"OUTRODUCTION": A RESEARCH AGENDA ON COLLEGIALITY IN UNIVERSITY SETTINGS*

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ABSTRACT

Collegiality is the modus operandi *of universities. Collegiality is central to academic freedom and scientific quality. In this way, collegiality also contributes to the good functioning of universities' contribution to society and democracy. In this concluding paper of the special issue on collegiality, we summarize the main findings and takeaways from our collective studies. We summarize the main challenges and contestations to collegiality and to universities, but also document lines of resistance, activation, and maintenance. We depict varieties of collegiality and conclude by emphasizing that future research needs to be based on an appreciation of this variation. We argue that it is essential to incorporate such a variation-sensitive perspective into discussions on academic freedom and scientific quality and highlight themes surfaced by the different studies that remain under-explored in extant literature: institutional trust, field-level studies of collegiality, and collegiality and communication. Finally, we offer some remarks on methodological and theoretical implications of this research and conclude by summarizing our research agenda in a list of themes.*

Keywords: Collegiality; challenges to collegiality; collegial resistance; collegial maintenance; varieties of collegiality; academic freedom; institutional trust; collegiality and communication

OPENING REMARKS

Collegiality is the *modus operandi* of universities. It is at the core of what universities are and what their purpose is. At the same time, collegiality is being challenged as a primary form of governing higher education and research.

The 17 papers in the two volumes of this special issue explore numerous examples of these challenges, which are partly a sign of our time. They follow pervasive processes of organizational rationalization with increased emphasis on planning, management, transparency, and a concomitant drive for predictability and control. Challenges also follow from political pressures, reflecting more general threats to freedom of speech, openness, and democracy. The expansion of universities also has been matched with an increased interest among politicians to control their finances and operations. In short, the papers in these volumes show how challenges to collegiality go hand in hand with challenges to universities. In doing so, they foreground collegiality as a critical resource to counter threats to universities as free spaces for knowledge inquiry.

External pressures are not the only sources of challenges, however. We have pointed out several weaknesses and limitations of collegial governance. One main weakness is the lack of clarity about what counts as collegiality, together with a lack of maintenance of collegiality as an institution. Too often, collegiality is a form of governance that is not clearly expressed, but largely associated with how things are perceived to have worked in the "good old days." From the very beginning of our research project, we have recognized a need to clarify what collegiality is, how it works and should work, and what it does. Collegiality cannot be taken for granted; it needs to be made explicit, both in practice and for analytical purposes. In this regard, the papers not only point to challenges to collegiality but also show that collegiality remains an important ideal for how to govern higher education and research. Collegiality is practiced to various extents and in various forms worldwide. Research thus, should not only concentrate on challenges and the introduction of new modes of governance in universities but also highlight ways in which collegiality operates, transforms, and is maintained.

In this concluding paper of the special issue on collegiality, we summarize the main findings and takeaways from our collective studies. We report on the main challenges to collegiality, as well as resistance and activation. We draw together some of the main conceptual developments of these two volumes and present implications for practice and policy. Our findings open multiple pathways for future research. Synthesizing these insights, we develop an agenda for research on collegiality.

This outroduction is a result of our collective work. The outline and key themes were developed interactively during our final session at the Stellenbosch workshop, following which different parts of the paper were written by different authors before being jointly edited. The research agenda is based on the conviction that collegiality manifests in many different forms and settings and that future research needs to acknowledge these many variations of collegiality. In this way, this paper also reflects the many facets of collegiality, both as a concept and in practice.

In the next section, we discuss collegiality as the *modus operandi* of universities. We address why studies of collegiality are important (i.e., why we care). Collegiality is central to academic freedom and scientific quality. In this way, collegiality also contributes to the good functioning of universities' contribution to society and democracy. Next, we summarize the main challenges and

contestations to collegiality and to universities, but also document lines of resistance, activation, and maintenance. We depict varieties of collegiality and conclude by emphasizing that future research needs to be based on an appreciation of this variation. We argue that it is essential to incorporate such a variation-sensitive perspective into discussions on academic freedom and scientific quality and highlight themes surfaced by the different studies that remain under-explored in extant literature: institutional trust, field-level studies of collegiality, and collegiality and communication. Finally, we offer some remarks on the methodological and theoretical implications of this research and conclude by summarizing our research agenda in a list of themes.

COLLEGIALITY IS THE *MODUS OPERANDI* OF UNIVERSITIES

Since the founding of universities in Europe around a millennium ago, universities have thrived as the established social institution for study and knowledge. In the wake of European imperialism and subsequent globalization, this model of the university has expanded in both domain and reach. Changes to the university during this long period have not erased the imprint of its Medieval European roots, among them the commitment to guild-like collegial governance. Nevertheless, collegiality and collegial governance are rapidly changing due to mounting challenges to the global institution of the university.

Recent pressures on universities, which have already reoriented their missions and led to structural and behavioral changes, come from a variety of sources. For-profit corporations, consultancies, think tanks and non-profit research centers encroach on the university's academic mission of research and knowledge creation. Technological advances that enable new forms of teaching and research (e.g., remote learning, online studies, MOOCs, and AI-based text production) are altering the ways universities practice their traditional academic missions. Universities also are challenged by labor market demands to justify the relevance of higher education to the acquisition of employable skills, job market placement, and work processes. Furthermore, seeing that universities were "born global" in the Middle Ages and remain faithful to norms regarding global standards and internationalization, social processes that stress social relevance force universities to become more responsive to local demands and cultural preferences. Increasingly, universities come under political pressure and in more and more countries, outright clashes with political regimes' ideological stances. A last pressure, also referred to above, is the extreme growth of universities. Overall, these worldwide social processes challenge the academic criteria for knowledge, its validity, and its acquisition. Importantly, such challenges to the institution of the university alter collegiality and collegial governance, which are at the heart of the studies in this compilation.

Collegiality as a *modus operandi*, that is, a manner of acting and taking action, has its home in the group of occupations designated as professions. Typical examples of classical professions are law and medicine and from the

19th century onwards the academic profession. To understand this *modus operandi*, one must consider the characteristics of professions. The work of professions is characterized by expertise based on abstract knowledge that members apply to particular cases and use for highly specialized activities that cannot be standardized and routinized. A prerequisite for the development of a profession is the formation and establishment of a social domain for which the profession with its specific expertise is responsible. Through autonomy and collegial self-regulation, professionals determine their tasks and control task fulfillment by themselves. Their practices are based on professional norms and ethics, and they are organized in professional associations, which play an essential role in setting standards for professional practice and the training of professionals (Abbott, 1988; Freidson, 2001).

In the sociology of science, the pursuit of science (Wissenschaft) – as an umbrella term for the entire array of fields and disciplines found in contemporary academia – is considered an academic profession (Ben-David, 1971; Whitley, 1984). Scientific communities, disciplines, and trans-local collaboration networks provide the social and intellectual context for the scientific communication process, peer review, and individual research activities. At the core of the professional activity of such "communities of professional scientists" is the ongoing production of new knowledge and the advancement of the knowledge bases in their fields (Ben-David, 1971, p. 18). Collegiality can be considered the *modus operandi* that the academic profession shares across scientific communities, from the humanities to the natural sciences. However, the *modus operandi* of the academic profession depends on how autonomous scientific pursuits and independent research are institutionalized in their respective organizational or national contexts (Gläser et al., 2021).

