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Codes of conduct for undergraduate teaching in the top-400 universities on the Times Higher Education World University Rankings

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ABSTRACT

Teaching codes of conduct form part of the ethics infrastructure of universities seeking to raise teaching standards and promote academic integrity. This study investigated the existence of publicly posted codes of conduct for undergraduate teaching in a random sample of 100 universities ranked among the Times Higher Education World University Rankings top-400 institutions. Based on DiMaggio &

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Powell's model of institutional isomorphism, we posited the Times Higher Education World University Rankings top-400 institutions as an organizational field. Findings reveal tepid isomorphic pressures to publicly post teaching codes of conduct among the top universities. Lower-ranked universities post codes with tenets very protective of students as clients and whose ethical infringement have legal ramifications, such as not harassing students or teaching while intoxicated from alcohol or drugs. Since a code of conduct may increase faculty members' sensitivity to ethical issues but not actually promote ethical behavior, we recommend reinforcement activities for faculty members.

Keywords: codes of conduct, faculty ethics, professional standards, teaching behaviors

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College and university faculty members possess and exercise significant autonomy in their teaching practice (Braxton & Bayer, 1999). There are at least two bases for this autonomy. The symbolic expectation for academic freedom, one of the core principles of the academic profession (Finkelstein, 1984), provides one such basis. The disciplinary and subject-matter expertise of faculty members (Baldridge et. al., 1978; Finkelstein, 1984; Scott, 1970) constitutes the other basis. Autonomy in their teaching role affords faculty members the freedom to make informed, professional judgements and choices regarding their performance of this role (Braxton & Bayer, 1999). These choices pertain to teaching practices such as course preparation and sequencing, criteria for assessing student coursework, classroom engagement with students, treatment of students in class, remaining current in their field and generally enforcing student academic codes of conduct (Braxton et al., 2002; DeAngelis, 2014). However, research shows that the academic and intellectual development of US undergraduate college students is negatively influenced by certain teaching choices made by faculty members (Braxton et al., 2004). These questionable teaching choices include those delineated by Braxton et al. (2002) such as neglecting to provide an adequate course syllabus ("course design and planning"), behaving with condescension or disrespect towards students ("in-class interactions with students"), and employing criteria other than academic performance to assign grades ("grading criteria").

These harmful choices by faculty members in their teaching role performance demonstrate the need for formal teaching codes of conduct.

Teaching codes of conduct form part of the ethics infrastructure of colleges and universities that seek to raise teaching standards and promote academic integrity or "compliance with ethical and professional principles, standards and practices" (Tauginienė, 2016; Tauginienė et al., 2018, pp. 7–8). While in general, codes of conduct establish "expectations and standards for behavior" for individuals within institutions (Tauginienė et al., 2018, p. 13), teaching codes specifically provide guidelines to deter faculty members in colleges and universities from making choices in teaching that negatively affect the academic and intellectual development of students. By stipulating "quality professional standards for teaching" and indicating the "fundamental ethics that inform the work of faculty members," these codes of conduct apprise faculty members of expected teaching behaviors and provide a clear framework for the professional choices that faculty make about their teaching role performance (Lyken-Segosebe et al., 2018, p. 290). Through this delineation of expected teaching behaviors, formal teaching codes of conduct become a framework of professional conduct that assist faculty members to serve students as clients. This professional obligation, known as the ideal of service, means that teaching faculty make choices based on the needs and welfare of students (Goode, 1969). In this sense, codes of conduct for teaching also safeguard student welfare in the classroom by providing guidance to faculty as they make choices in their teaching role and limiting those choices that negatively affect students as clients (Braxton & Bayer, 1999). Teaching codes of conduct therefore balance the autonomy of faculty members and the need for professional self-regulation with the protection of students as university clients (Lyken-Segosebe et al., 2018).

