts
- 108.AW\_CurrD\_problems
- 109.AW\_CurrD\_self-eva
- 110.AW-D\_time consuming
- 111.AW\_D<sup>26</sup>\_creativity
- 112.AW-D\_sustained effort
- 113.AW-D\_negotiation/socialization  
of ideas
- 114.AW-D\_gender issues
- 115.AW-D\_commitment to  
construction
- 116.AW-D\_Academic altruism
- 117.Academic life

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<sup>25</sup> CurrD=Curriculum design

<sup>26</sup> AW-D= Academic work-descriptors

## Code Families

The list of 117 codes were grouped into eight family codes: collective processes, individual processes codes, belief-based codes, relation and social structures codes, setting codes, strategy codes, symbolic-shared codes, institutional-valued and activity codes.

**Code Family: Collective process codes** (i.e., codes that name a set of activities or instances of action that may involve an intention or goal, whose definition and enactment were based on the main on group dynamics)

Codes associated with this code family: 17

Number of quotations related to this code family: 221

- |                                   |                                  |
|-----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1. C-I-DY_disconnected membership | 9. CDY_negotiation of structures |
| 2. C-I-DY_status construction     | 10. CDY_no collective planning   |
| 3. CDY_information management     | 11. CDY_peer evaluation          |
| 4. CDY_academic interaction       | 12. CDY_response to change       |
| 5. CDY_communication              | 13. CDY_self-contained units     |
| 6. CDY_conflictive power          | 14. CF_leadership                |
| 7. CDY_decision making            | 15. CF_vertical_leadership       |
| 8. CDY_dept_planning              | 16. CF_negative leadership       |
|                                   | 17. CF_no leadership             |

**Code Family: Individual process codes** (i.e., codes that name a set of activities whose definition and enactment were based on individual dynamics, which although



connected to group influences were reported by participants as an individual experience)

Codes associated with this code family: 14

Number of quotations related to this code family: 218

- |                                    |                                    |
|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 1. AW-D_commitment to construction | 7. IDY_searching new knowledge     |
| 2. AW_stress_evaluation            | 8. IDY_self-definition             |
| 3. C-I-DY_disconnected membership  | 9. IDY_sense of ignorance          |
| 4. C-I-DY_status construction      | 10. PB_hiring process              |
| 5. IDY_definition of AW            | 11. PB_previous experience         |
| 6. IDY_playing various roles       | 12. PB_residence                   |
|                                    | 13. PB_studies                     |
|                                    | 14. PB_studies_self-aggrandizement |

**Code Family: Belief-based codes** (i.e., codes that name instances of the perspectives and ideas held by an individual on the basis of cultural experiences)

Codes associated with this code family: 13

Number of quotations related to this code family: 200

- |                                    |  |
|------------------------------------|--|
| 1. Academic life                   | 5. AW_stress_evaluation                |
| 2. AW-D_commitment to construction | 6. CF_student performance              |
| 3. AW-D_gender issues              | 7. IDY_emotional expressions           |
| 4. AW-D_sustained effort           | 8. IDY_definition of academic dialogue |

- |                               |                            |
|-------------------------------|----------------------------|
| 9. IDY_definition of AW       | 12. IDY_self-definition    |
| 10. IDY_definition_university | 13. IDY_sense of ignorance |
| 11. IDY_definition_student    |                            |

**Code Family: Relation and social structures codes** (i.e., codes that label those segments of empirical data offering indicators about the properties of the interactional structures that frame the way in which individuals develop both individual and collective processes)

Codes associated with this code family: 18

Number of quotations related to this code family: 280

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| 1. CDY_academic interaction            | 10. CDY_negotiation of structures      |
| 2. CDY_academic leadership             | 11. CDY_no collective planning         |
| 3. CDY_communication                   | 12. CDY_no institutional socialization |
| 4. CDY_conflictive power               |  |
| 5. CDY_decision making                 | 13. CDY_outside networking             |
| 6. CDY_dept_evaluation practices       | 14. CF_academic body                   |
| 7. CDY_dept_planning                   | 15. CF_authority bodies                |
| 8. CDY_depreciation of academic status | 16. CF_leadership                      |
|  | 17. CF_no leadership                   |
| 9. CDY_inter-dept_networking           | 18. CF_no organization                 |

**Code Family: Setting codes** (i.e., codes that label segments of textual data that contain indicators of the characteristics that define organizational structures and physical spaces of the university in which social actors developed their most valuable activities)

Codes associated with this code family: 26

Number of quotations related to this code family: 308

- |                                     |                                  |
|-------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1. CF_academic body                 | 14. CF_student performance       |
| 2. CF_authority bodies              | 15. CF_systematization of        |
| 3. CF_centralized operations        | information                      |
| 4. CF_collective funds              | 16. CF_teaching/research divide  |
| 5. CF_no human resources            | 17. CF_university history        |
| 6. CF_no infrastructure             | 18. IF_AW definition_promep      |
| 7. CF_no organization               | 19. IF_educational programs      |
| 8. CF_no instrumental support       | 20. IF_evaluation                |
| 9. CF_organizational size           | 21. IF_federal programs_nature   |
| 10. CF_organizational socialization | 22. IF_hiring/promotion policies |
| 11. CF_organizational chart         | 23. IF_incorporation             |
| 12. CF_organizational structure     | 24. IF_norm system               |
| 13. CF_overwhelming bureaucracy     | 25. IF_unionization effects      |

**Code Family: Strategy codes** (i.e., codes that name strategies of actions that both individuals and groups developed in order to enact or implement changes in their daily activities as people working at a university)

