UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

Myths and Markets:

The Emergence of the Public Policy Program at the University of Chicago

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INTRODUCTION

On December 3, 1973, University of Chicago Board of Trustees approved a proposal submitted by the deans of six divisions and schools to establish a new degree granting committee in public policy at the University.[1] On its surface, the decision was unremarkable as it followed a well-established practice at the University of Chicago (hitherto referred to as "the University" or "Chicago") of furthering interdisciplinary research and education through a committee-based organizational structure. And yet, this decision came at a time when the University faced numerous financial challenges and contemplated drastic cuts to its academic operations, including the closures of its Graduate Library School and School of Education.[2] This event, which prefigured the establishment of the University's sixth graduate professional school in 1988, represented more than a routine decision; rather, I contend, it marked an inflection point in the history of professional education at the University of Chicago with potentially profound consequences for how it understood its place in the academy.[3] While University of Chicago President Edward Levi, a legal scholar and practicing lawyer who would later go on to become U.S. Attorney General under President Ford, often embraced the notion of professional practice in education, the project – first proposed in 1969 as a "school of public affairs" by University of Chicago Trustee Sidney ("Jim") Stein, Jr. – met fierce resistance. For more than four years, the project ambled along as University leaders and faculty debated whether the University ought to

[1] Proposal signed by deans of Social Sciences Division, Graduate School of Business, Education School, Biological Sciences Division, Law School, and the School of Social Service Administration. "Memorandum re: Proposal for the Establishment of a Committee on Public Policy Studies," Robert McAdams, Sidney Davidson, Philip Jackson, Leon Jacobson, Phil Neal, and Harold Richman to Edward Levi and John Wilson, November 26, 1973, Harris MSS.

[2] Boyer, *A History,* 386. In late spring 1973, the University's financial position worsens owing to a miscalculation of its enrollment projection that increased the deficit by $500,000. Around the same time, President Levi suggested to Provost Wilson shuddering its Graduate Library School and School of Education (Levi Admin MSS, Box 375, Folder 2).

[3] In defining professional education, I draw on the Andrew Abbott's understanding of professional education as a social structure of professionalization and professions as "exclusive occupational groups applying somewhat abstract knowledge to particular cases (Abbott, System of Professions, 8).

devote its resources (both material and symbolic) to an academic endeavor that, at face value, ran contrary to its understanding of itself as particularly devoted to pure knowledge over its practical application. Despite a long history of applied social science that belied its own myth-making, the University saw itself as the ideal type of the German research university as encapsulated by its Latin motto, *Crescat scientia; vita excolatur* ("Let knowledge grow from more to more; and so be human life enriched").[4] Through ritual and rhetoric, its leaders propagated the saga of an ambitious university – led by "great men" like William Rainey Harper and Robert Maynard Hutchins – that had survived against the odds because of this quality of *distinction*.[5] Given this lineage, how is it the University came to make room for a new academic endeavor – defined hitherto by professional practice, not knowledge creation – that appeared so disconnected from its myths and sense of identity? And, more puzzling, why would the University of Chicago proceed to develop a policy studies program during a time of financial austerity when the project had little funding or perceived benefit to the University's reputation?

Organizational theorists and sociologists of higher education offer several possible explanations for this paradoxical behavior.[6] Organizations compete for goods and resources (i.e., market competition based on financial fitness) as well as for legitimacy (i.e., institutional competition based on social and cultural expectations), contributing to homogenization – or

[4] University of Chicago, "About." See also Boyer, "A History," 73-80, 131-48, for a discussion of Harper's founding vision for the University and its relationship to the German research university model; Boyer describes a University that was more heterogeneous and complex than the "austere utopia" for which Thorstein Veblen advocated (145).
[5] This quality of "distinction" and "greatness" is oft-repeated in the President's State of the University Address to the faculty, which Hutchins began as an annual ritual in 1938. Mythic invocations of the University's history and Harper's founding vision can be found throughout Levi's addresses. See University Record ("SOTU 1969, 7; "SOTU 1972," 25; "SOTU 1973," 38).
[6] See Schad/Lewis/Raisch/Smith (2016) for a recent review of paradox research in the management sciences. I use their definition here in defining paradox as a "persistent contradiction between interdependent elements" (10). While my present discussion focuses on DiMaggio/Powell's theory of isomorphism, many other theories exist to explain organizational paradoxes. See March/Olsen ("New Institutionalism"), Cohen/March/Olsen ("Garbage Can"), Karl Weick ("Loose Coupling"), and Peter Blau (*Academic Work*) for foundational literature in the organizational studies of higher education which discusses goal ambiguity and its implications for structure.

isomorphism – within fields.[7] Some scholars have argued that, when faced with uncertainty, organizations seek legitimacy by mimicking their external environment, copying the structures and routines of their competitors and industry, in a form of mimetic isomorphism.[8] As a result, organizations find themselves – often unintentionally – with disconnects between their formal policies/practice or means/ends, a phenomena called "decoupling," which institutional myths can mask.[9]

Within these classic new institutional frameworks, the Chicago policy decision might be seen as the isomorphic outcome of competition among modern American research universities which have faced pressure since their founding – and particularly over the past fifty years – to "vocationalize" their academic programs in response the rise of the American middle class and the needs of the labor market.[10] The historiography of public policy education, though scant, corroborates this hypothesis, attributing the rise of policy schools in the late 1960s and 1970s to inter-organizational market forces and the increased demand of the U.S. federal government for trained policy analysts to evaluate the social welfare programs of Johnson's Great Society, paying little attention to intra-organizational dynamics of their development within academic

[7] DiMaggio/Powell, "Iron Cage Revisited." I have carried DiMaggio and Powell's distinction between "market" and "institutional" competition through this introduction and historiography, though I note these terms become problematic for processual analysis as the social and symbolic events play a role in the so-called "market" as well. For the empirical portion of the paper, I define market as "financial" events and do away with the term institutional in favor of speaking to "social" and "symbolic" events.

[8] DiMaggio/Powell, "Iron Cage Revisited."

[9] See Bromley/Powell ("Smoke and Mirrors") for a recent review and critique of the literature on decoupling and their theorization on means-ends decoupling, which they argue is common in social sectors, like higher education.

[10] Of course, while enrollments have swollen in categories like business, medicine/health, and education, career outcomes are hardly assured as the oversupply of business and law graduates during the last decade demonstrates (see US Dept of Education, 2019). For a discussion of social, economic, and cultural origins of professional education in America, see Bledstein, *Culture of Professionalism, 33-34,* 84-8, 296-300; Thelin, *American Higher Education*, 56-60; 423-426; Abbott, *System of Professions*, 205-211.

institutions to explain their emergence.[11] However, this conventional explanation presents some challenges in understanding the emergence of Chicago's policy program given the dominance of its ideology and Levi's "refusal to bow to the tastes of the moment."[12] First, from the standpoint of legitimacy, while it is possible there was something newly attractive to the University about the emergent field of "public affairs" amid the social and cultural change of the late 1960s, it was not clear whether this ill-defined field constituted a distinct area of inquiry separate from public administration nor a reputational win, as Levi later admitted.[13] Second, from the standpoint of financial fitness and market competition, it is also possible the University was so desperate for enrollment that it was willing to pursue new opportunities at all costs. However, given the belt-tightening all universities underwent at the time due to federal funding cuts and rising costs, any new project requiring investment would need to be carefully evaluated against the organization's specific goals and decision criteria.[14] Thus, ideology emerged as the crucial pressure test at Chicago as neither the particular type of program nor financial need, alone, sufficiently explain why the policy program moved ahead. It is precisely this tension – between myths and markets – that provides the impetus for this inquiry.

By examining the University of Chicago – an institution that has an understanding of itself as *particularly* dedicated to the advancement of pure human knowledge – this paper seeks to understand how elite research universities that espouse "Ivory Tower" ideologies navigate goal conflict and the role that organizational myth-making plays in their decision-making process

[11] For the most complete historiographies of the origins of public policy schools during the 1970s, see deLeon, *Advice and Consent* and "Historical Roots" in *Oxford Handbook of Public Policy,* and also Radin, *Beyond Machiavelli.* Lynn, *Public Management,* provides a perspective on the evolution of and ambiguity in the meaning of the field.
[12] University Record, "SOTU 1971," 73.
[13] Indeed, Levi later reflected that the Kennedy School was not highly regarded at the time (Notes from William Kruskal interview with Ed Levi, November 13, 1985, and Levi to Kruskal, November 25, 1985, Harris MSS)
[14] This insight was all the more true for Chicago which was particularly "hard hit" by the financial crisis of the late 1960s and 1970s. See Boyer, *A History*, 386, for a discussion of the similarities and differences in the University's financial position from its peers.

to establish new academic programs. Specifically, I investigate the origins of the graduate degree program in policy studies at the University (which began as the Committee on Public Policy in 1975 and later emerged as the Graduate School of Public Policy Studies in 1987, now the present-day Harris School of Public Policy) as a case study in organizational decision-making and an exploration of the social processes by which organizations come to arrive at decisions that appear to run counter to their institutional identities and myths.[15] From a sociological perspective, this historical project raises the theoretical question of the role that linguistic work and myth-making play in catalyzing subtle, yet profound, changes within organizations with consequences for both identity and structure.

Combining historical methods with a processual approach to understanding the policy decision at Chicago, this paper offers a counterpoint to the conventional market-driven explanation for the emergence of policy schools by examining the intra-organizational dynamics of a University that stood at odds with the inter-organizational market pressures of the time. With tepid faculty support and little funding for the program, this paper argues that the decision to establish the policy program represented a great gamble – symbolically and financially – at a time of uncertainty in higher education. While the program was initially spurred by financial events in a rapidly changing external environment, indicative of competitive isomorphism, ultimately, I demonstrate the primacy of the University's myth and symbolic action in catalyzing this particular decision, which, I argue, was fundamentally about the survival of an ideology. Faced with the disconnect between its myth and market demands, the University's myth served as the integrative mechanism that resolved this paradox and enabled the program to move

[15] By myth, I am using Dundes' definition, cited by Polletta et al: "Myths are stories that have a sacred character and that explain how the world or a people came to be" (Dundes, "Folkore and Myth," 173-74, 279-81). By saga, I mean a story that often reinforces myth and take Burton Clark's definition: "Organizational saga is a collective understanding of a unique accomplishment in a formally established group" (Clark, "Belief and Loyalty," 121)

forward even as it appeared to challenge the very identity and reputation of the University.[16] By knotting understandings of the policy program to the University's myth through a social process of validation that transformed its meaning, faculty and administrators were able to see the program not as advancing technical training for public administrators, but rather, as producing analytical thinkers that might generate interdisciplinary knowledge and "contribute to the creation of new ideas for policy."[17] Ultimately, this paper reveals how the process of developing the new policy program resulted in the replication – or mimesis – of the University of Chicago intellectual tradition and its particular understanding of the academy – while at the same time transforming the very institution that it appeared to be replicating – the idea of the University – in subtle, yet meaningful, ways.

The following paper proceeds in five parts. First, I review the relevant historiography of higher education and policy education in order to establish the conventional explanation for the emergence of policy schools and the historical context in which the Chicago program emerged. Second, after a discussion of methods, I extend this conventional explanation by demonstrating how uncertainty surrounding these events – both in financial and symbolic terms – in the higher education landscape led the University to consider a proposal focused on the practical training of public servants that it might not have otherwise considered at the time. Third, leading up to the 1971 proposal, I explain why, despite those forces, the policy program struggled to find a home at the University, and represented such a threat to the lineage of the University and its particular understanding of its place in the academy, exposing an apparent paradox of identity and behavior. In doing so, I show the role of the sedimented past – encoded in the myths, memories,

[16] By identity, I refer to the University's self-understanding. By reputation, I refer to how it was perceived or seen by other actors and organizations.
[17] "July 1977 Program Overview," Committee MSS, Records, Box 1, Folder 1.

and activities of the University – played in preventing Stein's vision for a public affairs program from moving forward. Fourth, in examining the 1973 proposal, I show how the University came to arrive at the decision and the role the University's myth played in creating the space in which the new program could be validated despite these divergent understandings and activities. Finally, I conclude with some thoughts on the consequences of this decision and implications for further research.

At a time when professional education is on the rise and the value of a liberal education remains in question as student debt loads skyrocket across America, this case study fills a critical gap in the historical record of the University while also providing new empirical evidence to confront the question of the myth vs. the reality of the Ivory Tower, uncovering the narrative and linguistic mechanisms that lead to subtle, "covert" forms of organizational change and innovation. The ways in which the mythic attributes of institutional identity have persisted for elite American universities, like the University of Chicago, despite changes in the economics of higher education, will be great interest to the millions of Americans who have "bought into" (ideologically and financially) the ideal of higher education as well as to historians and sociologists who are interested in the role of higher education in society and how its meaning has changed or remained constant in time in relation to institutional and market forces.