Promoting teaching codes of conduct lies with individual colleges and universities (Braxton & Bayer, 2004). In their Guidelines for an Institutional Code of Ethics in Higher Education, the International Association of Universities and the Magna Charta Observatory go further to state that these institutions also have the responsibility "to raise awareness in society of the decisive role that they [Codes] play in promoting ethical values and integrity" (IAU-MCO, 2012, p. 2). Colleges and universities can exercise these responsibilities by publicly posting

their codes of conduct for teaching, thus communicating to internal and external stakeholders their affirmation of good teaching practices.

Research studies have found that colleges and universities within the United States and across various institutional types—community colleges, baccalaureate colleges and universities, masters' colleges and universities, and research universities of very high research activity—publicly post formal codes of conduct for undergraduate teaching on their websites (Lyken-Segosebe et al., 2012; Lyken-Segosebe et al., 2018; Rine et al., 2021). However, there is a dearth of research literature on whether universities outside the United States promulgate similar codes to safeguard the welfare of one of their principal clients, the undergraduate student. This deficiency in the research literature motivated the current study, which utilized a proposed code of conduct for undergraduate teaching (Braxton & Bayer, 2004) to ascertain the incidence of publicly posted codes of conduct for undergraduate teaching at universities globally.

Specifically, we focused on universities included in the Times Higher Education World University Rankings top-400 institutions (Times Higher Education, 2020). Given that countries may apply various terminologies to distinguish their in-country types of colleges and universities, this study applied a universal distinguishing factor—their international Times Higher Education ranking—for cross-country comparison of colleges and universities. This distinguishing factor provides a measure of the international stature of these institutions. The findings of this study demonstrate the degree to which English-speaking universities ranked among the top 400 institutions of the world strive to safeguard the welfare of their undergraduate students through the existence of publicly posted codes of conduct for teaching undergraduate students. The findings of this study contribute to the further development of the literature on this line of inquiry on teaching codes of conduct in institutions of higher education. Specifically, it adds an international perspective to the US-based research of Lyken-Segosebe et al. (2012), Lyken-Segosebe et al. (2018), and Rine et al. (2021).

Literature Review

Public Posting of Codes of Conduct for Undergraduate Teaching in US Colleges and Universities

Higher education institutions do not share a common formal teaching code of conduct. Within the extant literature, guidelines and recommendations are available to colleges and universities for developing codes of academic ethics. These include the International Association of Universities and the Magna Charta Observatory's *Guidelines for an Institutional Code of Ethics in Higher Education* and the *Statement of Professional Ethics of the American Association of University Professors* (AAUP, 2009; IAU-MCO, 2012). However, Braxton and Bayer's (2004) proposed code of conduct for undergraduate teaching is the only known fully specified teaching code of conduct presented as a model for higher education institutions. Its ten tenets originated from their research study that surveyed 949 faculty members at a variety of institutional types in the USA (research universities, comprehensive colleges and universities, liberal arts colleges, and two-year colleges) about inappropriate behaviors in teaching role performance (Braxton & Bayer, 2004). The norms that formed the basis of the code's original ten tenets were empirically derived from faculty members' perceptions of inappropriate behavior. These inappropriate behaviors resonated with Merton's (1973) definition of norms as prescribed and proscribed behavior patterns. In their delineation of these ten tenets, Braxton and Bayer (2004) employed three principles: the tenets 1) should serve to protect the welfare of students; 2) should be specific so that evidence of the teaching behaviors could be noted and assessed by students and colleagues; and 3) should be derived from empirical research. Moreover, ethical principles (see Table 3) underlie these tenets. Table 1 shows the ten tenets proposed by Braxton and Bayer (2004) and an eleventh tenet identified by Lyken-Segosebe et al. (2012). This tenet, "Harassment," was added when researchers noted that several faculty codes of conduct prohibited more general forms of harassment, distinct from sexual harassment (Lyken-Segosebe et al., 2012).