An important organizational context for the academic profession is universities and other organizations that produce scientific knowledge, for example, non-university research institutes or research-intensive industry laboratories. Universities, as a stronghold of scientific disciplines, are particularly important for the academic profession (Ben-David, 1977; Jacobs, 2014). In university organizations, hierarchies are traditionally flat, and much of the administrative work (admission of students, recruitment of professors, international exchange programs, etc.) is traditionally carried out by academics (Mintzberg, 1983). Here, collegiality as a *modus operandi* comes into play, at times through extensive committee work. It requires specific academic competencies (typically rooted in one's discipline), but also a sense of responsibility and service, effort, integrity, and a large measure of self-control. These underlying norms of collegiality are mostly implicit and taken-for-granted. Members of the academic profession learn them through socialization as did generations before them.

While collegiality has been the *modus operandi* of the academic profession and has been in place for centuries, recent developments challenge its central role in the production and transmission of scientific knowledge. Apart from the erosion of trust in the collegial self-organization of the academic profession at the broader level of society and related contestations, we have identified a number of challenges from within academia and the university as its preeminent organizational

form, including universities as organizational actors, the increasing strategic and competitive orientation of scholars, the overall trend toward metricization, and the professionalization of academic leadership.

CHALLENGES TO COLLEGIALITY

Collegiality has many facets; it is multi-dimensional and includes decision-making structures as well as procedures and inbuilt aims, identities, and practices (Mignot-Gérard et al., 2022). In short, we understand collegiality as an institution of self-governance. Practices are essential for maintaining institutions, and institutions may change with changes in practices as well as changes in structures, procedures, identities, and aims. With this definition as a foundation, we can also see the many diverse challenges to collegiality. We have elaborated the definition further by distinguishing between vertical and horizontal collegiality. Vertical collegiality concerns decision-making structures within a formal organization and rules. This can include the composition of university boards, senates, and committees, and the selection of *primus/prima inter pares* as academic leaders. Horizontal collegiality encompasses the communities of peers in departments, universities, among reviewers, at conferences, or in scholarly networks. Vertical and horizontal collegiality presuppose and balance each other. Formal collegial decision-making in universities draws on the existence and activities of the broader scientific community. Both dimensions rely on faculty authority and are in turn essential for upholding faculty authority.

The papers in this special issue paint a picture of developments which, while varying both at the national and university levels, collectively present a variety of challenges to collegiality as the *modus operandi* in contemporary higher education. Developments such as increasing centralization and managerialism have been well-rehearsed in previous research but our findings both add some depth and detail to the nature of these challenges and offer insights into the practical ways in which actors within the higher education sector might respond.

A central element in current developments is the displacement of horizontal and vertical collegiality in universities through the globally diffusing idea that science and scientific performance can be managed by a centralized academic leadership (Denis et al., 2023, Vol. 87). The now worldwide transformation of universities into organizational actors is an important topic in several papers in these two volumes on collegiality (Gerhardt et al., 2023, Vol. 86; Hwang, 2023, Vol. 86; Kosmützky & Krücken, 2023, Vol. 86; Lee & Ramirez, 2023, Vol. 86). Aspects like the increasing relevance of university leadership and the expansion of university administration weaken the relevance of academic self-organization and related forms of governance. While these shifts alter the traditional power structure in academia, and at times, lead to conflict between leadership and administration on the one hand and academics on the other, the impact on the time-consuming administrative work of academics is less clear. However, the university as an organizational actor comes with increased reporting duties on behalf of academics and a formalization of academic activities.

This idea is underpinned by the assumption that scientific progress can be recorded and measured with the help of key performance indicators and rankings. The increasing "metricization" of society (Mau, 2019) is paramount. It is spurred by rankings, publication, and citation data banks like the Web of Science or Scopus, platforms like Google Scholar or ResearchGate, or data banks on external grants at the national or university levels. Such quantitative measures and indicators are increasingly used as the basis of comparative performance measurements and benchmarks in peer review processes across disciplines (e.g., hiring processes and funding decisions) and also enable actors outside the academic profession and its peer review-based process to evaluate the performance-based value of individuals and universities (Espeland & Sauder, 2016). Digitalization facilitates the comparative evaluation of performance via algorithms, big data, and digital infrastructures (Fourcade & Healy, 2017). Complex activities in academia are thus reduced to quantitative measures, which, again, favor some activities at the expense of others, hence weakening collegiality as the overall *modus operandi* of the academic profession. At the same time, studies in these volumes show that academic positions involve more tasks over time and hence display increased complexity (Gerhardt et al., 2023, Vol. 86).

The rise of world university rankings and global templates of excellence have contributed to universities becoming organizational actors and enacting their actorhood in the direction of isomorphism. Rankings have contributed to structuring the field of universities into stratified markets (Wedlin, 2006, 2011). With strong intentions of being "world-class universities," governments and universities have adopted different measures to enhance their research performance, one of which is the promotion of international research collaborations and exchanges (Peters, 2021). As such, governments and universities increasingly incentivize research collaboration at institutional, national, and international levels, as well as with industry and community-based partners, in the form of funding conditions, hiring, and tenure decisions (Kollasch et al., 2016; Van Rijnsoever & Hessels, 2011).

The creation of comparative metrics in turn leads to broader interrelated changes in research governance that move toward increased competition: the state uses competition as a governance mechanism and has shifted its funding instruments toward increased competitive research funding; universities have become strategic and highly competitive organizational actors, with the consequence of a further increase of competition between individual academics. Although there is broad historical evidence that competition for new knowledge and related reputation is central to science as a social system and its individual actors, there is equally strong evidence for a heightened sense of competition on individual, organizational, and national levels (Krücken, 2021; Musselin, 2018). Some dimensions of academic work – in particular, publications and external research grants – are assessed and compared in a competitive way, both by the individual academics themselves and relevant external forces such as funding agencies or appointment committees for professors. Other dimensions, which do not fit as easily into a competitive individual "portfolio" – academic committee work or anonymous peer reviewing for scientific journals – lose importance, as

does the self-description of being part of an academic community (Eriksson-Zetterquist & Sahlin, 2023, Vol. 87). This trend is ubiquitous and has been shown to affect in particular junior academics who still strive for a permanent position in academia (Fochler et al., 2016; Waaijer et al., 2018). The introduction of metrics into academia goes hand in hand with the introduction of enterprise models and with this reshaped form of competition. Over time, it is clear that academics have to large extents internalized these metrics, and with this metrics have come to play a key role in reproducing and strengthening the metrication of science and knowledge production.

As papers in these volumes reporting developments in, for example, France and Germany have shown, competitive research funding has increased significantly in importance and has also become a leading performance indicator for universities as organizations (Harroche & Musselin, 2023, Vol. 86; Kosmützky & Krücken, 2023, Vol. 86). Yet, such performance indicators and rankings, when used as managerial control variables in universities, are oriented toward criteria that have supposedly led to what is called "success" in the past. There are questions over the appropriateness of this given that, at the intersection of such developments, newly formed inter-disciplinary research clusters have become a highly prestigious scarce good in the competition of universities and academic researchers for reputation and resources. Both the state and universities aim at the cluster-ability of "their" universities and "their" researchers and use contractualization to foster research clusters (Kosmützky & Krücken, 2023, Vol. 86). Contractualization further spurs the increasingly strategic and individualistic orientation of academic researchers, who have a vested interest in applying for research clusters because they come bundled with many resources and a high degree of academic prestige.

These twin developments of competition which individualizes and rationalizes actors and centralized leadership present major challenges to collegiality. Moreover, as noted above, the contemporary university faces more diverse demands than before to develop applicable knowledge and expertise to address major societal challenges. The societal role of universities is gaining importance and can, under certain conditions, benefit both the organization and its faculty in their development. However, this is a delicate balancing act between the maintenance or regeneration of collegial governance and the renewal of academic work and practices that favor the development of such innovations and partnerships in both teaching and research. Such tensions and challenges can be seen throughout this special issue and are experienced at and across the levels of the individual academic, at intra-university levels, and at the levels of university governance and government policy.