HISTORIOGRAPHY: The Rise of American Policy Education in the 1960s and 1970s

Professional education – that is, the training of individuals for post-educational work as members of particular occupational groups that we call "professions" – has long remained a component of the educational activities of the University of Chicago.[18] And yet, policy studies,

[18] Reflecting its Baptist educational roots, the new University of Chicago, reconstituted in 1890, comprised at its founding graduate programs in divinity (1891) and soon after education (1895), business (1898), and law (1902), followed by a second-wave of professional schools emerging in the 1920s, including social service administration (1919), medicine (1927), and library sciences (1928).18 From 1943 to 1975, when the Committee on Public Policy

despite the Harris School's present status as the University's 2nd largest graduate degree program and 4th most declared undergraduate major, remains but a proverbial footnote in the University's official histories.[19] Though the domain of policy studies draws its knowledge base from the well-recorded disciplines of economics, sociology, and political science at the University, three disciplines which have earned the status of "Chicago Schools" in their own right, no synthetic history of policy studies exists at the University.[20] Despite this gap in the historiography of the University, this lineage affords the possibility of rediscovering the antecedents of its policy program. Equally, much has been written by historians and historical sociologists about the turbulent era of the 1960s and 1970s for American higher education as well as by practitioners and scholars in the policy sciences and public administration about the origins and aims of the field. In the following section, I discuss each of these literatures with the goal of establishing the historical context in which all policy schools emerged during the late 1960s and 1970s and the environmental forces – both market-driven and institutional – at play as Chicago considered its own program.

Knowledge for What?: Citizenship, Professional Education, and the Crisis of American Higher Education in the 1960s and 1970s

The late 1960s and 1970s presented a shock to American higher education as its financial model began to fracture under its growing weight. During the mid-20th century, a series of legislative actions begun with the GI Bill in 1944, which expanded access to higher education for

– the precursor to the University's sixth professional school, the Harris School of Public Policy – was established, my research shows at least six new occupationally oriented degree programs, from communications to industrial relations, were started at the University in the social sciences alone.

[19] Boyer, *A History,* 395, 447. The University's graduate school of public policy is only mentioned twice in the 473 page volume "University of Chicago: A History" – a monograph by historian and College Dean John Boyer that remains the most extensive on the institution.

[20] Extant histories of the Harris School and policy education can be found in the disparate collection of essays by founding administrators assembled for the policy school's 25th anniversary celebration and as well as in Dunn's monograph on the University's influence on Harold Lasswell's theory of the policy sciences (Dunn, *Pragmatism*).

millions of veterans returning to civil society after WWII, and continuing through the Higher Education Act of 1965, helped to fuel the rapid growth of higher education in America during the post-war economic boom. Following the "managerial revolution" in higher education that ensued to accommodate bureaucratic growth, universities, including the University of Chicago, faced a dark period in 1970s marked by sharp cuts to federal research grants, rising costs, stagnant enrollment, and social and political unrest on campuses over questions of educational access, equity, and social justice.[21] From 1969 to 1975, the University ran an annual budget deficit ranging from nearly $10 million in 1969-70 to $3.9 million in 1974-75 fiscal year in which the Committee on Public Policy officially began.[22] Despite the relative stability of the ideal of American higher education up until this point, the dire nature of these challenges suddenly put into focus the "lost center" of the American university as an institution absent of a coherent mission for its widening scope of activities.[23] In the following section, I review the relevant works in the historiography of higher education with the goal of understanding how the financial and social crises of this era affected the aims of higher education and scholarly discourse on the role of practical knowledge, more specifically.

As these "troubled giants" came under greater scrutiny, scholars engaged critically in a debate during the 1960s and 1970s about the origins and aims of higher education that put epistemological questions about the form and role of knowledge production at the forefront.[24] Unsurprisingly, the era witnessed a burst of ambitious historical projects tracking the origins and

[21] See Thelin, *American Higher Education,* 277-338; Loss, *Citizens and State,* 165-213; Boyer, *A History,* 389-90. I will discuss later in the empirical portion of the paper, the University of Chicago was still recovering from financial challenges of the 1950s due, in part, to costly urban renewal investments aimed at revitalizing its neighborhood (see Boyer, "A History")

[22] See University Record, Vol III-IX, and Boyer, *A History.*

[23] Thelin, *History,* 316. On the dimension of identity, University of Chicago diverges from the national picture Thelin depicts about the "lost center." Boyer (1999) notes in an occasional paper on the University during the 1960s and 1970s the stoicism and clarity of organizational purpose with which President Levi faced the challenges of 1969.

[24] Thelin, *History*, 318.

aims of the modern American university (Clark Kerr, 1963; Laurence Veysey, 1965; Talcott Parsons/Gerald Platt, 1971; Ben-David, 1971). Implicitly, these and other works resurfaced a question raised three decades earlier by sociologist Robert Lynd in 1939 who posed to his fellow social scientists the question of "knowledge for what?" in issuing a call-to-action to the disciplines to direct empirical knowledge towards improving the social condition.[25] At the heart of this debate lies the question over the role of basic (i.e., pure) versus applied (i.e., practical) knowledge in higher education – a tension oft repeated and replicated over time reflecting the fractal nature of disciplinary distinctions.[26] From their founding in the late 19th century, many of the new research universities included schools of professional education, beginning with established professions of the clergy, law, business, and medicine. In this sense, the "utility" of knowledge – as Laurence Veysey put it in describing four rival conceptions of American universities as they took their present shape in the 1890s– remained a feature of new American universities from the outset even if that practical value was often cloaked by other rhetorics.[27] It is important to note that the University of Chicago remained at an ideological distance from this utilitarian conception of higher education owing to its founding as a research university unlike many of its peers, including Harvard, which began as colleges during the Colonial Era.[28] As a result of its lineage, Chicago's identity and reputation remained closely tied to the German ideal of "research" as outlined in Veysey's construct. During the Progressive era, the utilitarian ideal in higher education took on the meaning of utility for *democracy* in educating knowledgeable

[25] Lasswell cites Lynd's "Knowledge for What?" extensively in his 1951 essay on the policy orientation.
[26] Abbott, *Chaos of Disciplines,* 3-33.
[27] Veysey, *Emergence.*
[28] For a discussion on the Colonial Era, see *Thelin, History, 1-40.* For a discussion of University of Chicago's ideological position in higher education, see Veysey, *Emergence;* Boyer, *A History.* It is worth noting that this ideological distance, though largely due to the University's roots in the "German model," was also widened by Robert Maynard Hutchins's obsession with liberal culture and general education (another rival ideal in Veysey's framework) during his presidency from 1929-1951.

citizens in the face of political corruption and the social and economic effects of the Industrial Revolution.[29] Training programs in civil service, which existed within the university system as early as the 18th Century in Germany (though their curricula bore little resemblance to modern public administration let alone public analysis), first emerged outside of the university system in the United States, but later formed the preconditions for programs in public administration beginning in the early 20th century.[30] While there are varying accounts of the origins of public administration, scholars have noted the Pendleton Civil Service Act of 1883 as necessary condition in spurring public administration curriculum within higher education in American by establishing practical examinations to test applicants' skills that undermined the patronage system.[31]

As programs directed at practical, occupational aims, like business and public administration, figured into the early design of many American universities, scholars, most notably Thorstein Veblen who wrote "Higher Learning in America" in 1918, issued a warning call against business interests' undue influence on higher education and their negative effects on the advancement of scientific inquiry and knowledge in the form of vocational education.[32] Many social historians have interpreted the growth of professional education as a response to market demands (Thelin, Geiger) or as a by-product of competition among professions (Abbott), concomitant with socioeconomic rise of the American middle class (Ben-David, Bledstein).[33]

[29] Veysey, *Emergence*, 64-65.
[30] Starr, *Handbook*, 34-35; Abbott, *System of Professions*, 202.
[31] Allison, "Emergence," 61; Starr, *Handbook*. In a 1966 handbook for training in public service published by the United Nations, Starr notes that these early examinations tested skills that did not require specialized graduate education in public administration (22). Some of early training programs in America existed outside of academia, including the Bureau of Municipal Research in New York City (35-7).
[32] Veblen, *Higher Learning*, 158-160
[33] See Thelin, *History;* Geiger, *Knowledge and Money*; Abbott, *System of Professions,* Ben-David, *American Higher Education, Bledstein, Culture of Professionalism.*

Beyond socioeconomic factors, scholars of higher education (Loss, Diner) have recently written about the social and political factors driving applied research and professional education programs at universities.[34] Whereas Diner studied the relationship between urban universities and their cities, focusing on municipal government and civic leaders, Loss examined the relationship between universities and the state in broader terms, arguing that American universities represent a parastate that mediates the relationship between citizens and the state that has contributed to the extension of government influence into American social life. While Diner's nods to the emergence of the University's School of Social Service Administration, neither scholars discuss policy schools within the context of their inquiries into the dynamics between universities and government.[35]

Thus, while the historiography of higher education gives public administration and policy studies sparse treatment, it helps situate the Chicago policy program within an external environment that was increasingly favorable to the field on both financial and symbolic terms. Indeed, as we shall see, policy education's rosy prospects stood in contrast to the dire market conditions universities faced during the 1960s and 1970s just as the relationship between government and universities was shifting, putting emphasis back on "practice" and "citizenship" over "knowledge" in the debate over the aims of higher education.

Policy Education and the Emergence of the Modern Policy School

1. *General History and Trends*

In the historiography of policy education, the late 1960s through the 1970s marked the birth of the modern policy school and the rapid growth of the study of "policy analysis" and the

[34] Loss, *Citizens and State*; Diner, *Universities and Their Cities;* Diner, *A City and Its Universities.*
[35] Diner, *A City and Its Universities.*

"policy sciences" as a field distinct from "public administration."[36] Though many of these new policy schools emerged out of extant schools of government and public administration, previously established in two waves (Progressive Era and post-New Deal), a third wave of curricular innovation emerged in the early 1970s when the Ford Foundation began issuing grants to "train public policy analysts and managers" under the auspices of its newly established "Office of Public Policy and Social Organization."[37] By 1975, there were 138 programs in public affairs and administration in the United States, a figure represented a 37% increase with a corresponding 57% increase in student enrollment in just two short years.[38] A review of the historiography of policy education, which falls into two categories, offers insight into the conventional explanation for their emergence.

The first body of literature includes monographs by founding deans, directors, and other administrators who were involved in the establishment these schools and institutes of public policy, and books by current-day scholars of public administration and policy who have written historical works based on these and others sources. This literature is remarkable in the consistency of its accounting for the origins of the modern public policy school which their founding deans and scholars attribute to the rise of government demand for "RAND-style"

[36] See deLeon "Roots of the Field" and Allison, "Emergence of Schools of Public Policy." Allison notes that between 1967 and 1971, graduate programs at the master's or doctoral level were established in policy analysis at University of Michigan, Harvard, UC Berkeley, Carnegie-Mellon, University of Pennsylvania, University of Minnesota, University of Texas, and Duke University.

[37] Ford Foundation, "1973 Annual Report," 17.

[38] Fritschler, et al, "1975 Survey," 489. According to a 1975 member survey of the National Association of Schools of Public Affairs and Administration, only 21% of programs were established as separate schools with the overwhelming majority (73.2%) housed within an academic division, either as a standalone department or within the political science department, specifically. Interestingly, only 5.8% of programs were merged with other professional schools – a repeated recommendation in the University of Chicago case. These growth figures are corroborated by US Department of Education statistics (2019) indicating a 96% increase in enrollment in public affairs programs from 1970 to 1976. Since then, growth has been steady – though increasingly tepid – with spikes during mid-1990s and mid-2000s.

policy analysis to provide a better basis for federal decision-making and implementation.[39] Fueled by the need to evaluate the programs of President Johnson's War on Poverty and Great Society, the mandated Program, Planning, and Budgeting System (PPBS) represented the prototype for policy analytic units across federal agencies and beyond as more think tanks, non-profits, and even the private sector got in on the game.[40]

More recently, the debates within the field have been less about origins and more about identity, viability, and jurisdiction over what Lawrence Lynn has portrayed as a highly fragmented and specialized domain of work in the service of public interest.[41] Looking to the future of public affairs and policy, scholars have wrestled with curricular innovation and how these schools can sustain their legitimacy and jurisdiction over public management activities in a polarized political environment dogged by low trust in government and greater private sector involvement in policy and social issues.[42] Though they use different terminology, deLeon, Radin, Lynn, and Anheier see these and other challenges for the field stemming from its position at the intersection of the boundaries of analysis/academia/advice and politics/management/consent.[43] Faced with these unresolved tensions, leaders within the field have continued to call for strong ties to the disciplines, particularly economics and political

[39] See monographs by founding deans and directors like Aaron Wildavsky (Berkeley), Joel Fleishman (Duke), Don Price and Graham Allison (Harvard), and John Crecine (Michigan).
[40] deLeon, *Advice and Consent*; Radin, *Beyond Machiavelli*. The PPBS originated in the Department of Defense in 1961 and was mandated across all federal agencies in 1965 (Radin, 16).
[41] Lynn, *Public Management.*
[42] See deLeon, *Advice and Consent*, Radin, *Beyond Machiavelli*, Anheier ("On the Future"), Stokes ("Changing Environment")
[43] deLeon, *Advice and Consent*; Radin, *Machiavelli;* Anheier,"On the Future," Lynn, *Public Management.* Like Lynn, deLeon's acknowledges the role of the academic discipline; he argues that while exogenous – namely political events – had an outsized effect in spurring the growth of the field, its expansion required laying the "cognitive groundwork" of the academic discipline in order for the professional practice to adopt its tools and methods – setting up this tension between "Advice" and "Consent" (deLeon, 91, 100).

science, to sustain legitimacy and bolter innovation – an argument supported by claims made by scholars (Abbott, Jacobs) who study the sociology of knowledge and interdisciplinary research.[44]

The second body of literature relates to the intellectual history of Harold Lasswell as the canonical founding father of the "policy sciences" – a new idea distinct from public administration that approaches the study of government as a problem-oriented science with normative, contextual, and multidisciplinary dimensions and continues to shape the curriculum of many policy schools today.[45] I shall revisit this literature within the context of the historiography of Chicago in the next section.