Codes associated with this code family: 7

Number of quotations related to this code family: 130

1. AW-D\_negotiation/socialization of ideas
2. AW-D\_sustained effort
3. AW\_self-negotiation
4. CDY\_negotiation of structures
5. CDY\_response to change
6. IDY\_playing various roles
7. IDY\_searching new knowledge

**Code Family: symbolic-shared codes** (i.e., codes that name instances of the perspectives and ideas shared by a group of people as a result of the dynamic they create together)

Codes associated with this code family: 7

Number of quotations related to this code family: 97

1. CF\_cultural dimension
2. CF\_dept history
3. CF\_dept\_goals
4. CF\_dept\_environment\_cultural orientation
5. IF\_norm system
6. IF\_AW definition\_PROMEP
7. IF\_philosophical basis

**Code Family: Institutional-valued and activity codes (i.e., codes that name a segment of empirical data that offer indicators of the activities that are considered by organizational leaders and managers as relevant to define the organizational identity of the university)**

Codes associated with this code family: 16

Number of quotations related to this code family: 194

- |                                       |                                  |
|---------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1. AW-D_Academic altruism             | 9. AW_official definitions       |
| 2. AW-D_commitment to<br>construction | 10. AW_research                  |
| 3. AW_CurrD_self-eva                  | 11. AW_teaching                  |
| 4. AW_CurrD_design problems           | 12. AW_tutoring                  |
| 5. AW_CurrD_previous efforts          | 13. C-I-DY_goal integration      |
| 6. AW_CurrD_reasons                   | 14. CDY_research + social impact |
| 7. AW_CurrD                           | 15. CDY_university planning      |
| 8. AW_no social commitment            | 16. CF_teaching/research divide  |

## APPENDIX C THE CONSTRUCTION OF CONCEPTS MAPS

In this appendix, I explain the construction of concept maps from interview transcripts; however, a similar process was carried out with the other sources of data. To construct the concept maps, I began with the codification of empirical data through Atlas.ti.

Interviews were transcribed in Spanish and then uploaded in Atlas.ti. The image below (Figure 1) is a copy of the main window of Atlas.ti. On the left side of the image there is the interview transcript. The small window displayed on the right side shows the list of codes created and used to codify the transcript. The second image (Figure 2) shows the application of codes into the interview transcript. Prior to the construction of concepts map, I read the interview transcript twice. The first reading enabled me to create and apply codes. The second reading led me to identify the kinds of topics and the relationships among them as described through the interview.

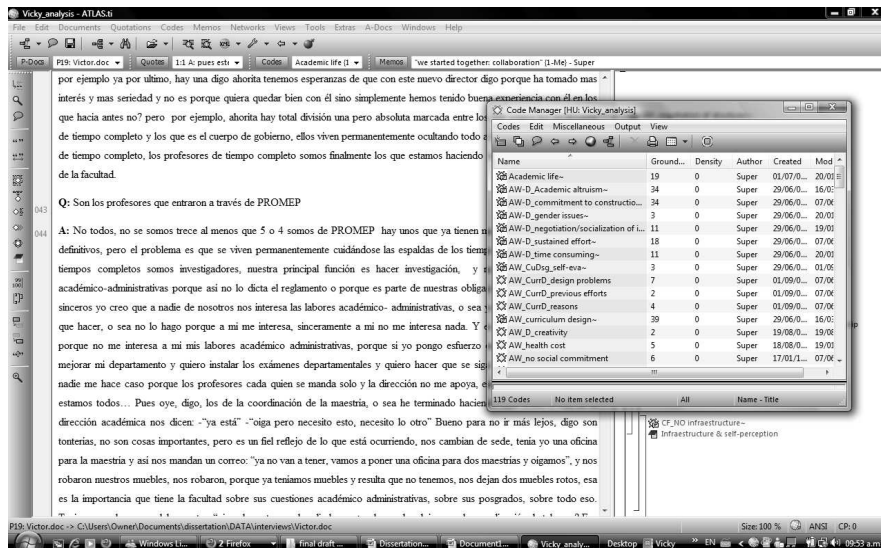


Figure 1. Main window of Atlas.ti showing the interview transcript and the list of codes

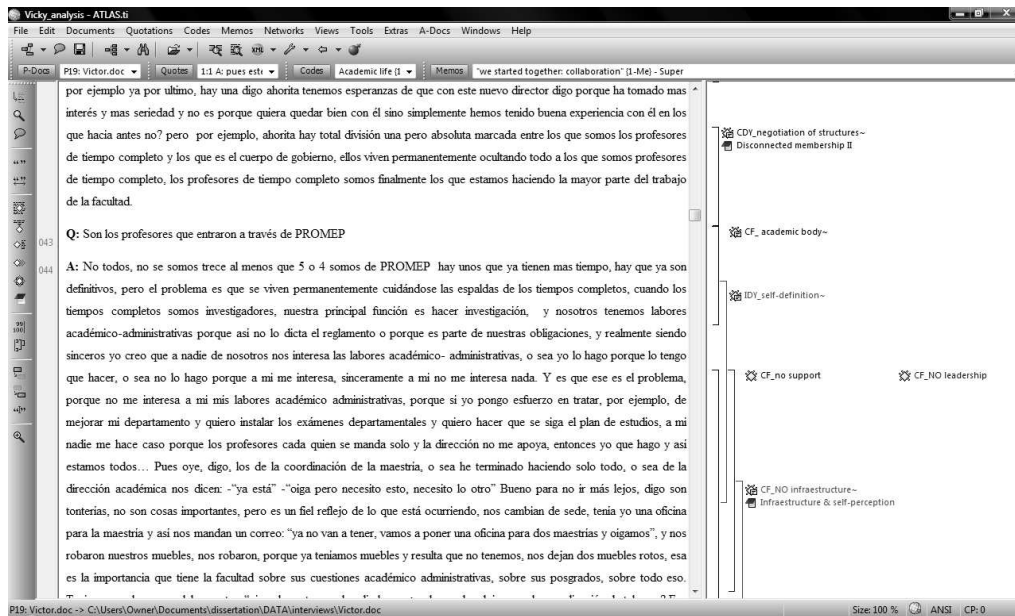


Figure 2. Main window of Atlas.ti showing a segment of an interview transcript and the application of codes and memos in the right side