University leaders and government policymakers need to reflect on the implications that a short-termist and competitive model (sometimes labeled neo-liberal) is having on higher education. For example, consider a university or national system of "research excellence" based on a performance measurement system constructed on competition. While the primary task of science is to explore the world and thereby to contribute to the development of humankind, such an inclination to explore the unknown is limited by indicators that are oriented toward competition, which encourages an instrumental orientation among colleagues

and weakens collegial bonds, and understandings of excellence that are founded in the past. In contrast, university governance and science policy based on the principle of collegiality open up the scope for universities, the faculties arranged within them, and the academics working in them to explore the unknown through the inherent characteristics of collegiality, including open-ended exploration and inter-disciplinary collaboration. Exploration always carries the risk of failure, but exploitation alone, informed by centrally defined criteria, makes fundamental and socially beneficial insights unlikely, maybe particularly so in the social sciences which have to deal with a fluid object of knowledge (March, 1991). It is increasingly the political and economic decisions of university leaders, politicians, and policymakers which determine the goals that are to be achieved within and across universities. In contrast to such rationalized technologies of organization, under March's notion of the technology of foolishness (March, 2006), goals are treated as hypotheses to be tested, and the "analytical rigidity of rationality is seen as limiting it to refinements on what is already known, believed, or existent and is contrasted with the imaginative wildness of various forms of creativity" (p. 203). We argue that collegiality and its inherent technology of foolishness are thus more beneficial to the advancement of the knowledge of humankind than the form of instrumental and individualized scientific endeavor reported under policies and universities which promote competitive excellence. This has implications for developments within individual universities since our evidence suggests that research clusters, often interdisciplinary in nature, foster academic exchange and understanding across fields, disciplines, and departments. As a result, horizontal collegiality might experience a renewal in such interdisciplinary contexts, though there may be the potential for its weakening in disciplinary and departmental contexts.

Research reported in this special issue also reveals a challenge to the accelerated and short-term time frames that often seem to dominate the decision-making of senior university leaders, politicians, and policymakers. Evidence presented in these volumes shows that the temporal structures in which universities are embedded certainly matter in this regard (Östh Gustafsson, 2023, Vol. 86). Recurring critique of collegiality for being slow should thus be weighed against the recent activism of so-called slow academia/science that aims to resist or revert the ongoing acceleration and culture of speed at scholarly institutions (e.g., Berg & Seeber, 2016; Kidd, 2023; Stengers, 2018). An awareness of temporal circumstances and the need to synchronize collegial practices with various scholarly and societal rhythms should even be seen as essential for the active maintenance required for collegiality to remain vital in the 21st century. Collegiality's dependence on specific temporal as well as spatial conditions on various levels should be further highlighted as current debates tend to employ rather abstract (and sometimes even stereotypical) notions and take current collegial components for granted. More nuanced knowledge of how collegiality has been challenged on previous occasions will hopefully help make universities more resilient in the future.

In part, the prospects of contemporary universities securing the stability in policy and decision-making that is likely to be central to maintaining vertical and horizontal collegiality will be informed by how well universities understand and

communicate with societal stakeholders while managing internal relations. This can be highly complex from a practical perspective, particularly in increasingly politicized university contexts within a wider environment characterized by global, real-time, networked digital communication. The case study by van Schalkwyk and Cloete (2023, Vol. 86) shows that universities will need to heed cautions related to the overtly open or public communication of expert scientific matters as well as matters pertaining to the self-governance of the university. While any communication policies or procedures put in place may appear undemocratic, they are critical to protecting the academy (and collegial relations) from the disruptive effects of codeless communication in highly politicized environments. In part, such measures will be more effective if trust is restored in the mechanism of depersonalized and robust debate to reach consensus decision-making in the academy.

Various papers have shown that collegiality within any university, particularly in the face of external pressures to "modernize," requires strong and committed leadership, both individual and collective, at various levels of the hierarchy. For example, we have seen how the top leadership of the university is crucial in responding to some inescapable demands and challenges from legitimate stakeholders. However, as shown by Jandrić et al. (2023, Vol. 87), academic leaders at the school and departmental level will need to reflect on the consequences of their institution's own mode of governance and whether and how they can mitigate limitations this may place on horizontal collegiality and potential erosion of professional norms of the academy. This in turn places responsibility on individual academics, which we will turn to shortly. Advocates for collegiality as the *modus operandi* in higher education would argue that responses to external pressures by universities should be filtered and framed through the enactment of collective leadership based on the collegial participation of professors and researchers in shaping strategic directions and decisions. However, evidence reported here shows that this is not necessarily the case and provides some insights into the reasons for this in practice, including the ways in which the (informal and formal) rules of collegiality are open to attack and manipulation and the diminishing role of the academy in formal spaces of collegiality.

Findings from the study of developments in a North American university (Crace et al., 2023, Vol. 87) most clearly demonstrate the limits of relying on informal norms during a blatant attack on collegial governance. Practically speaking, the study suggests that preventing the further erosion of collegiality will require both the cognizant participation of faculty and close (re-)examination of codified rules if collegial governance supporters are to prevent its decline, specifically by protecting collegiality within formal rules and structures. Faculty members, particularly those who occupy positions on governing bodies such as academic councils or senates, are well-positioned to resist attacks on the collegial governance system. But research presented here also suggests that practitioners of collegial governance at the coalface of senates or departments need to remain vigilant. Collegiality is something that requires effort to foster and it is all too easy for a deteriorating institution such as collegial governance to remain undefended, especially when it is subject to taken-for-grantedness and multivocality.

Nonetheless, the study of a UK Business School shows how local academic leaders were able to protect and maintain space for horizontal collegiality within the context of diminished vertical collegiality beyond the school.

The findings presented here problematize simple notions of the negative implications of academic leadership per se; variation in local practices and differences in the orientations and approaches of academic leaders at different levels of the university are both highly significant in understanding the specifics of collegiality in situ. These findings are in line with those reported by Deem and Johnson (2000) and Kitchener (2000), who showed that leaders in hospitals can be defenders of the medical profession or colonized by managerial norms.

Mizrahi-Shtelman and Drori (2023, Vol. 87) reveal the penetration of managerialist ideas and practices (e.g., a perceived need for leadership training in complex systems) into a national academic field that has maintained a strong collegial ethos (e.g., collegial elections for the vast majority of academic leadership posts). While professionalization in itself is not necessarily negative and may strengthen leadership in universities that are rapidly becoming more complex, the professionalization process often redefines and weakens collegial relations. For example, the institutionalization of professional training for academic leadership may transition into becoming a pre-requisite for holding leadership positions in academia, thereby overruling traditional modes of collegial elections. As another example, the expanded definition of collegiality as inclusive of both administrative staff and the professoriate (and possibly other "stakeholders" in the future) weakens the authority and autonomy of scholars as governors of academia. Therefore, the professionalization of academic leadership may be interpreted as a "slippery slope" of managerialist penetration, redefining the boundaries, scope, and orientation of the republic of scholars.