Given that the responsibility for promoting teaching codes of conduct lies with individual colleges and universities, this raised the question: to what extent do colleges and universities shoulder this responsibility by publicly posting codes of conduct that include one or more of the eleven tenets posited by Braxton and Bayer (2004) and Lyken-Segosebe et al. (2012)? Colleges and universities within the United States across various institutional types—community colleges, baccalaureate colleges and universities, masters' colleges and universities, and

research universities of very high research activity—have been found to publicly post formal codes of conduct for undergraduate teaching that include one or more of the eleven tenets listed above. When Lyken-Segosebe et al. (2012) investigated codes of conduct within US-based four-year baccalaureate level colleges, they found that most of these teaching-oriented institutions (77%) publicly post codes of conduct that include at least one of the above tenets. Lyken-Segosebe et al. (2018) extended the 2012 study by adding three additional types of colleges and universities, namely community colleges, masters' colleges and universities, and research universities of very high research activity. Findings of the 2018 study revealed that the majority of colleges and universities (76%) in their sample publicly posted codes of conduct with one or more of the eleven tenets. Codes of conduct were publicly posted by ninety-five percent (95%) of research-intensive universities. The researchers also found that the extent of posting varied across the different types of colleges and universities and the average number of tenets present in a code of conduct ranged from a low of 3.56 in community colleges to a high of 5.84 in research-intensive universities.

Using the institutional differences in both the existence and number of tenets of publicly posted codes of conduct found by Lyken-Segosebe et al. (2018) as a basis for a third study in this nascent line of inquiry, Rine et al. (2021) centered their attention on publicly posted codes of conduct for teaching in colleges and universities affiliated with the Council of Christian Colleges and Universities (CCCU). These researchers reasoned that colleges and universities with distinctive institutional missions and particular institutional cultures—such as military service academies, Minority Serving Institutions (e.g., HBCUs), and religiously affiliated colleges and universities—might also differ on whether or not teaching codes of conduct were publicly available to faculty members, students and external stakeholders, as well as on the number of tenets included in those codes. Rine et al. (2021) also utilized the proposed eleven tenets of the code of conduct for undergraduate teaching as a template for their analysis. However, while these researchers found that only 27% of the CCCU institutions in their study publicly posted codes of conduct for undergraduate college teaching, most were research-intensive universities.

Table 1: The Proposed Code of Conduct for Teaching Undergraduates

Category	Tenet	Evidence
Course Details	1. Undergraduate courses should be carefully planned.	• Prepare adequate course outline and syllabus. • Order textbooks and course materials in time. • Communicate dates for assignments and exams.
	2. Important course details should be conveyed to enrolled students.	• Communicate class attendance policy, reading assignments, opportunities for extra credit, grading criteria for essays on exams and papers, policy of missed or make-up exams. • Communicate changes in class time or location.
Course Content	3. New and revised lectures and course readings should reflect advancements of knowledge in a field.	• Keep up-to-date with advancements of knowledge in respective academic disciplines.
	4. Grading of examinations and assignments should be based on merit and not on the characteristics of students.	• Do not let grades be affected by personal friendships. • No preferential treatment for late or incomplete work.
	5. Various perspectives on course topics should be presented, examinations should cover the breadth of the course, and scholars' or students' perspectives at variance with the instructor's point of view should be acknowledged.	• Present various perspectives. • Acknowledge students' perspectives at variance with instructor's point of view. • Cover breadth of course in exams.

Treatment of Students	6. Students should be treated with respect as individuals.	• Refrain from treating students in a condescending or demeaning manner. • Respect students' needs and sensitivities. • Refrain from late coming to class. • Refrain from frequent early dismissals. • Be patient with slow learners.
	7. Faculty members must respect the confidentiality of their relationships with students and the students' academic achievements.	• Respect confidentiality of relationship with students. • Respect confidentiality of students' academic accomplishments.
Faculty Availability	8. Faculty members must make themselves available to their students by maintaining office hours.	• Maintain office hours. • Be prepared for student advising. • Be prepared to identify special services to deal with student problems outside faculty expertise.
Moral Turpitude	9. Faculty members must not have sexual relationships with students enrolled in their class.	• No sexual relationships with enrolled students. • Refrain from making sexual comments to students.
	10. Faculty members must not come to class intoxicated from alcohol or drugs.	• No use of alcohol or drugs on campus.
	11. Faculty members must not harass students enrolled in their classes.	• No harassment of students in an oral, written, graphic, physical or other form.

