

Investigation and Suggestion on the Allocation of Dean's Working Hours

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Keywords: Dean; Working Hours; Allocation

Abstract: According to the survey of 19 deans of H University, academic works are still the focus of most deans' work, and nearly 70% of them invest less in management affairs than academic works. Colleges and universities should provide assistants for deans, establish a scientific dean tenure system and reasonable assessment objectives, reform the administrative management and resource allocation mode, improve college governance structure, strengthen the informatization construction and institutional research, and raise the informatization level of management decision-making.

1. Introduction

As the principal person in charge of the college (department or institute), the second-level academic organization of the university, the dean (department head or director of the institute, collectively referred to as the dean) is not only an extension of the work and power of the university's leading decision-making body, but also an extension of the faculty group. [1] The dean is an excellent scholar, as well as an important manager of the university. Especially after the expansion of the university, as a connecting manager in the university, the play of the dean's management function is increasingly important. [2] What's the deans' main job? How do they spend their time on these things? Little attention has been paid to this. In the context of the popularization and marketization of higher education, the success of both the management and the academic of a university largely depends on the excellent deans, who is also the key to the success of the management reform at both the university and college levels. Therefore, this paper adopts the single case study method to investigate 23 college deans in H University (211 Project University) in China. A total of 23 questionnaires are issued, 19 are returned and 19 are valid.

2. Questionnaire Design

According to foreign and domestic research on the allocation of teachers' working time, teaching, scientific research, administration and service are the main contents of teachers' work. [3] As a manager, in addition to meetings, the dean spends a certain amount of time responding to the requirements of the superior administrative department or the university, making budgets, filling in checklists and various data, receiving visitors on behalf of the college, doing academic exchanges and social jobs related to academic or dean positions.[4] Therefore, the author roughly divides the working time of the dean into seven aspects: teaching, scientific research, meetings, filling in various data required by the superior administrative department or the university, internal management (communication, coordination and meetings), academic exchanges, reception and entertainment, and social part-time jobs, and then designs a questionnaire based on them. Using paper questionnaire and electronic questionnaire, the author investigated the weekly working hours of 23 college deans of H University, and processed the survey results with EXCEL2003. Based on the analysis of the collected questionnaires, the author conducted a telephone interview with some deans about the specific problems involved in filling data in the questionnaires.

3. Allocation of Dean's Working Hours

The survey results show that almost all deans of H University work 50 hours or more a week. Generally speaking, "busy" is the basic state of the dean's work.

3.1 Busy in academic works: time allocation on academic works

The percentage of deans' teaching hours in weekly working hours. 26.3 % of deans spent 13.3 % of their working hours on teaching, 36.8 % spent 17.9 % of their working hours on teaching, and 36.8 % devoted 24.9 % of their working hours to teaching.

The percentage of deans' scientific research hours in weekly working hours. The proportion of time deans spend on scientific research (including literature review, experiment, research and paper or report writing) is significantly higher than that in teaching. 31.6% of deans devoted 13.5% of their working time to scientific research, 36.8% spent 20.2% of their working time on scientific research, and 31.6% spent 32% of their working time on scientific research.

The percentage of deans' academic exchange hours in weekly working hours. The results showed that 31.6 % of deans spent 6.2 % of their working week on academic exchanges, 36.8 % spent 9.6 % of their working week on academic exchanges, and 31.6 % spent 13.9 % of their working week on academic exchanges.

If the time that the above deans devoted to teaching, research and academic exchanges is collectively called the dean's academic engagement, then 42.1% of deans devoted 42.6% of their weekly work time to academic works and 57.9% of deans devoted 57.4% of their weekly work time to them. Academic affairs are still seen by most deans as the priority of their careers.

3.2 Busy in management: time allocation on management affairs

According to the survey results, management is also an important part of the deans' work, among which meetings and the daily management of the college are the affairs that bring the most contradictions and conflicts to the deans.

The percentage of deans' college internal management hours in weekly working hours. 31.6% of deans devoted 11.2% of their weekly work time to college internal management, 31.6% of deans devoted 17.5% of their weekly work time to it, 36.8% of deans devoted 26.6% of their weekly work time to it. The average proportion of time spent by the 19 deans in the college internal management was 18.87%, among which the lowest proportion was 7.5% and the highest was up to 40%.

The percentage of the deans' meeting hours in weekly working hours. 47.3% of deans spent 14.3% of their weekly working hours in various meetings, and 52.6% of deans spent 6.2% of their weekly working hours in them. The 19 deans spent an average of 10% of their time in meetings, ranging from 4.7% to 17%. Although the proportion of time that deans devote to meetings is low, almost all want to reduce it.