The exact nature and consequences of these developments do remain at least partly in the hands of individual scholars. Indeed, a practical implication of a number of the research projects presented here is that the academy needs to be agentic in reproducing conditions of collegiality. Findings demonstrate how collegial governance is not only embedded in structures, but very importantly, is also embedded in day-to-day experiences of work, relations among colleagues, and academic culture more broadly. As a form of governance, collegiality requires faculty to invest their time in performing relational and identity work within their institutions to constantly affirm and enact collegiality in governance. However, the perceived growing workload and intensification of research activities may compete with demands for and investments in vibrant institutional life. The vitality of collegial governance within the university depends on the ability of faculty to invest in it and the conditions that support such commitment. The academic response to the COVID-19 crisis, both specifically in the case of the UK Business School reported here (Jandrić et al., 2023, Vol. 87) and more generally, shows how horizontal collegiality is central to academic self-organizing and successfully moderating the negative impact of the crisis on students. It is precisely the mutuality of the collegiate governance system that underpins the identity and commitment of faculty and is perceived to be threatened by contemporary developments.

Such discussions cannot be divorced from consideration of the employment terms and conditions and career prospects of academics. Research reported in these volumes has shown how various patterns of change in how higher education is expanding globally are working to the disadvantage of academics, increasing precarity and diminishing conditions and career progression (Pineda, 2023, Vol. 86). For example, while a strategy to strengthen the finances or the research production of a university through hiring postdocs may be undertaken in ways that are consistent with collegiality, it may come at the expense of educational principles in supporting the career development of junior researchers. Thus, discussions about collegiality must accompany conversations about the educational preparation of the new generation of scientists, working conditions, and precarity in academia (see Hwang, 2023, Vol. 86). Disciplinary differences also are very important to consider in the planning of research training positions and career mentoring (Gibbs et al., 2015) since opportunities outside academia vary considerably by discipline (van der Weijden et al., 2015). University presidents need to reflect on whether they are balancing their goals of increasing student numbers and research outputs and offering educational opportunities and sufficient career development support to the increasing numbers of temporarily employed staff.

The breadth of research reported in these volumes allows some reflection on the complex and multi-level dynamics at play in contemporary higher education more broadly, and with regard to collegiality in particular. The findings show the importance of institutional work not least by the academy itself in curating collegial governance arrangements and relations, the potential for local academic leaders at the coalface of the senate or the department to maintain space for collegiality even when under threat from developments at institutional and sectoral levels, and indicate the implications of university systems that eschew the openness and temporal rhythms necessary for scientific exploration. These should be at the forefront of concerns of all those – from politicians and policymakers to stakeholders and citizens – who recognize the force for good that universities continue to be and the role that collegiality as *modus operandi* continues to play in this.

Collegiality is a Contested Institution

Contestations for collegiality also follow from questioning and revisions of who is considered a peer. Although the equality principle is at the core of collegiality as a mode of conduct and governance (see Sahlin & Eriksson-Zetterquist, 2023, Vol. 86), in practice some peers are more equal than others. Throughout this special issue, findings show that both the vertical and horizontal dimensions of collegiality rely on various mechanisms of inclusion, and by extension exclusion. For a wide range of issues, including academic appointments (Gerhardt et al., 2023, Vol. 86; Östh Gustafsson, 2023, Vol. 86; Pineda, 2023, Vol. 86), crisis management (Crace et al., 2023, Vol. 87; Jandrić et al., 2023, Vol. 87; van Schalkwyk & Cloete, 2023, Vol. 86), the global development of diversity offices (Lee & Ramirez, 2023, Vol. 86), the professionalization of academic leadership (Mizrahi-Shtelman & Drori, 2023, Vol. 87; Sahlin & Eriksson-Zetterquist, 2023, Vol. 87), educational planning (Hwang, 2023, Vol. 86), or new forms

of funding elite research (Denis et al., 2023, Vol. 87; Harroche & Musselin, 2023, Vol. 86; Kosmützky & Krücken, 2023, Vol. 86) the production, negotiation, and evolution of boundaries among academics are involved, surfacing questions about who is included and who is excluded. In this sense, collegiality has some dark sides (Eriksson-Zetterquist & Sahlin, 2023, Vol. 87), and their implications regarding knowledge production need to be addressed.

Patronage has played a central role in the institutional development of universities and disciplines (see e.g., Clark, 1973). Yet, it has largely been based on co-optation, homophily, and agonistic relationships for the accumulation of capital (Bourdieu, 1984) that have long-lasting effects in academia resulting in the marginalization of most categories of people apart from well-educated white men. From citation practices in scientific outputs (Maliniak et al., 2013) to Nobel prize nominations (Gallotti & De Domenico, 2019) to appointment decisions (van den Brink & Benschop, 2014), gendered networks and gatekeeping practices are central. In these regard, collegiality constitutes a cog within two of the most structuring mechanisms in academia: the Matthew effect and the Matilda effect. These regulate the reward system in science as conceptualized by Robert K. Merton according to cumulative advantages. Following the saying "the rich get richer and the poor get poorer," the Matthew effect leads to the concentration of symbolic and material resources at the level of individuals and organizations in higher education (Merton, 1968). Merton's theory was revisited by Margaret W. Rossiter (1993) to address the gender bias of this mechanism. Hence, the Matilda effect refers to the observed erasure of women's scientific achievements. This may contribute to a high level of homogeneity shaping the social context for knowledge production. However, it has been demonstrated that segregation influences academics' research practices and careers, favoring boxed-in types of research (Alvesson & Sandberg, 2014; see also Eriksson-Zetterquist & Sahlin, 2023, Vol. 87). Building on these results, collegiality has been critiqued for potentially constructing barriers to innovation.

Collegiality is far from a paradise lost and can embody a form of conservatism that has detrimental effects on knowledge production. While these two volumes offer valuable insights into the evolution of collegiality under the influence of recent reforms, further research needs to be done to suggest directions for these reconfigurations and to identify which aspects can remain.

COLLEGIAL RESISTANCE, ACTIVATION, AND MAINTENANCE

Given the development and evolution of governance within universities in various jurisdictions, there is no guarantee that collegiality is or will continue to be a predominant mode of governance. Collegiality cannot and should not be taken for granted, even if it plays an important role in university life. In previous work, Denis et al. (2019) considered collegiality as an act of resistance against competing ideals of governance which inherently involves political work (by faculty in the case of universities) to constantly reaffirm. Resistance is seen not only as

opposition but also as the capacity to propose alternate ways of governing and organizing in order to redistribute decision-making power within universities in ways that maintain the vitality of collegiality. Political work implies both oppositional resistance and productive resistance (Courpasson et al., 2012) to rethink the institution.

This special issue provides insights on strategies and resources that can support and reactivate collegiality in challenging contexts by enabling faculty to react, resist and offer innovative responses to external changes and pressures. Somewhat surprisingly, some papers highlight how organizational assets and organizing can be leveraged to protect and sustain the principles and roles of collegiality (Denis et al., 2023, Vol. 87; Jandrić et al., 2023, Vol. 87). Managerialism and the organizational substrate of collegiality are inherently different. Managerialism favors greater centralization and is thus associated with a loss of control or self-governance. Organizing for collegiality involves a variety of resources and competencies. While there are risks associated with the emergence of a class of administrators in universities (Deem, 2010) that develops independently of professors and researchers, members of this ruling class can be allies to faculty in their quest for collegial institutions. One key resource is the notion of leadership, where the governors and administrators in charge play a mediating role to filter external pressures and allow them to cascade into the organization without threatening the institution and its collegiality (Denis et al., 2023, Vol. 87). These leaders employ and support collegial approaches to respond to these pressures. Without such support and commitment, it appears difficult for faculty to absorb and resist pressures without losing ground (Crace et al., 2023, Vol. 87). This is a sign that universities as organizations and the republic of scholars are more dependent than ever on the will and views of senior administrators and governors. If this is the case, it reinforces the importance of resistance (oppositional and productive) and political work performed by faculty to nurture and ensure that collegial governance will play a significant role in universities.