Note. Table reproduced from Braxton and Bayer (2004) and Lyken-Segosebe et al. (2012).

Furthermore, institutions posted an average of 7.5 of the eleven tenets of the code of conduct proposed by Braxton and Bayer (2004) and Lyken-Segosebe et al. (2012).

Taken together, these studies suggest that, with the exception of CCCU-affiliated colleges and universities, a majority of colleges and universities in the United States, and research-intensive universities in particular, take measures to protect the welfare of their students by publicly posting codes of conduct for undergraduate college teaching. Little is known as to whether universities in other countries, and research-intensive universities in particular, do likewise for undergraduate college teaching. We discuss this absence of literature in the next section of this review of literature.

International Literature on Codes of Conduct for Undergraduate Teaching

There is a dearth of research literature that examines whether universities outside the United States promulgate similar codes to safeguard the welfare of their client, the undergraduate student. When Tauginienė (2016) examined codes of ethics in Lithuanian public universities, the researcher found that these universities directed their efforts more to the behavior of students than to the behavior of academic staff. The literature on the international context indicates scholarly concern with the research aspect of faculty members' role performance and institutional quality assurance rather than the teaching aspect. Most literature exploring faculty conduct in the international context relate to ethical behaviors in research, publishing, and/or technology transfer (e.g., Milovanovitch et al., 2018; Reisberg, 2021) and quality assurance processes (e.g., Eaton, 2018). Furthermore, intergovernmental and nongovernmental educational organizations working in the global context focus on the quality of education (e.g., the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development [OECD]) and cross-border collaboration, research, and credentialing (e.g., the Association of Southeast Asian Institutions of Higher Learning [ASAIHL] and the Association of Commonwealth Universities [ACU] (ACU, n.d.; ASAIHL, n.d.; OECD, n.d.).

THEORETICAL CONSTRUCT

DiMaggio and Powell (1983) hypothesize that organizations within a given organizational field exist within an environment that includes shared norms and values that influence the actions of individual organizations. Organizations

may be persuaded to comply with the norms and values of their environment through a process of organizational isomorphism. DiMaggio and Powell (1983) argue that over time, organizations in the same organizational field come to share similarities in many different aspects through these pressures of isomorphism. They do so because they "compete not just for resources and customers, but for political power and legitimacy, for social as well as economic fitness" (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983, p. 150).

DiMaggio and Powell (1983) delineate three mechanisms of institutional isomorphism: coercive, mimetic, and normative. Coercive isomorphism describes the adoption of norms and values by organizations because of compulsory pressures within the organizational field or from governmental or other authorities external to the organizational field (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983). In comparison, mimetic isomorphism involves seeking trust and legitimacy from stakeholders by emulating other organizations within an organizational field (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983). Normative isomorphism is the mechanism by which organizations, influenced by education, values, and practices of professionals and professional associations, gradually acquire the norms and values of their organizational field. In higher education, this form of isomorphism occurs when institutions participate in professional associations of peer institutions or through hiring faculty and administrators from similar institutions (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983).

We posit that universities included in the Times Higher Education World University Rankings top-400 institutions are research-intensive universities and therefore constitute an organizational field. We do so because universities are included in the Times Higher Education World University Rankings by achieving an annual research output of at least 150 articles per year (Times Higher Education, 2021). Moreover, sub-fields may also exist within this organizational field given that the Times Rankings schema arrays universities into ten bands or categories of universities of varying degrees of institutional quality. We provide further information on the Times Rankings schema in the methodology section of this article.

Applying the formulations of DiMaggio and Powell (1983), international universities included in the Times Higher Education World University Rankings will resemble each other in the existence of publicly posted codes of conduct as well as the number of tenets included in their publicly posted codes of conduct for

undergraduate college teaching because of the pressures of institutional isomorphism. Although it is beyond the scope of this article, either mimetic or normative isomorphism may constitute the two most likely mechanisms of institutional isomorphism because of the international context of the universities in this study, which makes coercive pressures from public policy or larger society unlikely.