The percentage of the deans' weekly working hours devoted to clerical work such as data reporting and reception. 42.1% of deans spent 10.3% of their weekly working hours on clerical work, 42.2% of deans spent 18.1% of their weekly working hours on them, and 15.7% of deans spent 24.7% of their weekly working hours on them. The average proportion of time spent per dean was 15.86%, with the lowest at 5% and the highest at 26%. It can be seen that the trivial work occupies a considerable part of deans' management time.

The above work related to college internal management, such as meeting attendance, data filling and reception is collectively referred to as management affairs. 31.6% of deans devoted 33.1% of their weekly working hours to management work, 36.8% of deans devoted 45.5% of their weekly working hours to them, and 31.6% of deans devoted 55.6% of their weekly working hours to them. The average proportion of time devoted to management affairs by the 19 deans was 44.78%, ranging from 25% to 63%. Nearly 70% of deans devoted less than 50% of their time to management.

The percentage of deans' service hours in weekly working hours. In addition to the academic and management affairs mentioned above, 90% of the deans have part-time jobs. Some have one or two at least, and even 20 at most. Although deans hold many part-time jobs, they generally spend less

time on social works, and a few think they do not have time at all. Among 17 deans who have time investment in social part-time jobs, the average investment is 4.6%, among which the highest is about 8% and the lowest is 3%.

According to the above work time allocation, the deans spend significantly more time in teaching, scientific research and other academic affairs than in management affairs, and most of them are still academically oriented. It can be seen that the allocation of deans' working hours is not necessarily related to the subject. However, it has a certain relationship with college scale, the division of labor of college leading group, the current survival and development of the college, and the dean's personal academic affairs.

3.3 Views of deans on the allocation of their current working hours

It is the deans' consensus that conference and daily administrative affairs, reception and entertainment, and the internal management of the college should be reduced. But on the scientific research which deans devote the most time, no one thinks it should be reduced. At the same time, the surveys about deans' main job and whether deans are willing to devote more time and energy for the development of college show that 89.47% of deans think the job should take institute management development and academic affairs into account, and 63.16% of the dean express their willingness to spend more time and energy on school development.

4. Conclusions and Suggestions

In the book *The View from The Helm* written by James J. Duderstadt, former dean and president of University of Michigan, he points out that with the gradual shift of the principal's work focus to the outside world, the dean has taken on more tasks originally belonging to the president and become more and more like the president. This trend is also worth thinking about. At present, with the scale enlargement of college, the structure is complicated, the function is diversified, and the management is more difficult. So, what kind of dean does a college need? Must the dean accept the double examination of teachers and cadres? How should the system related to the dean be designed? In the current situation, can a good scholar be equated with a good dean? According to the opinions of the deans and the current situation of similar university presidents, the author believes that the above problems should be solved from the following aspects:

Firstly, provide assistants for the deans. It is a waste and a loss of university quality resources for deans to spend their time on trivial tasks. 84% of deans said schools should provide assistants to get them out of clerical work. The dean's assistant can be held by young teachers, which is more in line with the demand of dean's academic leadership management, and also provides an opportunity and platform for training young teachers.

Secondly, establish a scientific dean tenure system and reasonable assessment objectives. From the perspective of the benign development of the college, the college should formulate and improve the dean's tenure system, establish a post-service compensation mechanism, and eliminate the worries of deans. At the same time, it is necessary to define the position of deans in the case of the gradual shift of the center of university management.

Thirdly, reform the administrative management and resources allocation of the college, and improve the college governance structure. We will further intensify the reform at both institutional and university levels, and change the school-level department-led management and resource allocation model, thus making the college truly become the focus of university activities and vitality. The governance structure of the college should be improved, and on the basis of clarifying the dean's tenure objectives and assessment requirements, the deans should be given the right to lead and manage in line with their duties. The implementation of professorial scholarship enables the professorial community to give full play to their professional rights in teaching, research and evaluation.

Lastly, strengthen university informatization construction and college research, raise the informatization level of management decision-making. In the modern university management, more and more universities realize that the data and the information function is increasingly important, so

they set about to establish the unified management database system. This is not only conducive to improving the efficiency of university management and decision-making, but also the fundamental basis for university self-management, research and monitoring. At the same time, the establishment and improvement of management information system is also an important means to promote information transparency, accelerate democratic management and university governance reform.

Acknowledgements

In this paper, the research was sponsored by Hubei colleges and universities provincial teaching research project Research on the Construction of the Community of Practical Education in Colleges and Universities from the Perspective of Socialist Core Values (project number: 2014226) and teaching research project of Wuhan University of Science and Technology Application Research of Positive Psychology in the Practice Teaching of College Students' Mental Health Education (Project No. 2018X063).

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