Recent governance changes, also appear to lead to clear stratification among scholars, particularly large funding programs to support academic excellence (Denis et al., 2023, Vol. 87; Harroche & Musselin, 2023, Vol. 86; Kosmützky & Krücken, 2023, Vol. 86; Sahlin & Eriksson-Zetterquist, 2023, Vol. 87). Academic winners in the new game, characterized by increased management and intensified competition may be less reactive and instead comply with the new rules of the game.

Another important aspect is how representative bodies like unions change manifestations of collegiality and how faculty conceive the role of unions in university governance. This question has been only lightly addressed in recent work, but is significant. Unions often seem to propose a reformulation of collegiality as co-management of universities. The articulation of co-management as a mechanism to arbitrate competing logics within university governance and implications for its potential to become collegiality merit further empirical inquiry. In other words, does collegiality as a mode of governance need more formal bodies to protect the principle of self-governance of academic work? Obviously, the behavior of individual faculty members will still play a role in the development of collegiality even if unions intervene in this regard.

Like all organizations, universities face pressure to evolve in an environment characterized by alternating periods of change and relative stability. Faculty, through their agency, may develop the ability to follow certain external trends or demands while becoming active players in the quest for innovative solutions. The partnership culture associated with external demands may also represent an opportunity to publicly reaffirm the roles of science and independent research as key assets in a context where disinformation is increasing. To benefit from the changing context, institutional conditions must be in place to protect the autonomy of academic work.

The analyses of collegiality as an institution of self-governance point to important dynamics of institutional maintenance and institutional change, and point at intricate relations between organizational structures, identities, and practices. The study by Crace et al. (2023, Vol. 87) shows how a reality break down raised the institutional awareness of taken-for-granted collegial practices and in this way may form a first step toward institutional change.

VARIETIES OF COLLEGIALITY

Most scholars tend to hold a firm intuitive understanding of what collegiality encompasses, but upon closer scrutiny, it turns out that its various and shifting meanings are difficult to determine. In current discussions, collegiality comes across as an umbrella concept with a multitude of facets and nuances, as indicated by these volumes' analytical division into vertical and horizontal dimensions. As noted in the Introduction to Vol. 86 (Sahlin & Eriksson-Zetterquist, 2023, Vol. 86), with reference to a study by Björck (2013), collegiality clearly fulfills the criteria of what has been referred to as an essentially contested concept (Connolly, 1974; Gallie, 1956). Its meaning is never given, but discursively constructed and mobilized in specific situations – particularly when subject to pressure – and thus remains open to change. It would therefore be futile to aim at strictly defining collegiality as one, single thing. An ambition of these two volumes is therefore to unpack this evasive concept.

Discussions on collegiality in this broad international project have demonstrated that the state of collegiality depends highly on how we talk about it. Collegial discourses naturally differ around the globe as is clearly demonstrated in the paper by Wen and Marginson (2023, Vol. 86). But synchronic varieties are not the only ones to take into account; the diachronic dimension must also be considered as collegial principles have been articulated and performed in a multitude of ways over time. In that sense, studies of collegiality need to be sensitive to discursive mechanisms in order to reach a more conceptually precise discussion on what academic collegiality is, as pointed out by Sahlin and Eriksson-Zetterquist in their introductory paper to Vol. 86 of this special issue.

Here, we would welcome further comparative inquiries, not least informed by literary and media studies, of how collegiality has been articulated in specific situations and specific locations around the globe. This also calls for investigations of which communicative networks or platforms are most central to the performance of (as well as debates on) collegiality today. As noted in the Introduction to

Vol. 87, collegiality is not only found in universities but rather appears to be a "displaced" or at least decentralized phenomenon (see also Denis et al., 2023, Vol. 87). The lecture hall or the university board room may no longer be the most essential arenas for manifestations of collegiality. Instead, social and future media are likely to play an increasingly important role in shaping how we understand (and hopefully stand up for) collegiality in the 2020s, as van Schalkwyk and Cloete (2023, Vol. 86) remind us. Collegiality requires legitimacy and trust, among peers as well as in broader society. Changes to the public discourse on and attitudes toward universities are therefore essential to consider if we aim to better understand the current and future conditions of collegiality.

The papers in these two volumes show varieties of collegiality but also reflect different discourses surrounding collegial practices. The international composition of the authors of these volumes enabled us to compile variants of such discourses across different geographical locations. We found that in places where the research university model dominates, the discourse about the collegiality crisis appears to be rather self-contained. However, in places where universities are more entrenched in local politics, the collegiality crisis links more directly to local debates about corruption, symbolic and physical violence (Jansen, 2023). In both contexts, collegial discourses connect well to local debates about the loss of institutional trust inside and outside higher education. Furthermore, the papers allow us to reflect on how different interpretations of the collegiality crisis depend on academic rank: scholars at the highest ranks experience and debate the deterioration of collegiality in a different way than those at the lowest levels of academia (Pineda, 2023, Vol. 86). In sum, discourses about collegiality depend on the places or academic positions of their creators, eventually framed by their own experiences with practices that safeguard or threaten collegiality.

Authors in locations where the research university is a recognized institution tend to emphasize a crisis of collegiality in relation to the integrity and quality of academic work. In places where the university may not necessarily be recognized as a research university but as a highly politicized institution, discourse about a crisis of collegiality related to the loss of practices associated with scientific knowledge production is not as present. Pineda's (2023, Vol. 86) analysis of Latin American countries shows that scholars, the majority of whom are employed in temporary positions, are more engaged in debates about the deterioration of academic work for securing their subsistence than in debates about interference with their collegial relations. Individual competition for access to research grants is almost non-existent because available research funds are comparatively sparse and barely impact higher education in toto (Pineda, 2015). Also, private universities, growing faster than their public counterparts, and in some countries constituting the major share of universities (Buckner, 2017), have rarely been collegial, at least in practice.

As emphasized above, collegiality and understandings of it may be varied and contested. There may not be shared templates for how universities should be organized or run. Nonetheless, the concept of collegiality has been a widely held faculty value, linked to a variety of positive individual and organizational

outcomes (Alleman & Haviland, 2017). Collegiality has been regarded as a contributor to institutional commitment and desire to stay (Barnes et al., 1998). Additionally, it has historically been linked to academic freedom. The underlying premise has been that academics had to be "free" to be collegial, free to pursue knowledge as liberal subjects seeking their own self-development, and free to manage their own time with respect to the autonomy granted to teaching and research efforts (Downing, 2005). However, what implications do growing efforts to transform higher education systems in the image of "world-class" universities have for collegiality?

Although the academy has had a long history of being transnational, the increasing promotion and encouragement of international collaborations inevitably influence perceptions of who is considered a colleague. The answer likely influences both horizontal and vertical collegiality within the university and perhaps expands values and meanings of collegiality beyond institutional borders and boundaries. If collegiality is global, and faculty have greater affinity and interactions with their international collaborators than those within their own institutions, then what are the implications for horizontal collegiality, especially with regard to organizational commitment and contributions? Would this result in weaker horizontal collegiality, where academic staff becomes less willing to devote their time and energy to matters of their home university, leading to increased administration and management? Moreover, consider implications for vertical collegiality. Differences in commitments and identifications were identified already by Gouldner (1958) who distinguished between local and cosmopolitan academics. Subsequent studies show important variations across countries regarding academics' ties to their disciplines and institutions (Teichler et al., 2013). How do growing pressures to become "world-class universities" and rapidly globalizing network of scientists, influence the collegial relations between academic staff and university management?