The construction of concept maps started as part of a process of codification and categorization. Specific segments from an interview transcript were chosen as relevant on the basis of the codes implemented for that segment. The following example segments (in Spanish) were taken from the interview transcript with a full time faculty member from the Faculty of Medicine: Dr. Juan M. Garcia. Segments were coded as indicators of the lack of organization, centralized power, lack of collective work, and ambiguous academic goals and mission. Through the use of Atlas.ti, I applied the appropriate codes (e.g., CF\_no organization) to each segment. Once specific segments were identified as relevant, they were translated into English and the concept map was

constructed by taking into account the concepts (i.e., codes) that were relevant to represent the perspective and descriptions of interviewees.

#### Segment 1

*Cuando fui contratado en el 2003, una de mis primeras y mayores impresiones fue que había una desorganización total, absoluta; no digamos mala, o sea es una desorganización total; nada tiene pies ni cabeza. Cada facultad en esta universidad hace lo que se le antoja. No se respetan los acuerdos, nos hay objetivos comunes, la universidad no ha definido cual es la visión de la institución.*

#### (English translation)

When I was hired in 2003 as a full time professor, I was shocked by the **disorganization prevailing in the university**. Faculties worked on an individual basis: each one of them did what they wanted to do according to their own criteria. **There were no agreements, no collective goals, and no institutional vision.**

#### Segment 2

*Esto no es una academia esto es un ambiente pueblerino y no es que yo me sienta ciudadano, no es que no hay estructura ni organización de gobierno, académica ni política, no hay estructura, no hay estructura no existe la estructura, o sea es mi coto de poder y yo hago aquí lo que puedo y lo hago como*



*seme da la gana, eso es mi interpretación de la Facultad...[A]quí me ha tocado ver reuniones oficiales fuera del Protocolo, cancelan a última hora, llegan tarde, hay falta de formalidad. No se le toma seriedad a lo que se hace, digo esa es mi interpretación.*

(English translation)

This is not an academy; this is a town-like environment. There is no governance structure, no academic structure, and no political structure in this Faculty.

Rather, what you find are people who say “**This is my territory; I do whatever I want whenever I want**” ...[H]ere, people are late to meetings, cancel at the last minute. It seems to me that people here do not take things seriously.

Segment 3

*Muchas veces es frustrante...Pareciera que a nadie le interesa hacer algo por mejorar la situación académica de esta facultad. Los profesores cada quien se manda solo y la dirección no me apoya, entonces yo que hago y así estamos todos... Yo tengo la coordinación de la maestría, o sea he terminado haciendo solo todo...Los alumnos se han quejado varias veces de la incompetencia de ese profesor, pero el director no hace nada por atender las solicitudes.*

(English translation)

To work in this Faculty is quite frustrating...[N]obody is interested in improving academic performance. Every professor is his own boss and works individually.

**The dean does not support anybody**...[I] have been working alone on the design

of the master's program...[S]tudents complain about [bad professors] all the time but **the dean does nothing.**

The bold font in the English translation of the three segments emphasizes the kind of topics that were relevant in the interview transcript of Dr. Garcia. Bold sentences or words, which were identified through the process of codification, became the basis for the construction of a concept map. Multiple interview segments were used to construct a concept map that represented a specific topic such as the climate and cultural orientation of the Faculty of Medicine. In Figure 3, the concepts in the circles summarize and represent the content of the segment two and three, whereas the concepts in the circles with dotted lines summarize and represent the content of the segment one.

To construct the concept maps, I followed the basic principles identified by Cañas y Novak (2008). I began with the formulation of a focus question that required explaining an event or the reasoning behind a procedure. The construction of the concept map was aimed to answer a focus question. The focus question was related to the three research questions formulated for this investigation. On the basis of the focus question, I selected relevant stories, themes, notions, or concepts that participants relied upon during the interview. The second step was to select a series of concepts (between 10-15 concepts) pertinent to the focus question. The selection of concepts for the maps I constructed was based on the initial coding scheme and the topics found in each one of the interview transcripts that were relevant to the focus questions. To

construct the propositions in each map I used both participants' own words and the propositions that were the result of my interpretations of participants' words and the narrative episodes. The selected concepts were then listed and rank ordered by putting the broader ones near the top of the list and moving the more specific ones towards the bottom of the list for the question under consideration. The third step involved turning the ranked list of concepts into a concept map by selecting the best linking words to connect concepts and construct sound and sensible propositions.