Our conceptual framework yields three research questions. These questions are as follows:

1. How many universities in the top-400 institutions on the 2020 Times Higher Education World University Rankings publicly post faculty codes of conduct with Braxton and Bayer's (2004) and Lyken-Segosebe et al.'s (2012) tenets, and do differences in the rate of public posting vary by the universities' international institutional stature?
2. Does the number of tenets proposed by Braxton and Bayer (2004) and Lyken-Segosebe et al. (2012) that are specified in a given code of conduct, vary by the universities' international institutional stature?
3. Among universities with publicly posted codes of conduct with tenets, does the incidence of the specific tenets grouped by faculty teaching practices vary by the universities' international institutional stature?

Research Method

Sample and Data Collection

Our sample comprised 100 institutions from the 2020 Times Higher Education World University Rankings top-400 institutions (Times Higher Education, 2020). The World University Rankings assess research-intensive universities across all their core missions—teaching, research, knowledge transfer and international outlook—using thirteen calibrated performance indicators grouped into five areas: Teaching (the learning environment); Research (volume, income and reputation); Citations (research influence); International Outlook (staff, students and research); and Industry Income (knowledge transfer) (Times Higher Education, 2020).

Cluster sampling was utilized to randomly select samples of fifty universities with English language websites within each of two tiers of the top-400 rankings (Ranking 1-200 and 201-400). Data collection was undertaken over a six-

month period (October 2020-March 2021). We defined a code of conduct as a document in which the institution outlines expected behaviors for faculty members. Some of these documents found outline would explicitly state the tenets proposed by Braxton and Bayer (2004) while others would not. To ascertain whether these universities publicly post codes of conduct for teaching, we undertook content analyses of their websites using the key words "faculty handbook," "faculty guide," "faculty manual," "employee guide," "code of conduct," "code of ethics" and "faculty policies."

Following the research of Lyken-Segosebe et al. (2012), Lyken-Segosebe et al. (2018), and Rine, et al. (2021), we used the tenets of the proposed code of conduct posited by Braxton and Bayer (2004) and Lyken-Segosebe et al. (2012) as the basis for the content analysis of the websites of the 100 universities in our sample. We sought evidence for these eleven tenets using the contents of Table 1 as a template for the construction of the variables described in the next section.

We used the code of conduct for undergraduate teaching proposed by Braxton and Bayer (2004) and extended by Lyken-Segosebe et al. (2012) for four reasons. The first reason related to the comprehensiveness of this proposed code. Its eleven tenets encapsulate a wide range of activities of central importance to college and university teaching such as course details, course content, treatment of students, faculty availability and moral behavior. Second, each of its eleven tenets resonate with literature-based ethical principles (Table 3 lists these ethical principles). Third, as previously indicated, ten of the tenets of this proposed code index empirically derived norms for undergraduate teaching that proscribe highly inappropriate teaching behaviors. The fourth reason relates to the use of this proposed code of conduct in three previous studies (Lyken-Segosebe et al., 2012; Lyken-Segosebe et al., 2018; and Rine et al., 2021) that focused on publicly posted codes of conduct for undergraduate teaching. We likewise used it to maintain consistency among the studies in this line of inquiry. Such consistency in the use of research methods enables researchers to make comparisons between their findings and those of other studies. Such comparisons also contribute to the development of the literature on this line of inquiry on teaching codes of conduct in institutions of higher education in the United States and internationally.

With regards to our sample profile, our sample consisted of 100 universities. Fifty universities were randomly sampled from within each of two

tiers (Ranking 1-200 and 201-400) of the top-400 rankings. Ninety-three (93) were public universities and seven (7) were private universities. Four (4) universities were small with an enrollment of fewer than 2,500 students; one (1) university was of medium size with an enrollment of between 2,500-4,999 students; two (2) universities were large with an enrollment of 5,000-9,999 students; and the bulk of universities in the sample (93 universities) were very large with enrollment sizes of 10,000 and more students. Independent t-tests reveal that universities within the 1-200 and 201-400 ranks were, for the most part, not statistically different in terms of institutional control, enrollment size and region of location. As Table 2 indicates, both groups of universities were on average public, large with enrollment sizes of 10,000 and more students, and located in Europe.