2. Policy Studies at Chicago: Antecedents

Though Chicago is largely absent from the literature on policy schools and education, a review of the historiography of the University of Chicago – augmented by primary research – reveals several lost antecedents of its modern day policy studies program.[46] This history draws its lineage from several tributaries in the social sciences, which I discuss here. My goal is not to provide an exhaustive summary of relevant faculty and their projects, but rather to provide a brief sketch of the major applied policy-relevant research and educational initiatives that were institutionalized through organizational structures at the University.

Though the University did not have a professional school of civil service or public administration at its founding, it appointed its first professor of public administration in 1899.[47] President Harper, active himself in urban politics and public school reform in Chicago, laid down

[44] Abbott*, Chaos;* Jacobs, *Disciplines*. For discussion of policy studies ties to the disciplines, see Fleishman and Anheier.
[45] Goyal, "Review of Policy Sciences." Though a recent bibliometric analysis of publications in the Policy Sciences from 1970-2017 places Lasswell as the most referenced scholar in the journal with the 379 citations. See Allison, deLeon ("Advice and Consent"), Wildavsky ("Once and Future"), and Dunn ("Pragmatism") for discussion of Lasswell's legacy on policy studies.
[46] To supplement the historiography cited in this section, I draw upon my own primary research to survey *Official Publications*, from 1943-1975, which served as the course catalog for degree programs at the University.
[47] Lynn, Public Administration, 27

the conditions for urbanist, policy-relevant research across social sciences.[48] Shortly after his death in 1906, the University founded its Chicago School of Civics and Philanthropy (1908), which later evolved into the School of Social Service Administration (1919). One of the first schools of its kind, SSA and its founding mothers played a leading role in the social reform movements in Chicago during the early part of the 20th century, tackling issues ranging from housing, child welfare, and immigration policy.[49] At the same time, the tradition of the pragmatist philosophy of Charles Sanders Peirce, William James, John Dewey, flourished across a network of scholars in the social and behavioral sciences, including sociology and political science.[50] Influenced by both the pragmatist and reformist traditions of the Progressive Era, Charles Merriam, who chaired the political science department from 1923 to 1940, spurred a number of adjacent efforts in public administration, including the Social Science Research Council (1924) and the "1313" building (1938) on the University's campus – the latter of which emerged as a national hub for the growing field of public administration during the New Deal Era.[51] By the end of the 1950s, these efforts in public administration had either dissolved (as in the case of Merriam's political science department) or waned (as in the case of 1313) while at the

[48] Boyer, *A History,* 121-131. Boyer notes that many of Harpers' colleagues in the Chicago reform movement became instrumental to the flourishing of "academic urbanism" during the 1920s. Faculty hires, such as Charles Henderson and Albion Small (sociology), Dewey (philosophy), Sophonisba Beckinridge and Edith Abbott (social work), Charles Merriam (political science) were all deeply integrated into the city's reform efforts and institutions.
[49] "Grace Abbott," University of Chicago SSA. Grace Abbott, one of SSA's "founding mothers," held numerous positions in state and federal government and was influential in shaping policy on child welfare, immigration, and social security.
[50] See Abbott, *Department and Discipline,* 1999: 12-13, 31, for a discussion of pragmatism's relationship to the Chicago School of Sociology, which eventually split from the former's reformist agenda. See Dunn, *Pragmatism and Policy Sciences,* 2019: 8-16, for a discussion of the intellectual roots of pragmatism in the policy sciences. Dunn notes a shared orientation toward the pragmatic concept of human action – not to be conflated with "the simple application of [social science] theories and methods to practical problems" (9).
[51] Karl, *Merriam and the Study of Politics;* Simon, "Merriam." For more detail on 1313, see Hazelrigg ("1313") and Lee ("Short History") as well as the relevant finding aids of University SCRC ("Social Science Research Committee" and "Charles Merriam Papers"). Though independent from the University, "1313" emerged as a national hub for the growing field of public administration during New Deal era and housed seventeen professional organizations and non-profit agencies, including the Public Administration Clearing House and the Public Administration Service, the latter of which sought to bridge academic research and public administration.

same time the University turned inward and shuddered many other "occupationally" oriented programs in the social sciences amid cost cuts.[52] It wasn't until the 1960s that policy and urban studies found new life at the University. Following Levi's appointment as Provost in 1962, the University established two interdisciplinary research centers, including the Center on Urban Studies (1963) and Center for Policy Study (1965), within the social sciences aimed at applied policy-relevant and urban research that harkened back to a legacy of pragmatic sociology at the University, particularly within urban studies.[53] Related programs of study in urban studies and public affairs were also established within the Social Science Division and the College, respectively.

What this lineage masks is Chicago's influence on Harold Lasswell. While at Chicago from 1927-1937, Lasswell was one Merriam's protégés and represented a core member of what some describe as the "lost" Chicago School of Political Science, which I argue, was the most relevant antecedent to the University's policy program at the time of the decision. Under his leadership, Merriam's political science department took an interdisciplinary, behavioral approach to the study of political science that combined sociology, psychology, and anthropology and that

[52] According to my review of the University's *Official Publications*, a number of interdisciplinary committees in policy-relevant areas were started following WWII in the Social Sciences Division, including Industrial Relations (1945-1980?), Planning (1945-56), Race Relations (1947-1956), Communications (1948-1959?), though many were short-lived. The Extension and Home Study departments also offered courses in public management and personnel work during the 1940s. In the area of planning, Boyer discusses a number of political controversies surrounding Rex Tugwell, including rumors of communist sympathies, his role in the failed proposal for the Institute of World Government, and the University's own urban renewal project which may have played a role in the University's complicated relationship to policy ("A History," 297, 308, 344).

[53] See Carey, "Policy and Civic Involvements," chapt. 3 in *Sociology and Public Affairs,* 1975, for a discussion of applied sociology at Chicago in the 1920s which brought scholars into close contact with city officials and others engaged in urban policy issues of the time through initiatives like the Chicago Commission on Race Relations, Institute for Juvenile Research, and the Chicago Area Project. See also Abbott, "Pragmatic Sociology," for a discussion of Charles Henderson, and Abbott, "City Planning," for more on the Chicago School of Sociology's fraught relationship and eventual divorce from the study of urban planning.

eventually extended into adjacent fields, including Lasswell's policy sciences.[54] In *Pragmatism and the Origins of the Policy Sciences,* William Dunn argues that Lasswell's conception of the policy sciences was much more than an extension of the problem-oriented empirical social science research that began in the 19th century and reflected the ideas of Chicago's pragmatist tradition (particularly, Dewey) and the influence of contemporary scholars at Chicago including Merriam (political science), Robert Park (sociology), and many others across the social sciences.[55] While the concept of the policy sciences first emerges with Lasswell and co-author Daniel Lerner's essay *The Policy Orientation* in 1951, the terms "policy sciences" and "policy analysis" do not measurably emerge in the literature until after 1969, according to my own analysis of citations in the Web of Science.[56] Though curious, this finding is not surprising in view of aforementioned fact the academic field did not take hold until the late 1960s in response to the policy analytic needs of the U.S. federal government.

While this discussion of Lasswell may seem like a diversion, it is important for two reasons. First, his intellectual ties to Chicago – though predating his work on the policy sciences– challenges the conventional narrative (or lack thereof) that the University was a late-mover, and therefore inconsequential contributor, to policy education.[57] Second, it is reflective,

[54] For more on the Chicago School of Political Science, see Karl ("Merriam"), Heany/Hanson ("Building the Chicago School"), Almond ("Who Lost the Chicago School"), and Simon ("Merriam").
[55] Dunn, "Pragmatism and Policy Sciences" and "Chicago School of Pragmatism," chaps. 1 and 2 in *Pragmatism,* 2-23. Between 1915 and 1939, Chicago "dominated" the policy-oriented social sciences in the US. After completing his BA in philosophy and economics at Chicago, Lasswell completed his PhD in political science with Merriam as his dissertation advisor. Lasswell later served on the faculty at the University of Chicago from 1927-1937, leaving the University after he was denied tenure by President Hutchins.
[56] Analysis based on Web of Science Journal Citation Report search under the category "Public Administration" from 1900-2019; 1900-1969 generated 51 citations whereas the period 1970 to 2019 generated 8,952 citations.
[57] What is curious is the extent to which Lasswell's legacy as the founding father of the "policy sciences" (as an academic field) is secure and yet also insecure within the context of the history of policy education at Chicago, in particular. This disconnect can be explained, I argue, by a lag in time and distance as not only did the idea of the policy sciences take time to catch hold in practice, as noted above, but also because Lasswell departed from the University in 1938 and died in 1978 just as policy schools were beginning to grow in size and legitimacy.

I argue, of the broader ontological questions within historiography on policy schools and policy education about what precisely *is* policy education and how does it relate to or differ from the "lower-status" antecedent field of public administration of which the Chicago School of Political Science remained at the vanguard under Charles Merriam's leadership.

Ultimately, beyond revealing these "lost" antecedents at Chicago, the historiography on policy studies reveals a tension underlying the development of all new policy schools. On the one hand, we see a retrospective certitude surrounding the market need driving their mandate (which was hardly evident at the time given the uncertainties in higher education, more broadly); on the other hand, we find an opacity surrounding exactly what the field (if it could even be called one) actually *meant* that continues through to this day. As we shall later see, this ambiguity – of both aims and linguistic expression – provided a necessary condition for the University's own policy program to take root given the resistance many faculty had to the very idea of the field to which it might belong.

Conclusion

To sum up, this review makes clear three key points as historical context for Chicago's policy decision. First, the financial crisis of the 1960s and 1970s in higher education created a highly uncertain environment in which everything – institutions and markets – was "up for grabs." Second, policy studies' prospects, which generally seemed rosy against this backdrop, were hardly assured on intellectual or ideological grounds. Third, while Chicago was no stranger to public policy, its own relationship to policy studies was fraught at best and often relegated to the footnotes of its history. Thus, given this murky picture painted by the literature, no one "variable" seems to explain the University's decision – the dynamics of which I shall now turn to discuss.

METHODOLOGY

Applying processual theory, this paper takes an event-based approach to examining the process dynamics of the Chicago policy decision rather than pursuing the typical methods of institutional analysis or historical narrative in organization studies.[58] In this section, I briefly address each of these methods, their shortcomings and merits for this case, before proceeding with a discussion of the methods and sources employed in this paper.

New institutionalist theory in organizational literature has explored the social function of myth and ceremony in organizational contexts in response to "loose coupling" and "decoupling"– organizational phenomena whereby formal structures do not match organizational activities but rather are isomorphic with their institutional environments for the reasons I discussed in the introduction (i.e., competition for legitimacy and market competition).[59] Myths often justify paradoxical organizational activities in a form of Goffmanian face-work (Meyer/Rowan) that buffers conflicts and protects legitimacy (Weick, Brown, Kamens) and may even thrive amid ambiguity (Clark, Polletta,).[60] Despite the new institutional drift towards phenomenalism and its appreciation for the role of culture and symbolic action in organizations, it often takes a reified and synchronic view of myths and the institutional environments in which they exist by reducing them to routinized organizational "rules."[61] While the methods of

[58] Unless otherwise noted, the terms "processual view" or "processual theory" refer to Abbott, *Social Process,* throughout this paper.