Multiple concept maps were constructed for each interview transcript. Not all interview transcripts provided enough information to answer the focus questions fully; therefore, concept maps varied in the number of propositions they contained. Between eight or ten concept maps were constructed for each interview transcript. Some of the main topics of concept maps included personal-professional background (Figure 4), description of the Faculty in which faculty members worked (Figure 3), description of the university as a whole (Figure 5), description of academic life activities (Figure 6), description of academic work (Figure 7), self-definitions as academics (Figure 8). The construction of a series of concept maps enabled the process classification and grouping of concepts under specific fields to find relevant information to answer the research question (i.e., categorization and integration). The construction and comparisons among concept maps enabled me to identify the nature of the knowledge and interpretation that participants held with regards to different topics, concepts, or events related to the university and their academic work.

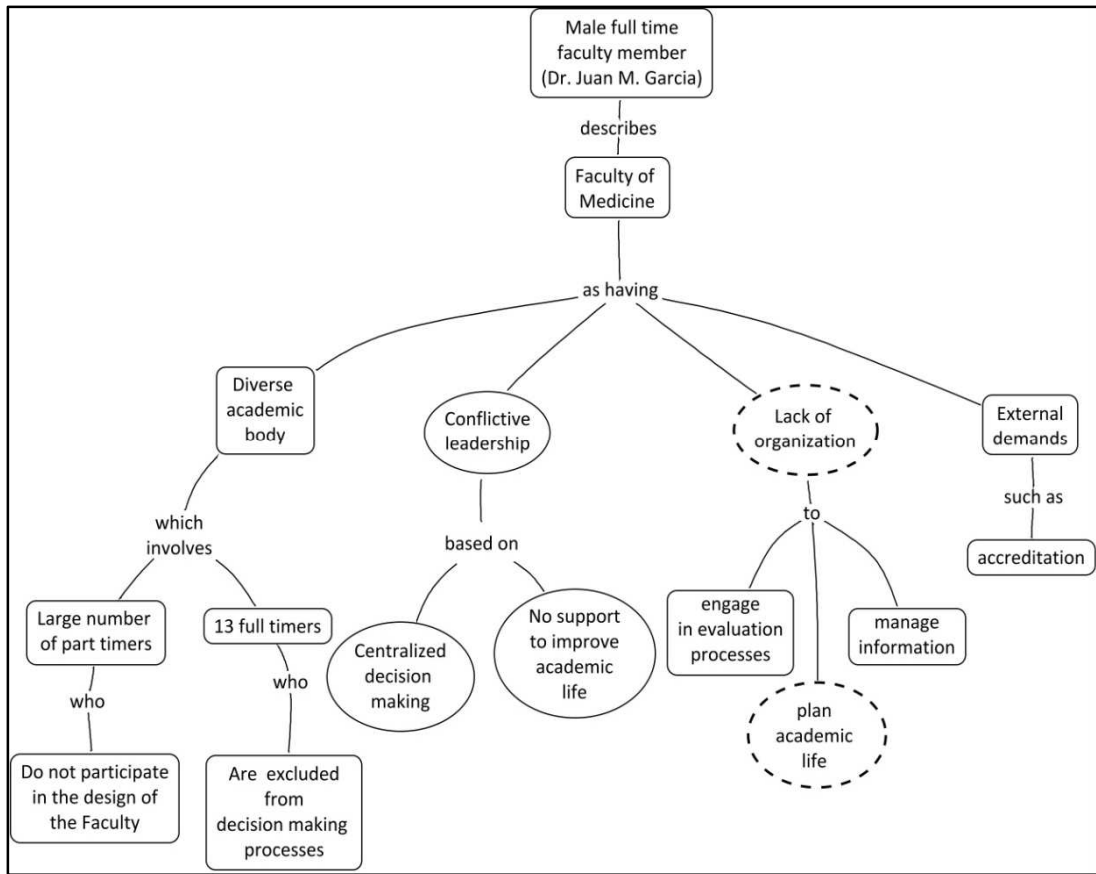


Figure 3. Concept map that summarizes and represents the ways in which a full time faculty member (i.e., Dr. Garcia) perceives and describes some social and cultural characteristics of the Faculty of Medicine