Table 2: T-Tests of Baseline Sample Characteristics

Baseline characteristics	**Times Higher Education Ranking**		**T-Statistic**
	1-200 (N=50)	**201-400 (N=50)**	
Public	0.90	0.96	-1.17
Size	3.88	3.8	0.63
Region	4.76	4.74	0.05

Note. *p. <0.025; **p.>0.01 ***p.<0.001

Data Analysis

Descriptive analysis, t-tests and Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) using Stata software were utilized to investigate the existence of publicly posted codes of conduct for undergraduate teaching in the sample of universities ranked among the Times Higher Education World University Rankings top-400 institutions. Prior to executing AVOVA, the homogeneity of variance assumption was tested using Levene's Test of Homogeneity. Following statistically significant main effects from the Analyses of Variance, appropriate post hoc mean comparisons were conducted.

Variables

There were four variables of principal interest in this study.

International Institutional Stature. International institutional stature was based on the ranking of institutions in the 2020 Times Higher Education World University

Rankings and coded as 1 = 1-200, 2 = 201–400, with those universities in ranked 1-200 of a higher rank than those ranked 201-400.

Code with Tenets. This variable identified whether a code of conduct existed based on the presence of one or more of the eleven tenets proposed by Braxton and Bayer (2004) and Lyken-Segosebe et al. (2012) as shown in Table 1. It was represented by a dummy variable coded as 0 = code of conduct not found or none of the eleven tenets posted on the institution's website, and 1 = one or more of the eleven tenets posted on the institution's website. We used this variable to address the first research question of this study.

Counts of Stated Tenets. For this variable, we calculated the total number of the tenets shown in Table 1 that were specified in an institution's code of conduct. This variable offers a measure of the comprehensiveness of publicly posted codes of conduct. The values of this variable ranged from 1 to 11. This variable addressed the second research question of this study.

Faculty Teaching Practices. This variable categorized faculty teaching practices by their pertinent tenets in a code of conduct into six categories of teaching practices that correspond to the types of choices faculty members can make regarding their teaching practices. This variable addressed the third research question of this study. Table 3 below shows the categories of faculty teaching practices matched with their corresponding tenets and the ethical principles that underlie each tenet. The values for Course Planning, Course Currency, and Treatment of Students range from 0 to 2. For Grading Criteria and Faculty Availability the values for these variables are either 0 or 1. The values for Moral Behavior range from 0 to 3.

Table 3: Specific Faculty Teaching Practices Organized by Tenets

Faculty Teaching Practice	Tenet	Underlying Ethical Principles
Course Planning	1. Undergraduate courses should be carefully planned.	Responsible instructors plan courses prior to their start. (Cahn, 2010)
	2. Important course details should be conveyed to enrolled students.	Students learn best when they know a course's design and direction. (Markie, 1994)
Course Currency	1. New and revised lectures and course readings should reflect advancements of knowledge in a field.	Course content should be updated between offerings to ensure it is current. (Markie, 1994)
	2. Various perspectives on course topics should be presented, examinations should cover the breadth of the course, and scholars' or students' perspectives at variance with the instructor's point of view should be acknowledged.	Professors have an obligation to assume a tolerant, open, and neutral posture that fairly presents differing perspectives representative of the wider field. (Baumgarten, 1982; Churchill, 1982; Kerr, 1996)
Grading Criteria	1. Grading of examinations and assignments should be based on merit and not on the characteristics of students.	Relevant, objective criteria should be used to assess student learning. (Smith, 1996; Strike, 1994)