[59] See Meyer/Rowan's seminal 1977 essay ("Myth and Ceremony") which sparked the cultural turn in new institutionalism.

[60] See Weick ("Loosely Coupled Systems"), Brown ("Politics"), Kamens ("Myths"), Clark ("Saga"), and Polletta ("Storytelling"). Weick summarizes best, saying: "given the ambiguity of loosely coupled structures, this suggest that there may be increased pressure on members to construct or negotiate some kind of social reality they can live with."

[61] DiMaggio/Powell ("Iron Cage," 157) acknowledge this shortcoming of Meyer/Rowan's 1977 essay. For a discussion of phenomenalism vs. realism in new institutional analysis, see Meyer ("World Society"). A close reading of his essay reveals the problematics discussed here with regards to understanding agency, structure, and change by viewing actors and institutions in "opposition" (2).

institutional analysis are diverse, its empirical focus on isolating variables in the internal and external environments to determine causality runs the risk of missing subtle changes in both structure and myth by failing to appreciate the fluidity of inter- and intra-organizational dynamics in both space and time.[62]

Historical narrative, by contrast, though rich in its temporal possibilities for exposing the contingencies of intra-organizational dynamics, is limited in its capacity to explore questions of causality as it relates to organizational structure. When viewed in terms of the historical narrative of the University of Chicago, one might see the decision to establish the policy program as yet another act of ambition on the part of the powerful personalities who have led the University through difficult times. Though few historians still espouse such "great men" narratives, it is tempting to interpret President Levi's call for a bold increase in graduate enrollment in 1974 (around the time that the Council of the Faculty Senate authorized the establishment of the Committee on Public Policy) as the catalyst for the decision and manifestation of leader's vision.[63]

Sociologists in the Chicago tradition have bridged these two methods through a processual approach that views structure as relational, socially fluid, and dynamic.[64] While

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[62] For a poignant and sympathetic discussion of the shortcomings of new institutional analysis, see Abbott's review of Powell/DiMaggio's 1991 volume on "New Institutionalism." See Glaeser for a discussion of the limitations of new institutionalism in understanding the role of linguistic phenomena in organizational contexts. Theories, including isomorphism, that depend on some "natural" notion of legitimacy to justify organizational behavior, miss the fact that "many institutional arrangements are mimetically acquired….without the need for explicit explanation or justification" (Glaeser, *Political Epistemics,* 39).

[63] University Record, "State of the University 1974," 90, 95. Having missed its 10-year enrollment projection (set in 1954 as part of a plan to recapitalize and revitalize the University), Levi, on the recommendation of a faculty committee, calls for an increase in master's enrollment across the University and for all divisions "which do not have active master's programs" to develop them. Though not expressly linked in his address, Levi later mentions in the same speech the decision to establish the degree-granting Committee on Public Policy following the favorable Faculty Senate vote which took place just four months earlier.

[64] Padgett/Powell, "The Problem of Emergence," in *Emergence,* 8. Padgett and Powell provide an apt metaphor for social structure in the processual view: "Social structure should be viewed more as vortexes in the flow of social life than as buildings of stone." Accordingly, their theory of organizational emergence, which applies biochemistry

scholars have applied processual thinking to a range of social problems using different methodologies, processualists share a common commitment to breaking down spatial (inter/intra, macro/micro) and temporal (synchronic/diachronic) analytic silos, which, in turn, alleviates many of the shortcomings of the aforementioned methods in understanding organizational change.[65] Andrew Abbott, a historical sociologist known for his work on occupations, has synthesized an event-based processual approach that rejects a leveled analysis of actors, organizations, and environments in favor of viewing the social world as co-planar and emergent out of the flow of events.[66] While organizations *appear* to be entities, they are, in fact, a social process – like everything else in the social world – that consists of an array of events located in relation to other social entities, bodies, personalities, and symbols which he calls the "orders" of social life.[67] The decision to establish the policy program, therefore, ought not to be understood in terms of the "interests" of a powerful actor in a decision-making event (as with historical narrative) nor as the result of discrete variables in the market (as with institutionalism). Instead, processualism views the so-called "organizational decision" in the context of the lineage of events coming in and out that decision-making event and the purpose or goals of the orders in which those events are located at the present moment of the decision.[68] By applying processual theory, I demonstrate how the new program was the product of the fear of an uncertain future – born not out of the ambitious plans of the "great men" of the University's history nor solely out

to network analysis, seeks to break down the traditional barriers between "markets" and "institutions" by demonstrating how organizational novelty arises from network folding across various environmental domains.

[65] See Glaeser's article on "Hermeneutic Institutionalism" for a challenge of new institutionalist theory.

[66] Abbott, "Time, Space, Location," chap. 4 in *Social Process,* 5. Padgett/Powell have put forth their own processual view of structure in organizational studies based not on flows of events, but on flows of people, technologies, and language (see Padgett/Powell, "The Problem of Emergence," in *Emergence,* 8).

[67] Abbott, "Cumulation and Orders" and "Time, Space, Location," chapt. 2 and 4 in *Social Process*.

[68] More specifically, in processual terms, the organizational decision would be defined as an event that changes some prior state of affairs for the lineage of the social entity that we understand to be the "University of Chicago."

of competitive isomorphism, but rather, out of the emergence of a sequence of events that sought to ensure the survival of the ideology – the myth – of the University in the face of change.

Sources and Research Design

The process of developing a degree-granting public policy program at University of Chicago took place over two decades from Jim Stein's initial proposition to President Levi in 1969 to the formation of the Committee on Public Policy Studies in 1975 and its eventual establishment as the Graduate School of Public Policy Studies in 1988.[69] The present study focuses on the first of three chronological phases of program development (listed below) and on an analysis of archival documents (containing memos, program proposals, marketing pamphlets, correspondence, and more) available in the University of Chicago Special Collections and the private collection at the Harris School of Public Policy, donated by founding dean Robert T. Michael, as well as on secondary sources.[70]

- Phase one covers the period from 1969 to 1974 before the establishment of the Committee on Public Policy Studies and includes consideration of a *"Proposal to Establish a School of Public Affairs"* at the University in response to Jim Stein's initial request to investigate a

[69] Levi Administration, Box 292, Folder 4. Archival records indicate that Jim Stein may have first expressed serious interest in starting a "center or school of public administration" at September 10, 1968 meeting with Charles Daly, VP of Development and Public Affairs, who was also serving as the executive director of the Center for Policy Studies to which Stein donated. The September meeting is likely to have been the first in which the possibility of funding surfaced in the amount $5-7 million. While there are many references to Levi and Stein's longstanding conversations about the project, it is not known (based on sources currently accessible) when the project was first mentioned to President Levi, though we do know that Stein wanted to meet with Levi and Daly to discuss in January 1969. On January 17, 1969, records indicate that Levi was notified of Stein's plans to "mov(e) ahead" with garnering support for the "public administration project" upon his return from vacation. It appears that the first formal meeting to discuss the project with Levi occurred on March 13, 1969 in which Levi, Daly, and Stein all participated.

[70] There are additional sources – though presently inaccessible due to the COVID-19 pandemic – in the Levi Administration papers at the University of Chicago SCRC related to a "Center for Public Administration" that I was not able to access before the library closures and may be germane to this investigation. Thus, the present archival analysis is largely based on a review of files in the Committee on Public Policy files, Harris' private collection, as well a review of select boxes in the Levi Administration papers as noted in the bibliography.

new program in "public administration," and eventual seed grant in 1973 to further explore a "school of public affairs or equivalent." [71]

- Phase two covers the period from 1975 to 1984 after the establishment of the *Committee on Public Policy Studies* and before its status was reviewed. During this period, the Committee developed and launched both a one-year and two-year Master's program in policy studies as well as a PhD program.
- Phase three covers the period from 1985 to 1987 during which two committees were established to evaluate the future of the Committee on Public Policy and whether it should be abolished, merged with the Social Sciences Division or the School of Social Service Administration, or "elevated" to the status of a graduate professional school – a status granted following the vote of Council of the Faculty Senate in 1987.[72]

For the empirical purposes of this paper, I apply processual theory to the analysis of these archival sources to determine the event links sending out and receiving into the December 1973 vote that made the decision *possible*. My investigation largely – though not strictly – proceeds temporally, focusing on four major proposals for this program as an "events" at key points in the decision-making progress: December 1969 (first proposal to President Levi developed by a small committee of University of Chicago faculty and peer institution advisors at the request of Trustee

[71] Sidney Stein, Jr. to President Edward Levi, March 7, 1973, Harris School of Public Policy Private Collection (hereafter cited as Harris MSS). Note, this initial committee first met on May 12, 1969, after which series of proposals were developed, including but not limited to: "School of Public Affairs: The University of Chicago," December 1, 1969, Committee MSS, Records, Box 1, Folder 9; "School of Public Affairs: The University of Chicago," July 20, 1970, Committee MSS, Records, Box 1, Folder 10; "School of Public Affairs: The University of Chicago," February 3, 1971, Committee MSS, Records, Box 1, Folder 9; "Memorandum re: Proposal for the Establishment of a Committee on Public Policy Studies," Robert McAdams, Sidney Davidson, Philip Jackson, Leon Jacobson, Phil Neal, and Harold Richman to Edward Levi and John Wilson, November 26, 1973, Harris MSS.

[72] Minutes of a meeting to discuss the (William) Kruskal Committee Report, undated (1984?), Harris MSS. Russell Hardin, chair of the Committee on Public Policy, presented the Kruskal committee's conclusions in a near final draft of the report to the President and Provost. A majority of the committee favored establishing a school, a minority favored abolishing it, and it was "unanimous" that a merger with other divisions or schools would be a "bad alternative."

Jim Stein), July 1970 and February 1971 (second and third proposals that reflected wider University faculty input), and November 1973 (final proposal by the deans of the University's divisions and professional schools) leading to approval of University of Chicago Board of Trustees on December 3, 1973 and Council of the Faculty Senate on January 15, 1974.[73] In each instance, I pay close attention to the evolution of the event "links" referenced – either explicitly or implicitly – in the proposal to draw some conclusions about the mechanisms that winnowed multiple possible futures down to 1973 decision-making event.

Limitations

Several limitations of this study ought to be acknowledged. First, as an employed administrator at the Harris School of Public Policy, my reading of these historical events is ineluctably shaped by my experience with and understandings of the present-day school. As researcher aware of this bias, I intentionally focus my investigation to the earliest period in the school's history as none of the primary individuals responsible for the program are alive, and those still living who may have knowledge of these events are no longer connected to the school. Second, this study relies almost entirely on archival sources. While the proposals have their empirical limits as an "intentional" form of historicality that run the risk of erasing lineages, as a medium, they are also rich in their multi-vocality and expression of the imagined futures of the program at a moment-in-time.[74] Third, the closure of the SCRC amid the COVID-19 pandemic

[73] Knox Hill to Council of the University Senate, "Minutes," January 15, 1974, Harris MSS. Unfortunately, due to library closures in light of COVID-19, I am unable to access the archival sources in the SCRC that might reveal how the 1973 proposal was received in those meetings beyond what was summarized by Knox Hill, secretary of the faculties, in his brief minutes following the meeting. He indicates that, while many questions raised at the last meeting in December were left without "fulsome answers," the proposal passed with 25 affirmative votes and the remaining abstained. Curiously, my review of the University Senate and Committee of the Council records in the SCRC (Levi papers, Boxes 106 and 349) did not reveal any evidence of the December 3, 1973 Board of Trustee meeting and vote on Committee on Public Policy decision – suggesting those files may be missing, or more likely, alternatively archived.

[74] A word should be noted on the "genre" of the program proposal and its discursive function in social life. On their surface, these proposals are addressed to a particular audience with the apparent purpose of securing funding

prevented further investigation of the Levi Administration files, leaving a gap in available sources for the year 1972.

A GREAT GAMBLE: Finances, Public Affairs, and the Fear of an Uncertain Future

> "If the University of Chicago is as important as we think it is – and, of course, it may not be – then we ought not to let it go under and seriously decline in quality without a major effort." [75]
>
> President Edward H. Levi

On April 3, 1969, University Trustee Jim Stein, Jr. confided in one of his outside advisors, Dean Marver Bernstein of Princeton's Woodrow Wilson School, that talks of a new "public administration" program at the University – a project initiated at his request – would be delayed as President Levi remained detained by student protests on the campus. [76] First introduced during the tumult of 1969, Stein's proposition for a school of public administration or public affairs came not only during a period of change in higher education but also during period of great uncertainty in the financial outlook of the University when the viability of the University of Chicago – and the ideals that it represented – stood in question. While the University faced many of the same market and social pressures as its peers, the events that led it to consider the proposal represented something more nuanced than either competitive or mimetic isomorphism might suggest. If any isomorphic ideas were introduced into the program proposal, they were

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from a donor or summarizing the findings of a faculty committee. However, in practice, they represent a form of public discourse in that they are almost always framed in audience-agnostic language, thereby enabling their circulation within and across social communities (as theorized by Michael Warner, *Publics and Counterpublics)*. Their multi-vocality, thereby, opens up interpretative possibilities to read these proposals against the grain. Their property of circulation may also introduce temporal lags – or offsets – in the flow of events (as theorized by Abbott, *Social Process)*.