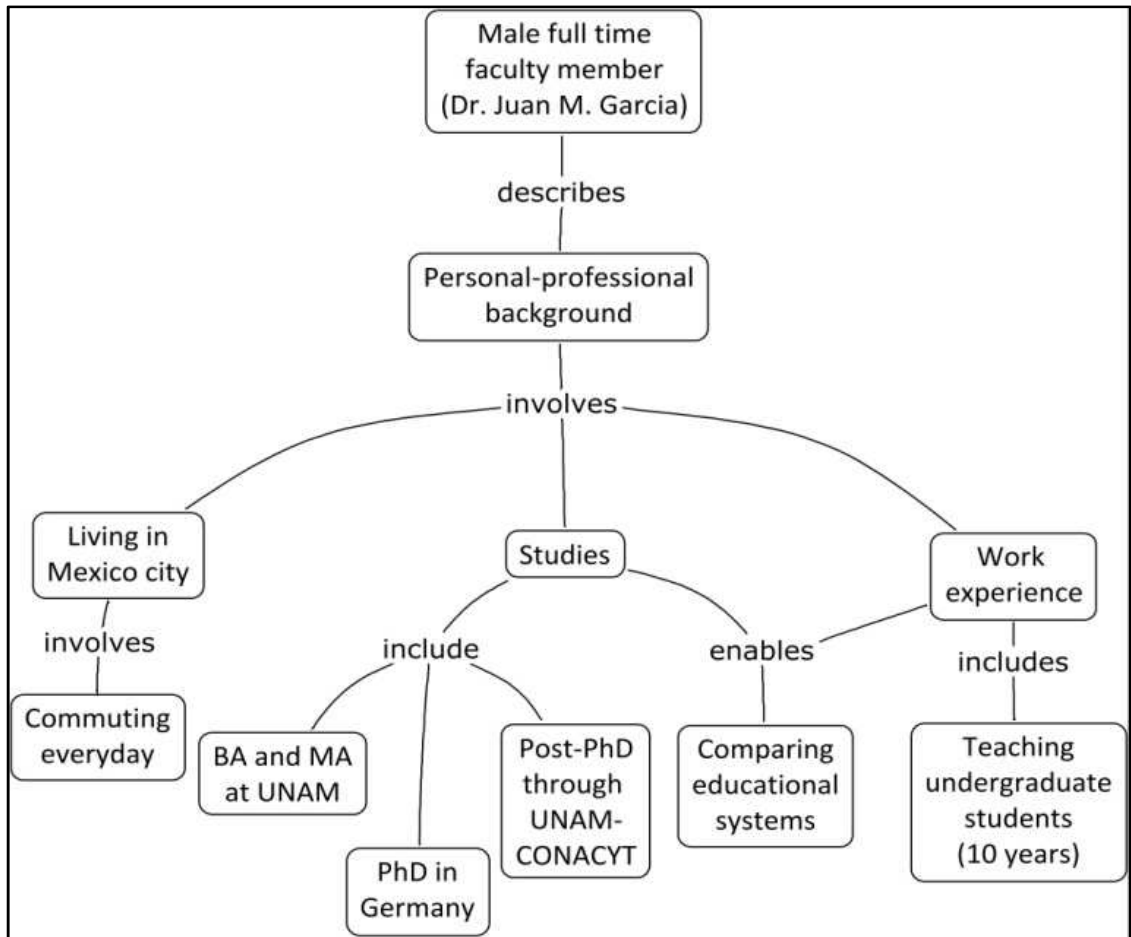


Figure 4. Concept map that represents the personal-professional background of a full time faculty member (Dr. Garcia) in the Faculty of Medicine

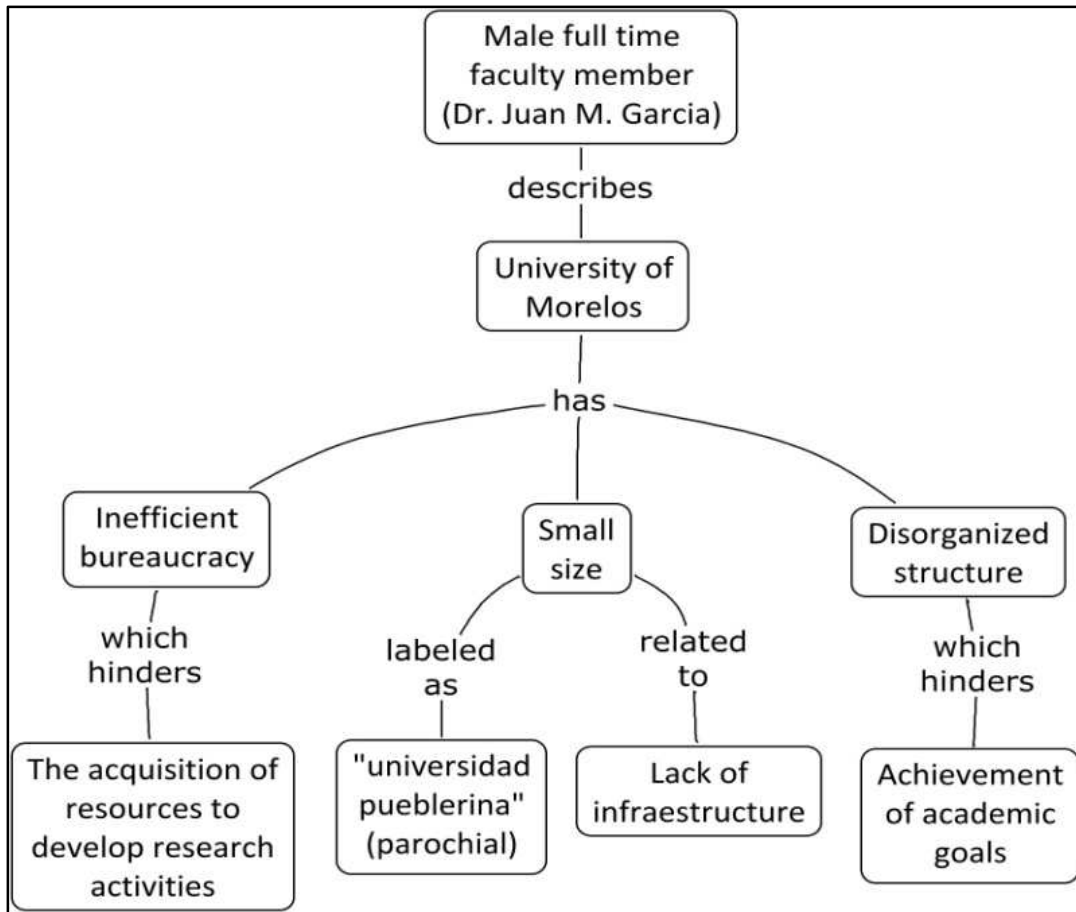


Figure 5. Concept map that represents the way in which a full time faculty member (Dr. Garcia) from the Faculty of Medicine describes the university as a whole