Treatment of Students	1. Students should be treated with respect as individuals.	Students should be respected as individuals. (Reynolds, 1996; Svinicki, 1994)
	2. Faculty members must respect the confidentiality of their relationships with students and the students' academic achievements.	Trust is an indispensable element of the faculty-student relationship. (Murray et al., 1996)
Faculty Availability	1. Faculty members must make themselves available to their students by maintaining office hours.	Student advising is an inherent developmental function of the faculty role. (Kerr, 1996; Murray et al., 1996)
Moral Behavior	1. Faculty members must not have sexual relationships with students enrolled in their classes.	Faculty-student sexual relationships represent an egregious abuse of power. (Murray et al., 1996; Svinicki, 1994; Cahn 1994)
	2. Faculty members must not come to class intoxicated from alcohol or drugs.	Faculty must never show personal disrespect or disregard towards persons. (Smith, 1996)
	3. Faculty members must not harass students enrolled in their classes.	Faculty should give equal consideration and respect to all students. (Reynolds, 1996; Svinicki, 1994)

Note. Table adapted from Rine et al. (2021), Braxton and Bayer (2004) and Lyken-Segosebe et al. (2012).

Results

Findings are organized according to the three research questions that guided this study.

Research Question One: How many universities in the top-400 institutions on the 2020 Times Higher Education World University Rankings publicly post faculty codes of conduct with Braxton and Bayer's (2004) and Lyken-Segosebe et al.'s (2012) tenets, and do differences in the rate of public posting vary by the universities' international institutional stature?

Fifty-two (52) percent of the 100 universities in the study sample possess a code of conduct with one or more of the eleven tenets proposed by Braxton and Bayer (2004) and Lyken-Segosebe et al. (2012). Table 4 shows that of these 52 universities, 19 universities (or 37%) are in the highest ranking (1-200) of universities while most of these universities are ranked between 201 and 400. We find the existence of such codes does indeed differ across the two groups of rankings in a statistically significant way (chi square of 7.85, $p < .01$). Thus, universities of lower international institutional stature are more likely to have codes of conduct that include one or more of the 11 tenets than universities of a higher international institutional stature.

Table 4: Status of Universities - Codes of Conduct with One or More Tenets

Code	Times Higher Education Ranking		Total
	1-200	201-400	
Code with none of the 11 Tenets	31	17	48
Code with at least one of the 11 Tenets	19	33	52
Total	50	50	100
Pearson chi2 = 7.85 (p = 0.005)			

Research Question Two: Does the number of tenets proposed by Braxton and Bayer (2004) and Lyken-Segosebe et al. (2012) that are specified in a given code of conduct vary by the universities' international institutional stature?

As indicated in Table 5, the number of tenets varies by international institutional stature. The mean number of tenets for universities within the rank of 201-400 (mean=6.9) exceeds those of universities in the rank of 1-200 (mean=4.2). Stated differently, the codes of conduct of universities with lower levels of international stature exhibit a greater degree of comprehensiveness in the coverage of their codes of conduct than universities with higher levels of international institutional stature. Prior to executing the analysis of variance, the homogeneity of variance assumption was tested using the Levene's test of homogeneity, and heterogeneous variances were detected. The one-factor analysis was conducted using the .025 level of statistical significance to reduce the probability of committing a Type I error.

Table 5: Number of Tenets by International Institutional Stature

F-Ratio for International Institutional Stature	Mean		Post-Hoc Mean Comparison
	Ranking = 1-200 (N=19)	Ranking = 201-400 (N=33)	
*8.89***	4.2	6.9	201-400 > 1-200

Note. *p. <0.025; **p.>0.01 ***p.<0.001

Research Question Three: Among universities with publicly posted codes of conduct with tenets, does the incidence of the specific tenets grouped by faculty teaching practices vary by the universities' international institutional stature?

Independent t-tests reveal that universities within the 1-200 and 201-400 ranks are, for the most part, not statistically different in terms of the mean number of tenets for the faculty teaching practices on their websites. However, as Table 6 indicates, universities ranked 201-400 tend to display a higher number of tenets related to Moral Behavior, that is, faculty members must not have sexual relationships with students enrolled in their classes; faculty members must not come to class intoxicated from alcohol or drugs; and faculty members must not harass students enrolled in their classes.