[75] Edward Levi to Sen. Percey, March 14, 1973, Levi Administration MSS, Box 375, folder 2. In an exceedingly blunt and dire March 14, 1973 memo to Sen. Charles Percey, President Levi goes as far as to say that he is not sure the University "will be able to make it" following the expiration of the Ford challenge grant and first leg of the campaign. Though cautious to not raise alarm, he confides that "we ought to not let it (the University) go under" and appeals for his support in securing a funder with capacity to put "significant support" behind the next leg of the campaign.

[76] Sidney Stein, Jr. to Marver Bernstein, April 3, 1969, Committee MSS, Records, Box 1, Folder 9.

done at the bidding of Stein and his outside advisors – who were front-and-center in the process – not out of a deliberate effort on the part of University leadership or its faculty to compete with or mimic peers. In the processual view, the anticipated future plays a powerful role in determining present events.[77] In the following section, I argue that uncertainty surrounding financial events – aided by social unrest – catalyzed the development of a proposal that ironically challenged the future of the very identity the University sought to protect. My discussion proceeds as follows. First, I shall discuss the particular financial challenges facing the University as Levi assumed the Presidency and tension between financial uncertainty and reputational stability as the University teetered on the edge of survival. Second, I show how financial and social events worked together to spur the initial development of the public affairs proposal.

The University was hardly immune from the uncertainty of the financial crisis facing higher education in the late 1960s and 1970s. We know from an examination of the Levi Administration files, including correspondence with Trustees, faculty, and University Administrators, that the financial events (whether economic, social, or both in their origin) facing American higher education were top-of-mind for President Levi during the time period of the policy program decision and made managing – let alone projecting – the University's financial position increasingly difficult. The uncertainty of the outlook – fluctuating from one year to another in the Provost's annual budget address – is striking in its rhetoric: from "bleak" (AY69-70) to the cautious, and ultimately misguided, optimism of being in a "sounder position, but not out of the woods" (AY71-72).[78] It wasn't until 1976-77 academic year that the University finally emerged from the black after years of austerity measures, which had included a "no growth"

[77] Abbott, *Social Process: "*Much of the future will be determined not by the present traces of the past, but by the present traces of the future."
[78] University Record, Vol. III, No. 10, 1-11, and Vol. V, No. 7, 108-116.

policy in faculty hiring and tighter budget controls, coupled with tuition increases and ambitious plans to increase master's programs and enrollment across its divisions.[79]

Having "barely recovered from the severe budget and neighborhood crises of the 1950s," as John Boyer so aptly put it, Chicago's financial crisis was both uncertain and steep as Levi assumed the presidency.[80] The University had become particularly dependent on both federal research grants as well as on foundation giving – not the least of which from the Ford Foundation.[81] In the mid-1960s, following years of budget cuts and erosion in both its size and prestige, the University of Chicago undertook an aggressive effort to recapitalize its financial position, enabled by the $300 million "Campaign for Chicago" fundraising effort launched in 1965 concurrent with a $25 million "challenge grant" from the Ford Foundation.[82] With the expiration of the challenge grant rapidly approaching and a second phase of the fundraising campaign looking unlikely to begin on schedule in 1970 after the first leg of the campaign failed to meet the unrestricted giving targets of its $160 million goal, President Levi was staring down a hole of $5.69 mil in the budget (amounting to 20% of the University's budget) in 1969.[83]

Having served as provost for nearly six years, Levi understood full well the dire financial position of the institution and the consequences that a feeble financial future might pose to the stability of the University's reputation – a theme which he made the center-point of his inaugural State of the University Address to the faculty in 1969.[84] Though the University benefited from a more durable understanding of its own institutional aims and myths (however real or

[79] University Record, Vol. X, No. 5, 139-145.
[80] Boyer, *A History*, 386.
[81] See Boyer, *A History, 362-63 and 384-5*, for a discussion of the University's particular dependency on the Ford Foundation during the 1960s.
[82] Boyer, "A History," 363.
[83] University of Chicago Magazine, "State of the University," 2-7; and University Record, Vol. III, No. 10. See also a 1973 memo to the Ford Foundation which recounts these events, "Memorandum on the University of Chicago," August 20, 1973, Levi Admin MSS, Box 375, Folder 3, as well as Boyer, "A History," 379.
[84] University of Chicago Magazine, "State of the University, 1969," 4.

misguided), the financial pressures of the era put strain on the University's ability to invest in faculty and other programs that might increase its eminence. And, yet, Levi was equally mindful that many of the University's financial woes were the result of significant investments it made to rebuild its faculty and restore its reputation following the bleak years of the 1950s as problems in its surrounding neighborhood contributed to the "flight of the faculty" and dwindling enrollments. Confronted with this "Catch 22," Levi articulated in this address that he did not want financial austerity to compromise the University's reputation as he believed it had during those years. In reality, as we will soon see, the University was loath to risk any prospect of major donor support.

When seen in the context of the severity of the University's financial outlook, it understandable why its leaders, including President Levi, Vice President of Development Charles Daly, and Board of Trustee chair Fairfax "Fax" Cone, among others, aggressively pursued Jim Stein's initial vague proposition made in September 1968 to "establish a center or school of public administration, but not necessarily at Chicago" and equally uncertain and bombastic claim that he might be able to raise $45 million for the program from his network.[85] This theme would continue through not only the early phase of the program's development, but also through the entire time period leading up to the authorization of the Committee on Public Policy. Following Stein's declaration that he would, indeed, pursue the program at Chicago in January 1969, his insistent and oft-repeated promises of the prospect of future funding – with no firm commitments – took on new meaning as the prospect of filling the anticipatory vacancy that was the University's projected budget deficit. Faculty leaders, most notably D. Gale Johnson, an economist who was then Dean of the Social Sciences Division and responsible for developing a

[85] Charles Daly to Fairfax Cone, December 10, 1968. Levi Administration MSS, Box 292, folder 4.

viable proposal for Stein's concept, were reticent to do anything to jeopardize the relationship with this donor and the prospect of this funding, however ethereal it might have been at the time.[86] When University faculty did express interest in the program, it was often in reference to financial needs and concerns.[87]

Thus, financial events – enabled by Stein's persistent involvement and ties to leaders in the growing field of public affairs and policy studies – moved the proposal forward despite early reservations of the University's faculty. Even after there was documented faculty resistance, as I detail in the next section, the prospect of a meeting with the Ford Foundation to discuss funding a public affairs program in early 1971 kept the proposal alive after it nearly fell apart after Stein expressed a vote of no confidence in Johnson following the 1970 proposal and his assessment his tepid leadership and endorsement of the project.[88] Likewise, in the absence of funding following the unsuccessful Ford Foundation meeting, the effort appears to have stalled during 1972 until Stein finally pledged a seed grant to establish a "school of public affairs or equivalent" in March 1973 – a gift that amounted to $500,000 (or more than $2,300,000 in 2020 prices) once disbursed in 1976 as the Committee got underway.[89] While it fell significantly short of the $5-7 million

[86] D. Gale Johnson to Edward Levi, July 10, 1969. Levi Administration MSS, Box 292, folder 4. Unable to appease both Stein and the advisors and University faculty, Johnson, desperately stuck "in the middle" with few ideas on how to "get out of this mess," confides to Levi: "I fear that I will be responsible for disappointing and possibly alienating a good supporter of the University."

[87] Johnson's July 10, 1969 plea to Levi indicates that faculty might be most interested in an Institute for Public Affairs that would combine Urban, Policy, and International Studies, and support existing faculty and graduate student research. Later, in sharing first proposal for the school with Levi on October 15, 1960, Johnson justifies financial merit in establishing a degree-granting entity by its ability to "provide a financial base" for the Center for Urban Studies.

[88] Sidney Stein, Jr. to Edward Levi, September 2, 1970, Committee MSS, Box 1, folder 10.

[89] Sidney Stein, Jr. to Edward Levi, March 7, 1973, Harris MSS. Stein donated "1,465 shares of common stock of International Business Machines Corporation to the University of Chicago" to explore a "new school of public affairs" or "equivalent" at the University. In a November 2, 1976 letter to President Wilson, Stein later approved the sale of those shares which had since increased to 1,832 thanks to a stock split, plus an additional gift, for a total amount of $500,000 to be used to develop a "School of Public Policy Studies" – an amount that fell significantly short of Stein's initial promises to Charles Daly of "$5 to $7 million" in December 1968.

Stein initially floated some four and a half years prior, this gift was ultimately pledged at time when the University was projecting a $5.9 million deficit for AY73-74 – a situation exacerbated by overestimating enrollment projections – in the wake of the expiration of the Ford challenge grant.[90] The University's dire state of financial affairs became the focus of a last ditch effort to court the Ford Foundation for broader University support in the summer of 1973, which eventually fell through in November 1973 – the same month the Committee on Public Policy was formally recommended to Levi and Wilson by the committee of Deans. Though the 1973 Ford Foundation discussions were unrelated to the policy program, the prospectivtiy surrounding the University's relationship with the Foundation and the existence – or absence – of funding were deeply intertwined in the process. It is not hard to imagine a world in which Levi and others believed that moving forward with the policy program on the basis of Stein's seed grant would eventually bring with it the funding the University so desperately wanted from Ford.[91]

At the same time as financial events spurred the continued development of the program, social unrest put pressure on the University's reputation as Levi and others considered the proposal as the project got underway. During January through March 1969, as Stein sought to move ahead with gathering support for the envisioned "center or school of public administration," Levi's own reputation was at risk – like many University presidents at the time – over social activism on campus. From January 30 through February 14, 1969, hundreds of students staged a sit-in of the Administration building in the aftermath of the contract non-renewal of politically controversial – but popular – associate professor, Marlene Dixon, in the

[90] Boyer, *A History,* 386.

[91] Though this claim is speculative, the Ford Foundation eventually did serve as one of the funders for the Committee on Public Policy. Records indicate that they had pledged a modest, 3-year grant in the amount of $100,000 as of 4/1/78 (Committee MSS, Box 2, Folder 14).

sociology department.[92] Delayed by campus protests, Levi failed to quickly identify faculty representatives who might serve on the advisory committee for the public affairs program, demonstrating, once again, the role of uncertainty in the process.[93] As a result, during this formative period, Stein was able to move ahead with little oversight in assembling a group of three public administration deans from peer institutions who would form a committee of advisors in developing a proposal for the program.[94] The inclusion of these outside advisors, I argue, led to the development of a proposal that fundamentally could not be seen or *recognized* in terms the University faculty might understand because of the dearth of their involvement in the process at an institution known for its highly decentralized and faculty-driven decision-making. In fact, it wasn't until January 1970 that a larger faculty committee was assembled to review the proposal.[95] Though Levi rarely used the term in his correspondence, Stein initially framed the

[92] Boyer, "A History," 373-375. Boyer notes the impact of the crisis of 1969 on Levi, indicating that according to College dean Wayne Booth, he had "threatened to resign" from the presidency on several occasions. It should be noted that this controversy impacted not only President Levi, but also D. Gale Johnson, as dean of the Social Sciences Division, who had approximately 150 students stage a two-hour sit-in his office on January 27, 1969.

[93] Sidney Stein, Jr. to Marver Bernstein, April 3, 1969, Committee MSS, Box 1, Folder 9. Stein notes to Bernstein, one of the outside advisors, that he has been waiting on Levi to appoint the University faculty members to the exploratory committee, citing "student unrest" as the reason for the delay. This delay was the first of two major delays during these early years. A second delay occurred between December and January 1970, following a 6-month ultimatum from Stein to develop the program, wherein Levi had failed to appoint faculty to the second, larger faculty committee, eventually delegating that responsibility to Johnson. Correspondence between Levi and Johnson surrounding both these delays, however, suggest that Levi may not have been as absent-minded as Stein believed. As early as July 15, 1969, Levi suggested to Johnson that setting up a committee structure, like Urban Studies, might be the most viable pathway to establishing a program might appease both faculty and Stein and his advisors (see Levi papers, Box 292, folder 4). Levi never floated the possibility of an alternative structure to Stein, however, until September 1970.

[94] The original exploratory committee consisted of three outside advisors who had served as deans of schools of public administration at peer institutions (Don Stone/Pittsburgh; Marver Bernstein/Princeton; Frederick Mosher/Virginia) and three University of Chicago faculty members (D. Gale Johnson, Chair; John Jeuck; Bernard Meltzer). Of these members, Jeuck was among the founding faculty of the Committee on Public Policy, and Stone stayed heavily involved, serving on its first Visiting Committee. Don Price (Harvard), though not formally on the committee, also agreed to provide advice and consultation, and indeed, did so through the formation of the CPSS.