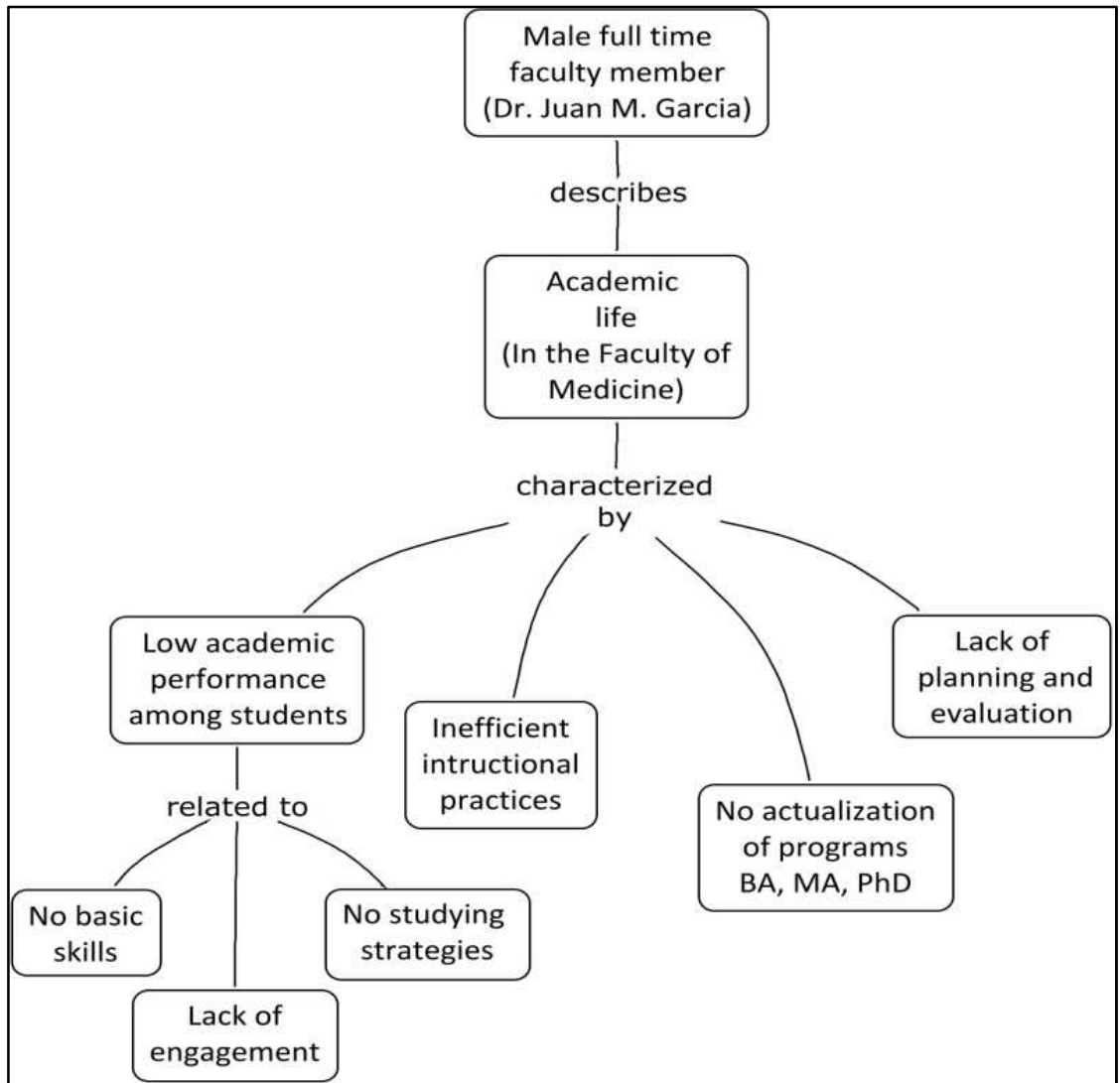


Figure 6. Concept map that represents the way in which a full time faculty member (Dr. Garcia) describes the academic life of the Faculty of Medicine