Further research is needed to explore these questions. However, the commonalities and varieties of collegiality explored in this special issue suggest that these patterns may be at least partly influenced by the growing internationalization of higher education. Furthermore, it is likely that the sociocultural, institutional, and positional contexts in which universities and individuals are embedded, would influence the discourses and manifestations of collegiality.

THE VALUE OF COLLEGIALITY FOR ACADEMIC FREEDOM AND SCIENTIFIC QUALITY

While these two volumes explicitly and voluntarily focus on universities, the seminal works of Waters (1989) and Lazega (2001, 2020) remind us that universities are not the only organizations with collegial governance: law firms, churches, and courts also share many or at least some collegial features. They are nevertheless different in many respects from universities. Law firms, for instance, are often organized as profit-oriented partnerships, in churches, collegiality is combined

with strict hierarchical structures, courts are organized with roles that are more tightly coupled than universities, etc. We therefore need contingent, and situated conceptualizations of the very generic definition of collegiality provided by Waters (1989), along with more systematic empirical comparisons of different collegial organizations to enrich the discussion on the different dimensions of collegiality and their interactions.

Although some forms of collegiality may exist across diverse professional settings (Greenwood et al., 1990; Lazega, 2001), the specific role of collegiality in its instantiation in higher education is distinctive. This is primarily because of the emphasis on the generation of knowledge for its own sake rather than as merely a means to other ends, particularly those of other orders in the interinstitutional system. In discussing the scientist's sentiment of "pure science." Merton (1938, p. 328) wrote:

> Science must not suffer itself to become the handmaiden of theology or economy or state. The function of this sentiment is likewise to preserve the autonomy of science. For if such extra-scientific criteria of the value of science as presumable consonance with religious doctrines or economic utility or political appropriateness are adopted, science becomes acceptable only insofar as it meets these criteria.

Collegiality as the *modus operandi* of the academy, enacted in collegial "self-governance" play a key role in supporting these principles by allowing autonomous scientific communities to evaluate appropriate knowledge contributions. Collegial governance insulates science from "planning" to serve the interests of external entities such as the state (Polanyi, 1945). Academic freedom – "the right to choose one's own problem for investigation, to conduct research free from any outside control, and to teach one's subject in the light of one's own opinions" (Polanyi, 1947, p. 583) – is thus fundamentally intertwined with notions of collegiality. Academic freedom and tenure are unique elements of the academy and reinforce the disinterested pursuit of knowledge, even that which may come at the expense of other spheres of society.

One revelation of our collective research has been the aforementioned "varieties of collegiality." This insight raises questions about how different varieties affect academic freedom and knowledge creation. Manifestations of collegiality in which there are senates and boards and those in which the composition of these bodies look remarkably different are likely to have quite different impacts on academic freedom and the quality of science. Findings across many papers in this special issue also show the role of external influences, especially with regard to the state (e.g., Crace et al., 2023, Vol. 87; Harroche & Musselin, 2023, Vol. 86; Kosmützky & Krücken, 2023, Vol. 86; Sahlin & Eriksson-Zetterquist, 2023, Vol. 87; Wen & Marginson, 2023, Vol. 86). Such a seizing of the means of knowledge production is likely to be consequential for academic freedom insofar as it increases outside control. Likewise, other contributions show an increasing role of civil society in the affairs of knowledge creation (e.g., van Schalkwyk & Cloete, 2023, Vol. 86) and the inclusion of non-traditional members like students and staff members in the collegial governance system (e.g., Crace et al., 2023, Vol. 87). Some variations of collegiality and collegial governance may be beneficial in certain respects and detrimental in others for the purposes of academic freedom and the quality of science.

Even increasing managerialism has unclear implications in this regard. Like the state, the university administration is increasingly able to influence what types of research are conducted. Yet, administrators also often have PhDs and may be considered colleagues under certain forms of collegiality (e.g., Mizrahi-Shtelman & Drori, 2023, Vol. 86). Nevertheless, the increasing tendency toward centralization and the consolidation of academic units potentially threatens the autonomous communities that Humboldt envisioned. Does the installation of academic leaders from certain backgrounds privilege specific epistemic traditions over others and shape what types of knowledge are pursued? Perhaps the erosion of authority within disciplinary communities is responsible for the increasing commensuration of the quality of science via academic journal rankings. On the other hand, the dark sides of collegiality discussed in the introduction to this volume suggest a potentially different story. The rise of diversity, equality, and inclusion concerns in the strategic orientation of universities as organizations (e.g., Lee & Ramirez, 2023, Vol. 86) may actually lead to an increase in scientific quality as the "old boys'" club is displaced by more diverse perspectives that push knowledge generation in new directions.

Overall, our numerous international cases provide an opportunity for comparative reflection. They have revealed a significant amount of heterogeneity in the manifestations of collegiality. Yet, the value of these different varieties of collegiality for academic freedom and scientific quality is an open question. As part of the research agenda, we believe it is imperative to explore these questions further; otherwise, we will continue to have little understanding of which variants of collegiality are most beneficial and in what ways. This volume focuses on the restoration of collegiality, but there is still much work to be done to unpack which collegial systems are worth restoring and which should be avoided altogether.

EMERGING THEMES

Institutional Trust

Above, we have emphasized that collegiality builds on trust, both among colleagues and in self-organizing arrangements. The erosion of trust in professions and in self-governance poses challenges to collegiality. Institutional trust provides an important focal point for a research agenda on many important contemporary dynamics of society and economy including collegiality (Lounsbury, 2023). In organizational sociology, Zucker (1986) emphasized the need to study the institutional production of trust, or what others have referred to as institution-based trust or more simply, institutional trust. She argued that in the late 18th and early 19th centuries, existing forms of particularistic and generalized trust underlying economic exchange were disrupted by high rates of immigration and population mobility, leading to the development of new institutional innovations (e.g., managerial hierarchy, financial intermediaries, and regulations) that created a new form of trust tied to formal social structures. Her research highlights the need to situate the study of institutional trust historically, focusing attention on how institutional trust at the macro-level shapes more situated forms of socio-economic behavior.

At a general level, institutional trust captures how formal institutions provide a target for trust such as in the development literature's focus on the perceived legitimacy of public institutions – most often, the nation-state. For instance, United Nations research has documented how institutional trust has been systemically declining in Western developed countries due to a variety of factors including growing economic insecurity and perceptions of poor or corrupt government performance (Perry, 2021). As documented in many contributions to these *Research in the Sociology of Organizations* volumes on collegiality, the university, like the nation-state, is under siege as a formal institution, facilitating changes such as the rise of corporatization and the waning of collegiality. While we believe that these changes are interpenetrated with the decline of institutional trust, more systematic research on the topic is required.

At the societal-level, evidence suggests that there is a marked decline in institutional trust in universities as public institutions. This may be proxied by a decreased willingness to use state funding to support public education, most pointedly originating in countries that have embraced neoliberal policies most strongly such as the UK and the USA, but now has spread more broadly to Australia, Canada, and elsewhere. In these countries, public universities are being hollowed out to emphasize more instrumentally oriented education, while the humanities and the social sciences have been losing support. These are profound, systemic trends that merit focused research attention. How these trends relate to the decline in institutional trust of the nation-state, democracy, and other formal institutions related to healthcare and the professions also needs to be unpacked.