[95] D. Gale Johnson to Sidney Stein, Jr., March 23, 1970. Committee MSS, Box 1, folder 9. Members of this larger committee included: Jeremy Arazel (polisci), Theodore Lowi (polisci), Harry Kalven (law), TW Schultz (econ), Robert Mundell (econ), Harold Richman (SSA), R. Stephen Berry (chemistry), Dan Lortie (education), Mark Krug (education), Jack Meltzer (Center for Urban Studies), C. Arnold Anderson (education), Robert Aliber (business), Kenneth Dam (law), and Robert Daniels (psychiatry). Schultz appears to have been particularly involved as Levi later refers to the program proposal this committee developed by his name.

project in pursuit of improving "public administration" – an idea that resonated with outside advisors such Don Stone who was dean of Pittsburgh's Graduate School of Public and International Affairs and among the more active members of the group given his ties to "1313" on the University's campus.[96] Consequently, the first proposal in 1969 had a strong orientation towards "public administration" and training of graduates for work in public service, as highlighted below, reflecting an envisioned future for a program located in reference to the ideology of government and professional practice instead of the ideology of the University and its myth of the pursuit of pure knowledge.

> "At the MA level, it is possible to devise a professional degree program with rigorous and analytical basis that would prepare individuals for effective public service, primarily, though not exclusively, in administration…Governmental agencies would presumably be interested in employing individuals with such a background in roles that would assist them in obtaining the necessary background in actual operations and to move on to major administrative responsibilities." [97]

Furthermore, Stein himself, in an April 1970 memo to Johnson, went to far as to suggest that a key benefit of the new program might be its ability to "create contacts with government in the period ahead" – a statement that poignantly spoke to the changing relationship between universities and higher education at the time.[98]

Ironically, in an effort to ensure its financial survival, the University found itself with a proposal focused on a kind of practical training that challenged the stability of the very

[96] Sydney Stein, Jr. to Donald Stone, October 22, 1969, Committee MSS, Box 1, Folder 9; Donald Stone to Sidney Stein, Jr., November 5, 1969, Records, Box 1, Folder 9, Committee MSS. Stein underscores his mutual understanding ("we-relation" per Schutz and Luckmann) with Stone, suggesting a recent public affairs proposal circulated Gale Johnson by was at odds with "the kind of school you and I want." Early on, Don Stone viewed the proposal as too self-serving of faculty research interests, noting little connection to the needs of government or public service outcomes.

[97] D. Gale Johnson to Edward Levi, "School of Public Affairs," October 15, 1969. Though framed more as a justification than an affirmative statement of purpose, the first proposal frames the educational aim of the school as training for public service and administration: "At the MA level, it is possible to devise a professional degree program with rigorous and analytical basis that would prepare individuals for effective public service, primarily, though not exclusively, in administration."

[98] Sidney Stein, Jr. to D. Gale Johnson, April 14, 1970. Committee MSS, Box 1, Folder 10.

reputation that President Levi feared was at risk. The fast pace of financial events impacting the University may have pushed the project forward initially during a period of social unrest, but that progress would soon come to a halt. The fact that, at subsequent stages, the existence – or lack thereof – of funds for the program suggests that the "institutional will" (as a manner of speech) to develop a program was not there.[99] Did these impasses reflect the dire financial condition of the University, or did they reflect more profoundly on the question whether this program belonged at the University at all? With the project left in the hands of a powerful donor and his network peer advisors in public administration for much of 1969, University faculty would have to reckon with its past and a program proposal that came into direct conflict with its myths and the legacy of pure knowledge that it sought to preserve.

Market Meets the Myth: Knowledge, Practice, and the Struggle to Preserve a Reputation

While the uncertainty of the University's financial future – and what that might mean for its reputation – moved the project forward during this formative period, the clash between market and the myth came to the fore during 1970 and 1971 as the program proposal circulated more widely among faculty at the University in an effort to hone the program into something that might *befit* it.[100] To understand why the lack of faculty input into the initial proposal presented

[99] D. Gale Johnson to Edward Levi, "School of Public Affairs, July 20, 1970. Levi Admin MSS, Box 292, folder 4. In the cover memo to the second public affairs proposal, Johnson advises that, given "differences among the interested faculty," that it is "imperative that the school not be officially proposed to the Council of the University Senate until there is assurance that the entire project is financially feasible." Accordingly, in his September 2, 1970 memo to Stein, Levi indicates that he is prepared to "push the program" contingent on raising $25 million (see Committee MSS, Box 1, folder 10).

[100] D. Gale Johnson to Edward Levi, December 18, 1969. Levi Admin MSS, box 292, folder 4. Following an inconclusive meeting to review the initial proposal, Jim Stein gives D. Gale Johnson six months to develop a program. This event triggered action to towards establishing the larger committee of 14 faculty who were charged with developing the second iteration of the proposal. While Levi had suggested a committee to Johnson back in July 1969, no action had been taken, representing another key delay in the program development and indication that neither Levi nor Johnson had the attention to devote to this project. It wasn't until January 13, 1970 – some six months later – that Stein eventually prodded Johnson – and by extension Levi - into action to form this second committee.

such a roadblock in the process, it is important to understand both the role of *recognition* in the social process of validating new ideas within organizations – particularly within an institution accustomed to peer review – as well as the role that past events played in making it difficult for faculty to envision this particular program at the University.[101] In processual theory, past events – like future events – are also powerful determinants in the social process. While only events in the immediate past can have an effect in the present, all past events, even those from the deep past, can be brought into the present through forms of "encoded" memory, whether social, symbolic, physical, or otherwise, to shape the meaning of the present event.[102] In the case of the policy project, I show how University faculty's two main concerns about the program – namely, its organizational structure and its pedagogical focus – emerged from interrelated events in the University's lineage which emphasized its myth of knowledge over practice and hindered Stein's future vision for a public affairs program from being understood as such.

The problem of the proposed program's pedagogical focus and how it fit into the existing organization of academic work represented an early and persistent concern among University faculty and administrators who were deeply connected to an ideology that the University had sustained and replicated over time through various forms of myth-making, buttressed by social ties to the various institutions that made up the "academy." Indeed, the ideal of the advancement of pure knowledge – the myth – while was highly dependent a social order within academia that organized faculty, research, and educational activities at the University according to the

[101] By recognition, I am using Glaeser's definition used in his theory of consequent processualism and related validation processes for institutions: "The validating force of recognition emerges in the refraction of one person's understanding in that of another person taken to be an authority (*Political Epistemics*, 219). This process will continue so long as understandings remain tenuous.

[102] By encoding, I am using Abbott's definition of a social process by which the passage of events in time produces a "sedimentation of the past in the current structure of the present." See Abbott, "The Present," in chap. 6, *Social Process*, 5-10, 15.

disciplines.[103] While professional schools, centers, committees, and other organization structures existed at the University, the departments served as the primary organizing mechanism through which faculty could advance human knowledge – the very thing upon which the University's reputation and ideology hinged. As a result, the idea of a "*school"* of *"public affairs or administration"* naturally presented both structural and ideological challenges to the aforementioned dominance of the departmental organization of academic work.[104]

On ideological grounds, faculty balked at concerns about program quality and the impact that the proposed program's focus on practical training would have on the disciplines. Because these early proposals had linked the program's primary aim to the training of professionals for public service, with references to the importance of research disconnected from the advancement of knowledge, the educational mission and curricular focus of the new program was deemed by many University faculty not worthy the institution.[105] For example, in sociology, Morris

[103] Much has been written about the organization of academic work and the durability of the disciplines within the structure of American universities (see Abbott, Blau, Jacobs, Clark, etc). There are several theoretical explanations for this stability, ranging from the dual-institutionalization of the labor market and university organizational structure (see Abbott, *Chaos of Disciplines*) to the role of other interwoven institutional layers that buttress the discipline, such as journals, conferences, professional associations, etc. (see Clark, *Org Saga*). All of these links work to keep existing disciplinary organizational structures and social relations in place and resist the emergence of new ways of organizing academic work within universities.

[104] D. Gale Johnson to Edward Levi, July 10, 1969. Levi Admin MSS, Box 292, folder 4. Unable to "see a way out" of faculty resistance to a degree-granting school, Johnson proposes the establishment of an institute, noting that neither business school nor the social science division viewed the program as a fit with their divisional structure. These concerns with ideological and structural fit can be seen through the ambiguous the terminology used to describe the new program. During much of 1969, the program was interchangeably described as a "center or school" of "public administration" or "public affairs." While the field of study solidified into "public affairs" by 1970 and eventually "policy studies" by 1973, the ambiguity around the structure continued even through to Stein's 1973 seed grant which left the possibility of establishing something other than a school open (see Stein to Levi, March 7, 1973, Harris MMS). See also Lynn, *Public Management*, and Radin, *Beyond Machiavelli*, for a good discussion of ambiguity in defining the fields of policy analysis and public administration, suggesting this issue existed within the profession, more broadly.

[105] The 1969 proposal lacked any overarching descriptive aim for the school, though clear throughout in linking teaching and research activities to supporting effective "public service and administration" with no reference to "knowledge." Reflecting faculty input, the July 1970 proposal introduces the idea of knowledge and states two separate aims for the school, albeit in tension: one to "prepare talented students for professional work in the public sector" and another to "contribute to knowledge that is useful for the determination and implementation of public policies and programs." (see Committee MSS, Box 1, folders 9-10).

Janowitz, feared the impact that a new school might have on the departments' ability to advance policy-relevant knowledge.[106] As a result, in terms of the social order, the only suitable location for the practical work of "public administration," therefore, was one of the extant professional schools – many of which saw the new program as a threat to its *jurisdiction* and a potential drain on its faculty and resources.[107] Some leaders of its professional schools, like law school dean Phil Neal, doubted that the labor market even needed students with public affairs training and worried that a limited supply of quality faculty in this area would mean that law faculty would be subsumed into the new school. [108]

Curiously, as discussed earlier in this paper, many antecedents existed in the University's lineage of that pertained to practical training or the practical application of knowledge that, on their surface, *should have* provided a basis for understanding how a public affairs program might work at the University.[109] However, I argue, those antecedents were insufficient to spur the

[106] Morris Janowitz to D. Gale Johnson, March 31, 1970. Levi Admin MSS, Box 292, folder 4. He writes, "It will relive the Departments of effective responsibility and initiative in this area," adding that "a School of Public Affairs will have a special impact on the Department of Sociology and make its intellectual life even more unbearable." Interestingly, Janowitz's proposal for the Department was rebuffed by Levi two years earlier, saying, "we may need to cut back on basic educational expenses" (see Boyer, *A History*, 379).

[107] Use of the term "jurisdiction" is intentional reference to the "link between a profession and its work" as defined by Abbott, "Introduction," in *System of Professions,* 20.

[108] Neal writes, "I am skeptical about the education or training objectives envisaged for the School." Phil Neal to John Wilson, July 27, 1970, Committee MSS, Box 1, Folder 10; Bob McAdams to John Wilson, July 27, 1970, Committee MSS, Box 1, Folder 10. Unlike Neal, Harold Richman, then dean of the School of Social Service Administration (SSA) was a notable outlier among the deans of the professional schools in his support for the public affairs program. Richman, who also served on the program committee, made an appeal to Stein to redirect his interest in public affairs towards this existing school (see Richman to Stein, February 17, 1970, Committee MSS, Box 1, folder 10). While this proposition never came to fruition, it may have helped to sustain Stein's engagement in the project in the face of faculty opposition; ultimately, Richman later emerged as the first chair of the Committee of Public Policy instead of others, like Harry Kalven (faculty in Law School), who Levi and Johnson had previously identified as the top candidate to lead the envisioned school.

[109] Reflecting its Baptist educational roots, the new University of Chicago, reconstituted in 1890, comprised at its founding graduate programs in divinity (1891) and soon after education (1895), business (1898), and law (1902), followed by a second-wave of professional schools emerging in the 1920s, including social service administration (1919), medicine (1927), and library sciences (1928).109 From 1943 to 1975, when the Committee on Public Policy – the precursor to the University's sixth professional school, the Harris School of Public Policy – was established, my research shows at least six new occupationally oriented degree programs, from communications to industrial

program forward because many of those events remained either long in the past or divorced from this decision-making process – temporally and spatially "out-of-sight," so-to-speak.[110] While Stein particularly bemoans the fate of Charles Merriam's department of "government" in his September 17, 1970 invective to Levi, it had been effectively disbanded for more than three decades by this time and rebuilt by political science departmental faculty with a different orientation.[111] Despite Stein's attempt to revive Merriam's ghost, this lineage was scarcely reclaimed in the proposals for the new program.[112]

Consequently, as the program proposal circulated within social sciences and professional schools at the University during the spring and summer of 1970, faculty – particularly within sociology, business, and law – expressed serious concerns about both the structure and curriculum of the proposed school, underscoring that it would face significant challenges in attracting quality faculty and students and might burden existing departments to the point of

relations, were started at the University in the social sciences alone. It is worth nothing that Stein, in his September 17, 1970 memo to Levi, calls out the University's history of professional education.