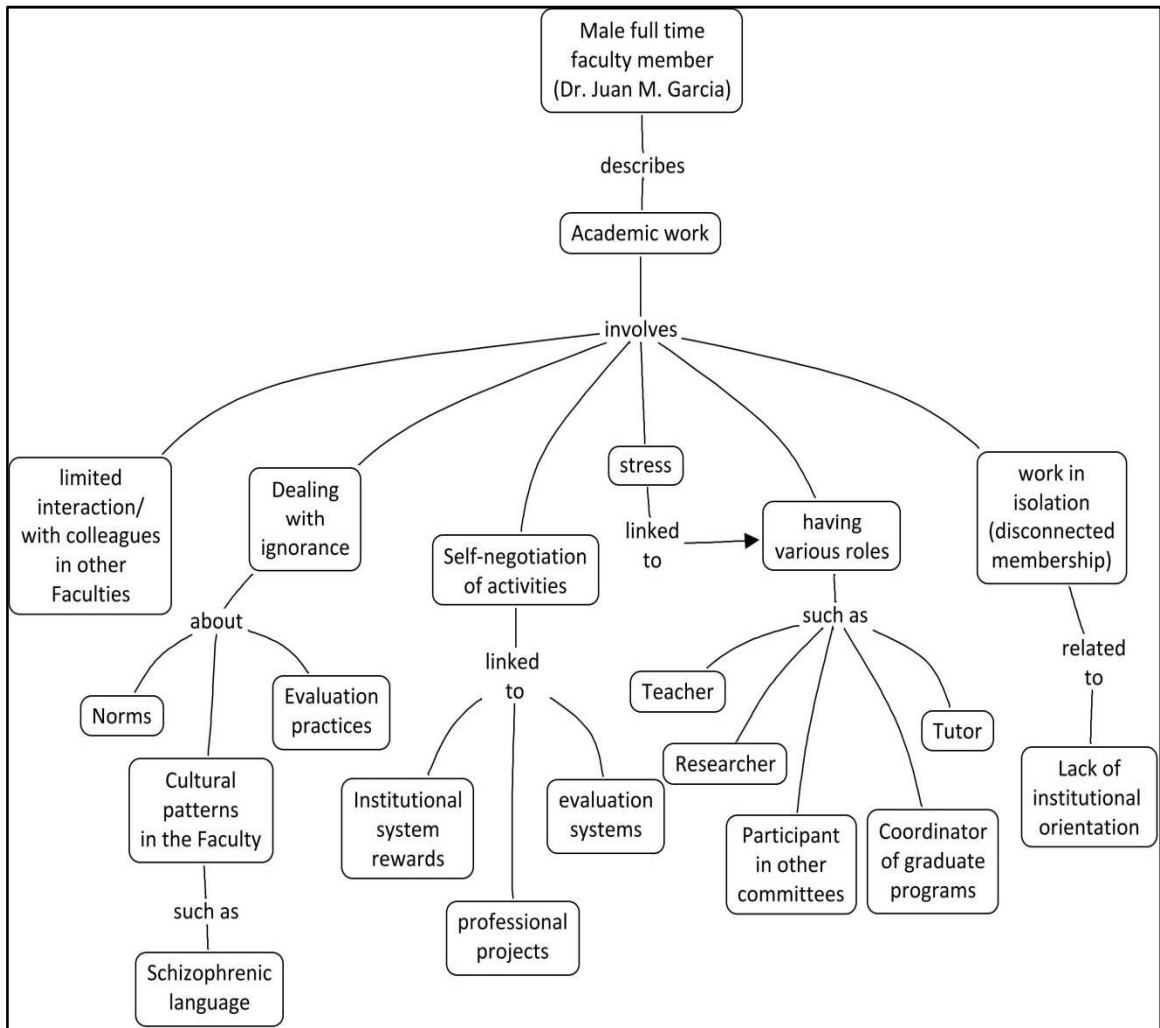


Figure 7. Concept map that represents the ways in which a full time faculty member (Dr. Garcia) from the Faculty of Medicine describes his academic work



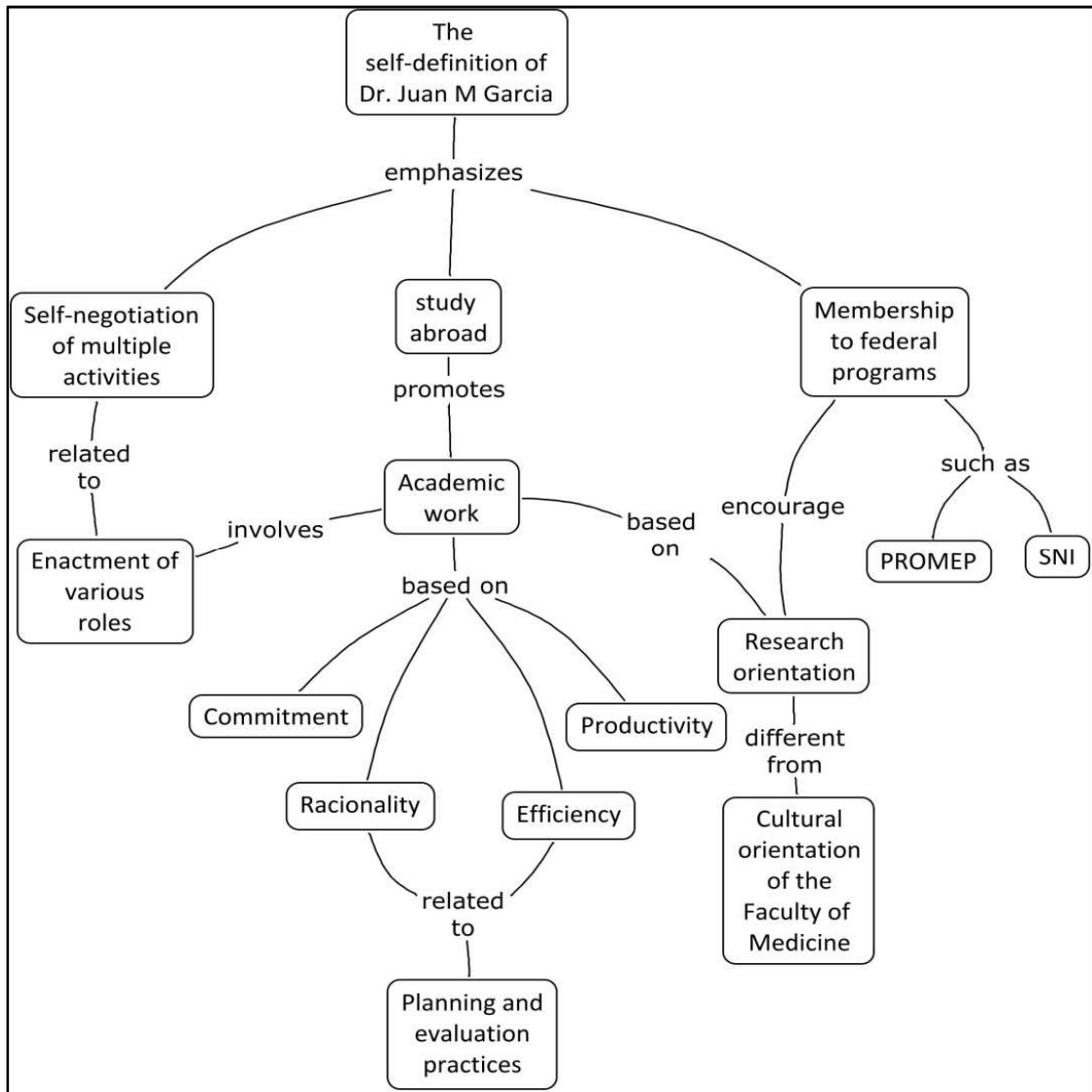


Figure 8. Concept map that represents the main topics and strategies through which a full time faculty member (Dr. Garcia) from the Faculty of Medicine describe himself as a professional