Delving deeper into the functioning of higher education institutions, we also need to develop a more detailed understanding of how the decline of institutional trust at the societal level has reshaped collegiality inside and across universities. While we suspect there is a direct relationship between the decline of institutional trust at the societal-level and collegiality inside universities, there may be many mitigating factors. Since collegiality inside particular universities is importantly undergirded by interpersonal trust, such research requires unpacking how institutional trust – a form of generalized trust – relates to more particularized forms of interpersonal trust in particular settings (see Schilke et al., 2021). For instance, despite declines in institutional trust, particular universities might continue to maintain higher levels of collegiality as institutional leaders (e.g., presidents and deans) focus on maintaining and reinforcing cultures of collegiality and collegial governance despite pressures for increased corporatization. We also need research on how institutional trust might be repaired (Bachmann et al., 2015).

Field Level Studies of Collegiality

A major insight emerging from decades of institutional analysis is the concept of an institutional field as a critical level of analysis (e.g., Reay & Hinnings, 2005; Wooten & Hoffman, 2008). In his now classic treatise, Scott (1995, p. 56) defined an institutional field as: "a community of organizations that partakes of a common meaning system and whose participants interact more frequently and fatefully with one another than with actors outside the field." Essentially the field

includes any actor that might impose coercive, normative, or mimetic influence on the organizations partaking in it (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983).

More recent work in this area has differentiated between exchange fields and issue fields (Zietsma et al., 2017). In exchange fields, "the shared objective of the field is to stabilize and coordinate exchange, membership in networks, and compatible practices" (Zietsma et al., 2017, p. 396). This approach, which is taken by the majority of field studies (i.e., studies of industries, professions, and social movements), conceives of organizations as competitors for resources, approval, and market share among their exchange partners. By comparison, "the purpose or focus of orchestration of issue fields is to negotiate, govern, and/or compete over meanings and practices that affect multiple fields" (Zietsma et al., 2017, p. 400).

Against this backdrop, it is interesting to think about the field of higher education and research and to ponder what might be gained by directing greater attention to collegiality at the field level. We emphasized above that higher education has become an international regime as it has expanded globally and that universities have even become global actors in their own right (Lee & Ramirez, 2023, Vol. 86). The relevance of field dynamics also is apparent in the horizontal dimension of Sahlin and Eriksson-Zetterquist's (2023, Vol. 86) collegiality framework, especially the notion of governance as a relational network as propounded by van Schalkwyk and Cloete (2023, Vol. 86).

But many questions remain to be answered. The system of higher education and research is not homogeneous, rather there are multiple systems, plural. So, while it may seem fruitful to conceptualize universities as partaking in the "same" field, there are bound to be variations, including different manifestations of collegiality at the local (Crace et al., 2023, Vol. 87; Jandrić et al., 2023, Vol. 87), provincial/state/region (Denis et al., 2023, Vol. 87), or national level (Gerhardt et al., 2023, Vol. 86; Harroche & Musselin, 2023, Vol. 86; Hwang, 2023, Vol. 86; Kosmützky & Krücken, 2023, Vol. 86; Lee & Ramirez, 2023, Vol. 86; Wen & Marginson, 2023, Vol. 86).

This suggests opportunities to study the diffusions and translations of collegiality from one time and place to another. What are the different top-down, bottom-up, and middle-out processes that buttress and undermine collegiality at different levels and scales? Why are some arrangements more resistant to erosion than others? What agentic possibilities are afforded by different understandings of collegiality? How does the involvement of different arrays of actors within the institutional field shape these dynamics? For instance, a theme running through several of the papers in these volumes relates to the role of politics and political interference. A symmetrical account (Latour, 2005) would necessarily require attention to how such interference can be cut both ways. In addition to providing cautionary tales, such investigations might also suggest fruitful interventions that can support or restore collegiality.

Collegiality and Communication

It is a truism to say that the production and transmission of knowledge – the two most central functions of the university – depend on communication. Peers are

required to share their findings and claims in order for them to be accepted by the scientific community. University lecturers share both settled and contested theories and truths with their students.

How then is the communication of science relevant to collegiality? As has been shown in contributions to this special issue (Crace et al., 2023, Vol. 87; van Schalkwyk & Cloete, 2023, Vol. 86; Wen & Marginson, 2023, Vol. 86), the university remains a highly politicized space. This is not new. What is new are the emergent outcomes of the politicized university situated in a changed communication environment characterized by real-time, global networked digital communication. Change in the communication of science includes increasing access to science by the public, a decline in the gatekeeping role of the media, and the uptake of digital media platforms (including social media platforms such as Twitter), resulting in, among others, the emergence of "mass self-communication" and "electronic autism" (Castells, 2007, p. 247), as well as more frequent "alternative" (Bucchi, 2004, p. 120) or deviant trajectories (van Schalkwyk, 2019, pp. 50–52) in communication. A consequence of these changes is the highly personal nature of science communication which, in turn, has a direct impact on collegial relations within the university.

The motivations of both university researchers and teachers, as well as the public, for communicating in the digital realm go beyond stimulating collective debate in the service of knowledge production to serve individual (Kosmützky & Krücken, 2023, Vol. 86) and/or ideological agendas as the communication of science becomes politicized (Scheufele, 2014).

Future research will need to focus on how these new features in the communication process disrupt and, possibly, threaten collegial relations in the academy. Particularly when those who govern the funding of university activities become more insistent that academics make use of digital communication technologies to engage with communities outside of the academy (Weingart et al., 2021).

A FEW METHODOLOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Collegiality is a subject related to the investigation of meaning, practices, and situatedness within and across global and local contexts. Yet, this research endeavor poses methodological challenges as meaning, practices, and situatedness are complex, multifaceted, and dynamic. Luckily, organizational scholars are already well-equipped with a large and reliable reservoir of research strategies to enhance our understanding of collegiality and its multidimensionality. The two *Research in the Sociology of Organizations* volumes demonstrate the fruitfulness of various methodological approaches such as case studies and interview surveys.

Additionally, when studying the university setting it is also important to have other ideal types of governance in mind. In an analysis of social contexts, the development that takes place may not necessarily be an outcome of circumstances specific to collegiality but a result of the interaction of other mechanisms. For instance, if a matter seems to be the result of speedy decision-making, the analysis of rapidness may be a result of the researcher not having insights into the

formal and informal processes applied to prepare the final formal announcement of a decision taken.

We also wish to point scholars to additional methodological avenues that can leverage our understanding of collegiality. While case studies and interviews are useful to study the reflection of actors on their practices, ethnographic studies, and experiments enable a stronger focus on unconscious mechanisms underlying the execution of practices.

We consider *ethnography* to be a fruitful avenue because organizational scholars have undergone a similar socialization process as the actors they study. This fact is beneficial as deep knowledge of professional actors can uncover the mechanisms on which practices rest. At the same time, this fact requires a reflexive approach to avoid biases and to ensure the reliability of ethnographic studies (Wacquant, 2004). Special attention has to be paid to the ethical dimensions, that is, studying the closest working group of the researcher is not recommendable. Accordingly, we suggest that ethnographic research could be complemented with other techniques such as a joint analysis of the researcher and the actors studied (McDonnell, 2014).

Whereas ethnographic studies may be distorted by the situatedness of researchers, *experimental designs* may complement the study of collegiality (Haack et al., 2021). Experiments are well suited to isolate cognitive processes from being influenced by external variables and thus provide evidence of causality. For example, experimental design can be used to study the selection of one practice over the other. This can be meaningful to investigate collegiality, its situatedness, and its divergence and change within and across contexts.

