

EDUCATIONAL ENTREPRENEURISM IN
HIGHER EDUCATION: A COMPARATIVE CASE STUDY OF TWO ACADEMIC
CENTERS WITHIN ONE LAND-GRANT UNIVERSITY

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ABSTRACT

This research explored the relationship of educational entrepreneurship and organizational culture in the creation and evolution of academic centers within one Midwestern land-grant university facing resource constraints. Particular attention was given to: (a) synthesizing current entrepreneurial and organizational culture and evolution theory as it relates to postsecondary education; (b) ascertaining the implications of a qualitative, comparative, case study approach to analyzing entrepreneurship and organizational culture and evolution within a university setting and (c) presenting the application of and reflection on a qualitative, comparative, case study approach to researching educational entrepreneurship and organizational culture and evolution as they relate to the creation of two, not-for-profit centers.

The findings of this study indicate that these centers have utilized entrepreneurial processes within an academic and non-academic setting to serve a public interest. Primary factors supporting entrepreneurial processes in these academic centers include: (a) mission focus; (b) remaining objective to serve multiple constituents; (c) cultivating resources, both people and funding; (d) building leaders from within; (e) commitment and (f) champions. The relationship of organizational culture with these factors was found to be the key for continuous innovation.