The series of concept maps constructed from one of the full time faculty members in the Faculty of Medicine were compared to the series of concept maps constructed from the interview transcript of another full time faculty member in the same Faculty of Medicine. The concept map (Figure 3) of faculty member A (i.e., Dr. Juan M. Garcia) which represented the ways in which faculty member A described the Faculty of Medicine was compared to the concept map (Figure 9) of faculty member B (i.e., Dr. Joaquin Acosta). The comparison between two concept maps from two different faculty members in the same Faculty of Medicine enabled me to identify, test, and examine relevant assertions.

The comparison of two concept maps (i.e., Figure 3 and Figure 9) that represent the ways in which two full time faculty members perceived the Faculty in which they work enabled me to identify and pursue the analysis of relevant topics such as the forms leadership enacted within the Faculty. In their narratives, both Dr. Garcia and Dr. Acosta emphasized the negative influence of the prevailing form of leadership within the Faculty upon the development of academic activities. Dr. Garcia described leadership as conflictive whereas Dr. Acosta talked about it as ineffective. The construction of concept maps as part of the process of categorization enabled me to formulate additional questions and find out additional information about leadership as part of the social structure of the Faculty of Medicine.

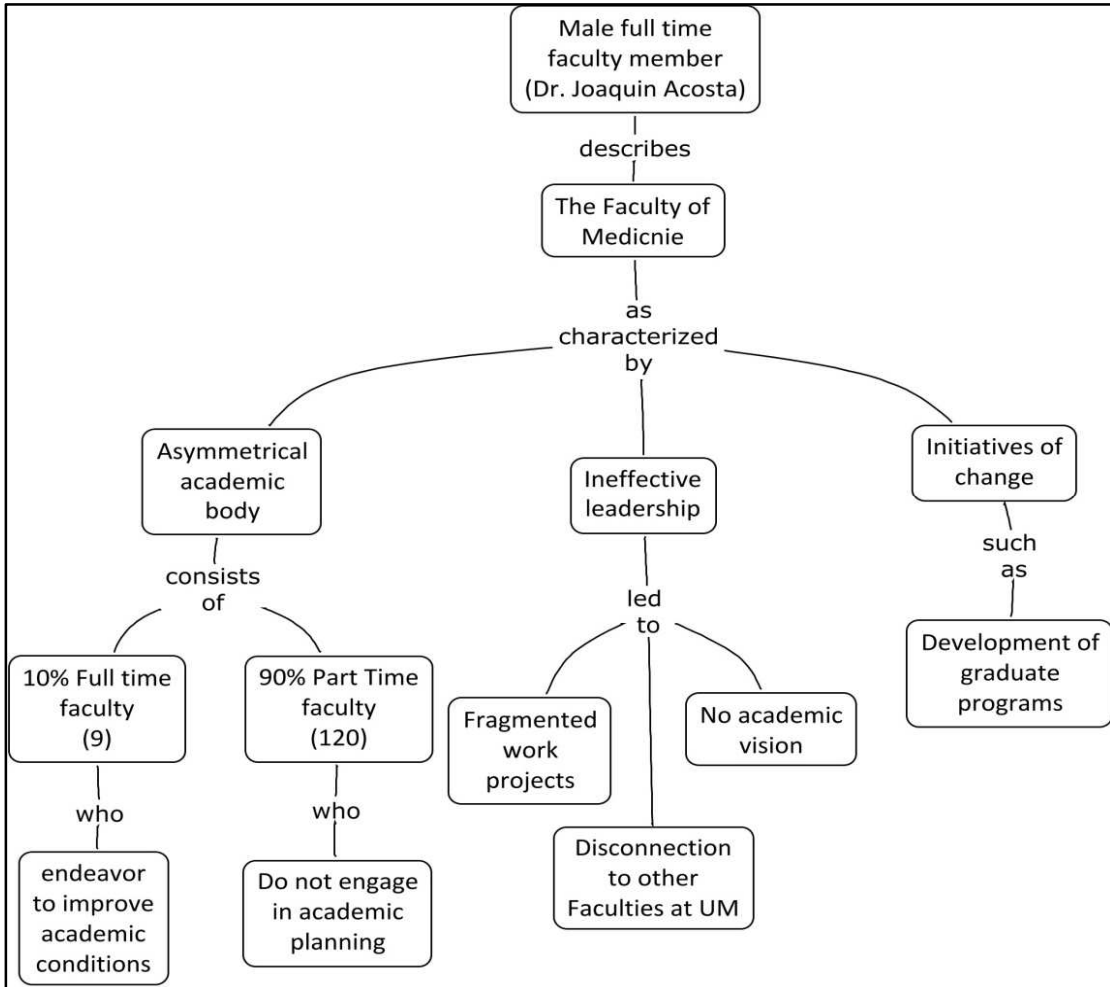


Figure 9. Concept map that summarizes and represents the ways in which a full time faculty member (i.e., Dr. Acosta) perceives and describes some social and cultural characteristics of the Faculty of Medicine