[110] Some other antecedents, including the Center for Urban Studies, the Center for Policy Studies, and a related MA in urban studies and policy, were linked to the program development process and indeed served as positive determinants as some faculty involved in these efforts were also part of the public affairs proposal committees, including Jack Meltzer who led the Center for Urban Studies. Charles Daly, executive director of the Center for Policy Studies, however, specifically requested to remain out of the process and shortly thereafter left the University altogether (see Daly to Kleinbard, March 14, 1969, Levi Admin MSS, Box 292, folder 4).

[111] Sidney Stein, Jr. to Edward Levi, September 17, 1970, Committee MSS, Box 1, folder 10. "The history of the Department of Government at Chicago is in my view tragic…all the well laid plans of Charles Merriam were nullified by Hutchins, and instead of having the outstanding center for the study of government in the United States, the University of Chicago has actually nothing to show for the efforts of this great pioneer."

[112] Interestingly, as I note later, many policy-relevant antecedents at Chicago did surface in the donor proposals and myth-making surrounding Committee on Public Policy; while Merriam is mentioned in at least one 1976 program overview, along with Grace and Edith Abbott and others from the Chicago School of Civics and Philanthropy; Lasswell was noticeably absent (Committee MSS, Box 1, folder 15). Other scholars, such as Milton Friedman, however, were claimed as current examplars of the University's contributions advancing policy-relevant research in the spirit of "critical inquiry" (Committee MSS, Box 2, folder 15). The selection of antecedents, I argue, likely represented a deliberate effort to distinguish the program from the study of government and align it with a view of a kind of study of policy ideas inclusive of private-sector solutions – a positioning undoubtedly more appealing to corporate foundations, too.

hiring of "second-rate" faculty to fulfill unmet needs.[113] In his March 1970 progress report on the status of the faculty committee's efforts to Stein, Johnson echoed these concerns, indicating that most faculty on the committee were opposed to offering an MA in public affairs."[114] Unable to align the structure of curriculum and instruction, the July 1970 program proposal redirected the school's mission towards the advancement of interdisciplinary research, as noted in the excerpt below, and deemphasized the program's educational mission, limiting the school to a cohort of 60 students – a far cry from the "minimum" of 100-120 put forth in the 1969 proposal.[115] Faculty would be appointed for limited durations within the school, enabling them to return to their departments.

> "In our various discussions with faculty it has become clear that...a School of Public Affairs would make its major contribution only through contributions to knowledge that would result from a major emphasis upon fundamental as well as applied research."

Despite Johnson's efforts at negotiating compromise, by August 1970, persistent faculty concerns – with structure at the forefront – came to a head following a response memo from Bob McAdams (dean of the Social Sciences Division) and Phil Neal (dean of the Law School), neither of whom was on the committee, to President Levi advocating for a "gradual approach" that might begin with a focus on interdisciplinary research, akin to centers and institutes.[116]

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[113] Morris Janowitz to D. Gale Johnson. March 31, 1970. Levi Administration Archives. Janowitz voiced his opposition to the establishment of a "school for public affairs" on three grounds: (1) relieving departments of responsibility for training for public service, (2) complicated administrative structure, (3) specific impact to department of sociology which is not equipped to meet needs for "packaged sociology" which he suggests will lead to the hiring of "second rate" sociologists to meet the school's needs. He indicated support provided that the school would not be degree-granting, a common compromise solution suggested by opposing faculty at the time.

[114] D. Gale Johnson to Sidney Stein, Jr. March 23, 1970. The views expressed in Johnson's report reflect the first meeting of the faculty committee of 14 and consultations with all the departmental chairs within the Social Sciences Division.

[115] Levi's hand notations on the July 20, 1970 proposal indicate that he thought the cohort size (30 per class) was "too small" and didn't buy the argument that a full fellowship would be required to attract students. Equally, he noted concerns that the limited duration of appointments of existing faculty to the school would "drain school funds to benefit departments." (Committee MSS, Box 1, folder 10)

[116] Levi circulated these memos to Stein along with the July 1970 program proposal.

Thus, unable to see beyond extant organizational rules and routines, these past models served to narrow the possibilities for the future anticipated structure of the program as faculty offered counter-proposals to incorporate the program into existing departments ranging from School of Social Service Administration to the Center for Policy Studies, and Center for Urban Studies, among others.[117] After more than a year of debate, the idea for a public affairs program still faced "limited but strong opposition."[118] Having shared these points of view with Stein, Levi diplomatically floated to him an alternative, less ambitious pathway forward in a September 2, 1970 letter; this proposal called for a more modest amount of money to be put toward "strengthening programs in the departments and schools" in the area of "public affairs work" and "public policy formulation" as interim step should the estimated $25 million endowment not be raised for the school.[119] Stein's response to this proposition nearly terminated the entire project, prompting him to question Levi's commitment to the project and Johnson's leadership and claim that faculty interest in the school was only a function of their desire to fund "pet projects."[120] In fact, the situation was so dire that University officials suggested Stein redirect his fundraising

[117] While Harold Richman made a pitch to "absorb" the proposed program into SSA (see Richman to Stein, February, 17, 1970, Committee MSS, Box 1, folder 10), there was no uptake on the part of Stein, who though sympathetic, remained stuck on standing up a new school at Chicago that might replicate the one at Harvard (see Stein to Levi, September 17, 1970, Committee MSS, Box 1, folder 10).
[118] D. Gale Johnson to Edward Levi, July 20, 1970. Levi Admin MSS, Box 292, folder 4.
[119] Edward Levi to Sidney Stein, Jr., September 2, 1970, Committee MSS, Box 1, Folder 10. It should be noted that later as the Committee on Public Policy came up for reevaluation in 1985, Levi reflects on the funding conversations he had years ago, suggesting that the $25 million figure was his threshold to establish the school and that he was unaware of the current financial needs of the University. Kruskal notes the figure should not be taken "literally." From this exchange, one cannot help but speculate that the figure was related to the University's financial needs and the expiring Ford Foundation challenge grant, which was $25 million. (Notes from William Kruskal interview with Ed Levi, November 13, 1985, and Levi to Kruskal, November 25, 1985, Harris MSS).
[120] Sidney Stein, Jr. to Edward Levi, September 17, 1970. Committee MSS, Box 1, folder 10. Stein writes, "When I approached you initially, I had anticipated that you would take the lead in developing this new program. Instead, you turned the matter over to Dean Johnson whom I have judged entirely inadequate."

capacity towards the development of a new facilities complex that would serve as a center for the arts.[121]

Despite these roadblocks, as new efforts got underway to develop a third iteration of the proposal spurred by a meeting with the Ford Foundation in spring of 1971, as discussed earlier, the question of the program's mission and what activities this entity should offer were equally – if not moreso - the subject of contention.[122] These ideological concerns, though prefigured in faculty correspondence and Johnson's March 1970 progress report, were never explicitly referenced in any of the official program proposals until the July 1971 proposal. Putting aside the structural concerns as "more apparent than real," the proposal issued a stark disclaimer:

> "Doubt as to the intellectual level of most current policy-oriented studies is, in fact, the major underlying objection of those who have voiced opposition to the establishment of a School of Public Affairs. To varying degrees, we share those doubts. Hence, we advocate moving ahead with such a School only on the assumption that those invited to join its faculty fully meet Chicago's standards."[123]

Faced with yet another impasse, at the conclusion of the July 1971 proposal, the committee posed to Levi (and by extension Stein) a series of questions instead of answers in a departure from the norms of the proposal genre which was designed to provide recommendations. This event, as I discuss in the next section, set the conditions for the symbolic action needed to reimagine the future of the program to fit the University's myths and social structures. As such, the idea of establishing an interdisciplinary committee was introduced – referencing urban

[121] Michael Claffey to Robert Gunness, June 18, 1970. Levi Admin MSS, Box 29, folder 4. Claffey, the VP of Development, writes to Trustee member Gunness.
[122] "Proposal for a School of Public Affairs," February 3, 1971. Committee MSS, Box 1, folder 9. While the structural ambiguities of the new program never really went away, the committee concluded in the 1971 proposal that the faculty reservations about the "difficulties" the new school posed for the divisions and departments was "more apparent than real."
[123] "Proposal for a School of Public Affairs," February 3, 1971. Committee MSS, Box 1, folder 9.

studies as an example – as a well-worn structural alternative to fully fledged school often used for *corroborating* new academic endeavors.[124]

In sum, once the program proposal left the hands of the outside advisors and came into interaction with the University's faculty and their tangled lineages of departments, curricula, and myths, it became clear how the envisioned "public affairs" program not only posed a direct threat to the University's identity and preservation of its reputation but also how the past social arrangements of its academic work had limited the possible structural futures that the program might embody.[125]

BRIDGING DIVIDES: Myth-Making, Meaning, and Making Space for a New Program

While we know little about the events of late 1971 and 1972 following the unsuccessful meeting with the Ford Foundation other than University's continuing financial struggles and efforts to refill the vacancy left by the expiration of the Ford challenge grant, what is clear is that by March 1973 the project was back-on-track thanks, in part, to a seed grant from Stein to establish a "school of public affairs or equivalent."[126] As the project had been unfunded until this point, this financial commitment, particularly when coupled with the structural solution of an interdisciplinary committee with joint faculty appointments, would have appeared sufficient to establish the program had not the ideological barriers remained for the reasons discussed in the prior section. Thus, we see, once again, that while financial events helped to move the project forward, reputation remained a top concern. Policy education, by definition, brought into interaction two very different social entities – academia and government – each of which has a

[124] The suggestion to form a committee is a classic example of what Glaeser calls a direct corroborating action in his validation process dynamics. Corroboration "self-consciously" puts "action into a test" based on past experience as a "successful guides for [future] action" (*Political Epistemics,* 200, 206).
[125] Glaeser, Political Epistemics, 185. Glaeser notes that agency problems often arise in the process of recognition as "attacks on understandings are therefore often understood as attacks on identity."
[126] Sidney Stein, Jr. to Edward Levi, March 7, 1973, Harris MSS.

very different ideologies, lineages, and purposes in the social order of the world. With a promissory note to establish *something* at the University, the question before Levi and the University's deans and faculty remained: would the University establish just another program in the long succession of schools of public administration that supported the labor market by providing training for would-be government officials? Or, would it create something that might contribute something meaningful to the advancement of knowledge and the ideology of the academy that the University held so strongly? Caught between the divergent purposes and ideologies of the academy (with its myths) and government (with its market demands), I show in the following section how the framers of the 1973 program proposal were able to bridge these divides and achieve *resonance* between disparate understandings of the program though linguistic work and symbolic action, drawing on processual theory.[127]

As social meaning, in the processual terms, is not clear until its location is determined in the social present, this process of meaning-making required establishing the space – in temporal and social terms – to understand and validate the project.[128] As discussed in the last section, the necessary conditions for faculty to understand – or *recognize* – how a degree-granting program in public affairs or policy might fit at the University did not exist. By invoking the University's "myth" in the 1973 program proposal, this storytelling event, I posit, helped to both locate the meaning of the program in reference to events in the University's lineage *and* maintain (even if only by appearance) some stability in the myth to which it was linked while at the same time effectively producing a program that might also satisfy the donors and the demands of the

[127] In this section, I continue to draw on event-based processual theory of Andrew Abbott (*Social Process)* while incorporating Andreas Glaeser's processual view of validation dynamics which replicates and links understandings in a dialectic of recognition, resonance, and corroboration until stabilized (*Political Epistemics* and "Hermeneutic Institutionalism").

[128] Abbott, "Linkage," in chapt. 5, *Social Process*, 40: "Social meaning is unclear until we know its location in the space of the social present."

market. I shall now proceed to examine this validation process, examining the spatial and temporal dynamics that worked together to "knot" paradoxical events into the eventual decision.