We also see potential in novel methodological approaches in organizational studies that are connected to the application of natural language processing techniques, such as parsing, topic modeling, or word embeddings (Goldenstein & Poschmann, 2019; Nelson, 2021). These techniques uncover grammatical structures, thematic orientations, or word semantics in texts. Further, digital image processing techniques are able to assess visual angles, image semantics, image structures, and graphical renditions. As texts and images can be considered to be symbolic manifestations, for example, of organizational identities and practices, of social relations and interactions, and of institutional and cultural level processes, we see promise in applying these techniques to large amounts of data in their full complexity and nuance in studying collegiality.

Moreover, the outputs of these novel methodological approaches can support the construction of variables for conventional statistical analysis. In other words, language and image processing techniques can be used to capture theoretical constructs (e.g., the manifestation of organizational identities) which can be used as dependent or independent variables in studies on or related to collegiality.

Above, we have already highlighted the importance of continuing international comparative research. The examples we have provided point to the importance of remaining sensitive to variations in how collegiality is organized, practiced, and understood, as well as to conditions and challenges to collegiality.

Finally, we want to alert scholars to the possibility of using the above-mentioned and other methodological approaches in *mixed-method designs* to study

collegiality and account for its multidimensionality. For example, the symbolic manifestation of meanings and practices revealed by natural language processing and digital image processing techniques could be deepened and contrasted with findings from ethnographic or interview data. Such an approach would allow for the study of symbolic and practical domains of collegiality in combination.

STUDIES OF UNIVERSITIES AS A BASIS FOR DEVELOPING ORGANIZATION THEORY

Papers across the two volumes demonstrate an academic interest in understanding how universities work and the central role of collegial mechanisms in such entities. More broadly, these works contribute to the knowledge on organizations at large. Over the years, studies of universities have formed important grounds for the development of organization theory. In the words of Krücken et al. (2021, p. 4):

> Leading scholars in the 1960s and 1970s like Peter M. Blau, Burton R. Clark, James G. March, Henry Mintzberg, Jeffrey Pfeffer, Gerald R. Salancik, and Karl E. Weick based their specific approach to organisations on the study of universities and, thus, had a wide impact on both general organisational theory as well as the analysis of other types of organisations like business firms and public administrations. Theoretical concepts like "bureaucratic organizations" (Blau 1973), "organizational saga" (Clark 1972), "organized anarchies" (Cohen et al., 1972), "professional bureaucracies" (Mintzberg 1979), "resource dependency" (Pfeffer & Salancik, 1978) or "loosely coupled systems" (Weick, 1976) shaped the entire field of organisation studies.

It should be noted that viewing universities as a form of organization is a rather recent shift that occurred well after the development of research that examined academic staff as a community or as a profession. It started in the 1960s and was almost exclusively in the USA at that time. Two main phases can be identified in the organizational approach of universities.

Phase 1: Studies of Universities as Particular Objects Contributed to the Organization Theory

The first phase covers the 1960s to the end of the 1980s and is characterized by two main features. First, scholars tried to characterize the internal governance of universities, that is, the way members of universities make decisions, work with one another, set priorities, deal with conflicts, etc. Second, many of these studies have been used to contribute to organization theory more broadly and to analyze other kinds of organizations.

Four main perspectives were developed, each of them reacting to the former. The first perspective derived directly from Merton's work on academics as a community of peers sharing the same ethos. Goodman (1962) and Millet (1962) assumed that universities are collegial. They did not provide a very firm definition of collegiality but reaffirmed that universities should be led by academic peers sharing the same ethics and norms. The idea of universities as organizations sharing the same values has then been enlarged by Clark (1972) who argued that each US university is founded on a specific saga whose objectives and norms are

shared by the academic staff, but also the administrative staff, the students, and even their parents.

Baldridge (1971) discussed this perspective and considered that universities are political rather than collegial and that they are a locus of conflicting interests. Academics are striving for resources and reputations and compete with one another to get them. The same conception infused the study led by Pfeffer and Salancik (1974) and Salancik and Pfeffer (1974) who developed their resource dependence theory from the research they led on the power situation gained within their university by departments able to get external resources. They then extended this argument about resource dependence to firms (Pfeffer & Salancik, 1978).

The third perspective has been developed by Blau (1973) who used a large data basis to measure which aspects of university structures correspond to the definition of a Weberian bureaucracy and which aspects are not bureaucratic. A further development of this characterization of universities as bureaucracies has been proposed by Mintzberg (1979). In his typology of organizations, he identifies the professional bureaucracies, that is, organizations hosting a profession and having an administrative structure supporting the activities of this profession. This includes universities but also hospitals, courts, law firms, and the like.

Criticizing the three former perspectives, March and his two colleagues, Cohen and Olsen (1972) suggested a fourth one. For them, universities are organized anarchies, that is, structures with multiple missions, unclear technologies, and fluctuant participation and attention of their members. Because of these characteristics, their choices rely on a garbage can model of decision-making. Even though this model specifically applies to universities, the three authors did not limit it to them. Some authors extended this model to other situations (Padgett, 1980) like Kingdon (1984) who applied it to the access of public problems to the political agenda.

Phase 2: Studying the Transformation of Universities into Enterprise Organizations

In the 1980s, research focused on universities took a completely new turn. Characterizing university governance and contributing to organization theory through the study of universities were no longer an issue. Rather, organization theory frameworks were employed to explain university transformations and their consequences. As reviewed in Sahlin and Eriksson-Zetterquist (2023, Vol. 87) research explored the ways in which enterprise and bureaucratic ideals came to influence universities, and how universities were turned into more governed, more managerial, and more hierarchical organizations. Today, researchers continue to explore the extent to which universities are becoming more similar to firms. Previous research reviewed throughout these two volumes on collegiality reveals that while some authors have stressed the strong corporatization of universities, the merchandization of their activities, and their economization, others tempered these conclusions and observed the resilience of universities and identified forms of hybridization between traditional and new modes of governance. Whatever the results, during this period, the life of universities was rarely studied for themselves, and they were not seen as interesting cases for developing organization theory.

*Toward New Contributions of the Study of Universities to
Organizational Theory?*

The papers in these two volumes plead for a renewed perspective. First, because many studies referred to above rely on a rather traditional conceptualization of firms and do not take into account the following paradox. Whereas universities were expected to become more hierarchical, and more rational, and to strengthen their borders and identities, managerial doctrines on firms have gone in the other direction (with greater or lesser success). Reduction of the hierarchical lines, recognition of professional groups (Evetts, 2003) interest for the freedom-form company or F-form company (Charles et al., 2020), development of benefit corporations (Stecker, 2016), expansion of pluralistic organizations (Denis et al., 2007), etc., challenged the traditional representation of firms. In a way, these new conceptions can be interpreted as a movement of firms in the direction of universities (Menger, 2002). This underscores pleas for reinvestment in the study of university governance, stressing the benefits of its particularities. This could furthermore renew the contribution of the organizational studies of universities to the theory of organizations.

THE RESEARCH AGENDA IN BRIEF

In this outroduction, we have summarized the main findings from our studies of collegiality. These studies have some clear practical implications. Perhaps even more importantly, they open avenues for a broad range of comprehensive future studies. We discussed themes for future studies on collegiality in the sections above, and summarize them here in a simple list.

1. Collegiality as the *modus operandi* of universities.
2. Challenges to collegiality.
3. Collegial resistance, activation, and maintenance.
4. Varieties of collegiality.
5. The value of collegiality for academic freedom and scientific quality.
6. Institutional trust.
7. Field-level studies of collegiality.
8. Collegiality and communication.
9. Methodological considerations.
10. Contributions to theories on organization.

This broad list of themes emphasizes the centrality of collegiality for scientific work, both as a practice and mode of governance, and a central research topic.

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