First, in examining the temporal dimension of location, the University's myth – with its quality of apparent timelessness– worked to mitigate the fear of an uncertain financial future by bringing the past into the present through the event of the program proposal process. As discussed earlier, all events – including those in the deep past – can be brought into the present and be "made available for metamorphosis" in the social process.[129] In processual terms, myth can be seen as a form of what Andrew Abbott has called, *memorial historicality*, which I define here as the memory of a social entity's identity that can be reproduced through memories of brains, reports, speeches, statues, curriculum, and departments, etc.[130] While an exploration of the nature and scope of the University's myth-making practices goes beyond the present discussion, it is important to note how Levi, as president, often used myth-making in his public speeches and the effects his invocation of the past had in distorting the time horizon in which key decisions and events were narrated to create temporal effects in the narrative event as well.[131] For example, in his 1974 State of the University Address, the year in which the Committee on Public Policy was approved, Levi precedes the discussion of this event by connecting the investigation of ideas of "practical importance" to "the unity of diverse approaches" engendered by the University's legacy of basic research and its "continual" striving for new ideas.[132] Through these invocations and other references to Harper's original vision for a "Great

[129] "Memory pervades the social process and is available for metamorphosis into lineage." (Abbott, "The Present," in chapt. 6, *Social Process,* 10)
[130] See Burton Clark, *Org Saga*, for an extensive discussion of the role of myth and saga, which includes origin stories, in higher education.
[131] University Record, "State of the University 1971," 73. Levi often invoked the iconicity of the University's myth to justify new programs and endeavors: "the University is a symbol and custodian of a long tradition. That tradition includes a willingness to experiment as well as a refusal to bow to the tastes of the moment."
[132] University Record, "State of the University 1974," 95

University," current or future decisions were not seen as events or actions of *this* time, but rather, through a form of temporal reckoning, they were marked to a privileged point of orientation in the University's past – or *another* time.[133]

Until this point, the public affairs program proposals contained little reference to the University's myth or previous efforts in public administration or policy beyond the occasional mention of the Center for Urban Studies or the Center for Policy which both existed at the time. Owing to the involvement Stein and the outside advisors who had ties to the emerging field of policy education, the proposals typically framed the program's purpose in terms of the *future* opportunity to meet the demand for the training of public servants with little justification for how the program might advance the University's mission or ideals.[134] However, in the 1973 proposal, while still future oriented in the sense that it outlined the possibilities for a new program, the temporal emphasis of its rhetoric shifted towards the past, resurfacing examples of policy-relevant activities in the University's near-past in an effort to justify and corroborate why the program should exist in here at the University.[135] This temporal shift in the storytelling event of the proposal brings with it the effect of *thickening* the experiential present of the decision such a vote to establish the program was no longer one made in response to an urgent market need or isomorphic pressure from a peer institution, but rather, it existed in the context of a longer and

[133] For a discussion of "temporal reckoning," see Kockelman and Bernstein, "Semiotic Technologies," 325. University Record, "State of the University 1972," 25. Levi invokes Harper and his vision for a "Great University."
[134] "School of Public Affairs," July 20, 1970, Committee MSS, Records, Box 1, Folder 10. "State(d) simply, the mission of the School of Public Affairs in its professional program for the M.A. degree would be to prepare talented students for work in the public sector."
[135] McAdams, et al. to Levi and Wilson, November 26, 1973, Harris MSS. Examples included activities "falling under the rubric of public affairs" at the University (e.g., Urban Studies Center in SSD, program in Educational Administration and the Midwest Administration Center in the Department of Education; the Public Affairs program in the College; the Center for Studies in Criminal Justice in the Law School; the Cetner for the Management of Public and Non-Profit Enterprise in the business school; and the Center for the Study of Welfare Policy in SSA). As discussed in the prior section, there continued to be a noticeable absence of the legacy of Chicago School of Political Science and related contributions to the study of public administration.

seemingly timeless lineage at the University.[136] It should be noted that this rearview-looking and inward linguistic emphasis in subsequent program proposals only increased during the early years of the Committee as its faculty sought to further develop the curriculum and/or raise additional funds.[137]

Turning now to the spatial dimension of location, to come to fruition, the program needed to both fit to the University's understanding of "itself "and well as the emergent field to which it would belong. With the project caught between ambiguous understandings and definitions of this field (i.e., public administration vs. public affairs vs. policy), the question of fit – in other words, *resonance* between events – became critical to achieving recognition forth new project.[138] Again, one sees how the University's myth played a role in re-wiring linkages needed to facilitate the decision. While myths endure because of the multiple and reinforcing forms of memorial historicality that reproduce them, I posit that they can also function as symbolic links in narrowing or *forecoding* the possibilities for future plans.[139] As with other symbolically centered events, however, they are particularly open to "reinterpretations" as they pass into the present.[140] In the case of the policy project, two ideas – *intellectual frontiers* and *interdisciplinarity* – connected to the University's myth became dominant themes in the 1973 proposal used to justify the unique need for the University of Chicago to develop a policy program that might address the gaps not only in the type of skills training but also in the quality of said training. Indeed, anticipating faculty response to claims in support of expanding professional education at the University, Levi, in his public speeches, often invoked the

[136] Abbott, "Time, Space, Location," chapt. 4 in *Social Process.*
[137] Committee on Public Policy Studies, "Public Policy Studies at the University of Chicago: 1976-77," Harris MSS.
[138] See Glaeser, *Political Epistemics,* 191, for a definition of resonance as a "validating force resulting from the fit between any two understandings."
[139] Abbott, "The Present," chapt. 6 in *Social Process.* 21.
[140] Abbott, "The Present," chapt. 6 in *Social Process,* 15.

intellectual virtue of "interdisclipinarity" as a means of creating an indexical association between professional education and the academic arena in his claims-making process. To disabuse any notion that the University would fall victim to the massification of education, he says in his 1973 State of the University Address, during of a time of heated debate regarding the policy program: "At a time when professional education was a bastion of separatism, the professional schools at the University of Chicago were interdisciplinary and were concerned with basic problems of theory and research."[141] In the same address, Levi also speaks of the high reputational ranking of the University of Chicago's extant professional schools, framing their *distinction* within the context of University's commitment to the interdisciplinary pursuit of new knowledge formation and the mythic quality of distinction and difference at the University.[142]

Thus, if the University of Chicago were to develop a policy program, one needed to be assured that it would be *different* from programs at other universities in order for it to fit the ideal of the advancement of knowledge and the attribute of distinction that was so dominant in the myth-making of its presidents past and present. Ultimately, this notion that the emergent sub-field of *policy analysis* (as distinct from public administration or public affairs) required *interdisciplinary study* – an idea that achieved mutual recognition among Stein and his outside advisors and University faculty – helped link these divergent understanding and solidify University's support for policy education.[143] Interdisciplinary study suggested the work of the new program would not encroach upon the disciplines and diminish reputation, but rather, it

[141] University Record, "State of the University 1973," 39.
[142] University SCRC, "State of the University 1969, 7; University Record, "State of the University 1973," 38
[143] It is worth noting the one of the outside advisors, Don Stone, who eventually joined the Visiting Committee of the Committee on Public Policy, played a key role in bridging understandings of policy education between Stein and his advisors and University faculty. Though dean of the Graduate School of Public and International Affairs program at Pittsburgh, Stone had ties to the University of Chicago, having previously served as the executive director of the Public Administration Service arm of the Public Administration Clearing House (known as by its building address, "1313") located on campus. See Rosen and Weizer for more on Don Stone.

might "widen the University's intellectual frontiers" as the 1971 proposal preconditioned. As long as the program retained this interdisciplinary nature, the new outfit would have both a symbolic and social location at the University (i.e., "the proposed committee should not duplicate but build on existing programs"). As long as the new program was predominantly about substantive knowledge (i.e., "a common core of analytic techniques and substantive concerns) and not administration, it would reflect University's myth and understanding of itself within the social order of the academy. As long as the new program had a tangible connection to the public sector (i.e., the primary concern of the Committee would be to prepare talented students for professional work in the public sector), peers and donors would recognize it as adding value to the field and worthy of their financial investment. Appealing to both University's tradition of rigorous social science and the field's emphasis on practice, the proposal, therefore, concluded:

> "The disciplined study of public policy is a potential source of fresh insights from multiple scholarly perspectives, and encourages the empirical testing of narrowly specialized academic fields that have lost contact with the processes by which real-decisions are made…"[144]

While it is difficult to say to the extent to which symbolic action was more determinative in relation to other events in the decision-making process, it is clear this myth-making lent legitimacy to the project and led those engaged in its work to *believe* – and therefore, portray to donors, students, and others – that they were indeed embarking on a project that was different (i.e., "a special attitude toward public policy studies") from those that had come before it at other elite research universities.[145] In this way, ones sees the vital role of the University myth as a

[144] McAdams, et al. to Levi and Wilson, November 26, 1973, Harris MSS. The quotes in parentheticals in the preceding paragraph all came from this seminal memorandum recommending the establishment of the Committee on Public Policy.

[145] "Committee on Public Policy," June 1977, Harris MSS. Program overview describes how the "character" of the policy program has grown from the "distinctive" nature of the University, "formulating a special attitude toward

symbolic link necessary to creating the space needed to knot various separate and, at times, contradictory events – whether they be people, ideologies, understandings, or organizational structures and routines – into the decision-making event to establish something *new* at the University.

CONCLUSION: A Word on Gambles and Consequences

Like all gambles, the great gamble that was the 1973 decision to establish the Committee on Public Policy was not without its consequences – intended and unintended. What is abundantly clear is that what began as a gamble – with limited funding and faculty support – pursued at the insistence of a Trustee during a time of extraordinary financial uncertainty eventually became its sixth graduate professional school with lasting impacts for the University's identity and structure. While financial uncertainty and market competition may have helped spur the program, by applying processual theory, this paper shows the interrelationship between financial and symbolic events – and the specific role of myth-making – in driving organizational change in higher education. By bridging the paradox of ideology and behavior presented by this new program, the University's myth not only enabled the decision, as new institutionalist theory might suggest, but it also opened up the possibilities for subtle metamorphosis in the University's myth and its organization of academic work. As the consequences of events take time to produce effects in the social world, I conclude by offering a few final thoughts for further research into the consequences of this new program on each of these dimensions.

In terms of the University's identity and reputation, by linking its myth – knowledge – to an endeavor that was fundamentally about practice, the new program opened up the possibilities for ideological change at the University. Though myths are durable and do not change as quickly

public policy studies" that went "far beyond the study of government itself" to investigate "alternative approaches to public problems."

as student enrollments or even faculty hiring, a comparison of President Levi and Wilson's public speeches during the 1970s reveals that the tension between professional education and the advancement of knowledge markedly abates by the end of the decade, suggesting the normalization of professional education as a worthy aim of the institution.[146] Further investigation into the University's presidential discourse and other public communications through to the present day may, indeed, reveal subtle, yet meaningful, changes in its myth over time. Indeed, one finds evidence of metamorphosis in the very myth the University was so protective of in the present-day rhetorics of its "Inquiry and Impact Campaign" which places equal emphasis on both *inquiry / knowledge* and *applied research / impact.* Future studies might examine these linguistic changes in the context of the evolving relationship between higher education, the state, and philanthropy. It is possible, for example, that the shifting emphasis toward knowledge-for-impact represented a political project to court, consciously or not, socially oriented government agencies, corporations, and philanthropists either to secure funds or legitimacy against attacks to the value of higher education.

In terms of organizational structure and behavior, while some of the envisioned futures for the policy program bore fruit, others did not. Despite the reluctance of faculty to establish a degree-granting program, we know the existence of alumni – however small in number – represented instrumental, affirmative voices in the decision to elevate the program to a School – representing an important, likely unforeseen, consequence. The Harris School today represents the second-largest master's degree program with more than 50 faculty and 1,000 enrolled graduate students as well as academic oversight of the undergraduate policy major. By contrast, the interdisciplinary *nirvana* envisioned by the Committee's founders eventually dissipated as

[146] See University Record, SOTU 1977, 105; SOTU 1975, 150 and SOTU 1976, 177; SOTU 1976, 171-2.

the enterprise grew in its standing and stature as a school with a greater focus on applied economics and political economy and a lesser emphasis on psychology, sociology, and law. While there is some evidence of similar shifts at other institutions, the disciplinary orientation of policy studies in the United States remains highly heterogeneous. Further investigation into the career trajectories of the alumni of the University of Chicago policy program as well as the changing composition of the Committee's faculty as it transitioned to a School in 1988 and beyond may reveal particular reasons for this evolution at Chicago and what effects the program's orientation toward applied economics has had on the disciplines in the social sciences.

In conclusion, this paper fills an important gap in the historiography of the University of Chicago while revealing the unintended consequences of myth-making for organizational change by taking a processual approach to understanding the 1973 policy program decision. It also serves as a cautionary tale about myths – or a hopeful tale about the possibilities for new markets– for contemporary universities as they face, once again, extraordinary financial challenges and social unrest. Myths, however stable as they may appear, are dynamic. While they can – and are often used – within organizations to justify and legitimate paradoxical organizational behavior, they also have the power to cross social space and temporalities in a way that catalyzes subtle, yet profound, organizational change. The risk, however, is that in their dialectical capacity to integrate and resolve these organizational paradoxes – increasingly common in higher education – the myths universities hold so dear may themselves one day change.

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