Table 6: T-tests of Faculty Teaching Practices by Institutional Stature on the Times Higher Education World University Rankings

Faculty Teaching Practices	Times Higher Education Ranking 1-200 (N=19)	201-400 (N=33)	T-Statistic
Course Planning	0.89	1.27	-1.33
Course Currency	0.47	0.91	-1.85
Grading Criteria	0.74	0.57	1.15
Treatment of Students	1.00	1.15	-0.57
Faculty Availability	0.37	0.42	-0.39
Moral Behavior	0.84	2.51	-7.41***

Note. *p. <0.025; **p.>0.01 ***p.<0.001

Discussion

In conjunction with the findings of Lyken-Segosebe et al. (2018), our findings indicate that from a cross-national perspective, most international English-speaking research universities and those in the United States publicly post codes of conduct that include one or more of tenets of the eleven tenets of the code posited by Braxton and Bayer (2004). However, the proportion of these international research universities (52%) that post such codes lags substantially behind research universities in the USA given that ninety-five percent (95%) of US research universities publicly post such codes (Lyken-Segosebe et al., 2018). The moderate degree (mean=5.6) of the comprehensiveness of the coverage of the codes of conduct in international universities partially compensates for this sizable lag in their public posting, being relatively close to the average number of tenets in the codes of conduct of US research-intensive universities (mean=5.84) as found by Lyken-Segosebe et al. (2018).

The formulations of our conceptual framework provide the basis for the discussion of our findings as well as the three conclusions we subsequently offer. First, we found that universities of lower international institutions were more likely to publicly post teaching codes of conduct. Our findings suggest that universities with lower international institutional stature (rankings 201-400) exist in a shared organizational field in which isomorphic pressures exist for the public posting of codes of conduct for undergraduate teaching and for codes containing tenets

proposed by Braxton and Bayer (2004) and Lyken-Segosebe et al. (2012). The source of these pressures may be status related. Heyneman (2012) posits that having an institutional ethical infrastructure constitutes an important element of the reputation of a university, especially world class universities. He lists a code of conduct for faculty as an aspect of an ethical infrastructure. As a consequence, in order to maintain or enhance their international institutional stature, lower ranked universities publicly post more comprehensive codes of conduct than their higher ranked counterparts. In turn, mimetic and normative isomorphic pressures prevail for comprehensive codes of conduct for faculty teaching in the organizational field of English-speaking universities of lower international institutional stature. To elaborate, mimetic isomorphic pressure emerges from an initial group of universities of lower international institutional stature that publicly post comprehensive codes of conduct followed by normative pressures that develop over time as additional lower-ranked universities post such codes of conduct.

Initial mimetic and later normative isomorphic pressure to publicly post codes of conduct for undergraduate teaching may arise from regional socio-political and cultural influences. Taking into account that universities with lower international institutional stature are mostly European and North American institutions, the tendency to publicly post codes of code may reflect institutional group adherence to guidance against faculty misconduct provided by the American Association of University Professors (AAUP) to protect the interests of faculty members and as espoused in the association's Statement on Professional Ethics (AAUP, n.d.). Publicly posted codes of conduct may also reflect individual European Higher Education Area (EHEA) country's efforts to harmonize their higher education institutional policies regarding values such as academic integrity and public responsibility, and promote inter-regional and international student mobility and other goals of the Bologna Process.

Theoretically and for the European countries in our sample, policy convergence theory may explain our finding that universities of lower international institutional stature (rankings 201-400) exist in a shared organizational field in which isomorphic pressures exist for the public posting of codes of conduct for undergraduate teaching. The theory rests on the notion of societies over time developing "similarities in structures, processes, and performances" (Kerr, 1983,

p. 3) and processes that shape "social structures, political processes and public policies in the same mould" (Bennett, 1991, p. 216). Research studies (e.g., Dobbins & Knill, 2009; Drezner, 2001; Heinze & Knill, 2008) have found that policy convergence is likely to be effective among countries with similar cultural backgrounds (i.e., those that share linguistic, religious, historical or other cultural linkages), institutional configurations and socioeconomic characteristics. Dobbins and Knill (2009) link policy convergence among signatories to the Bologna process to DiMaggio & Powell's (1991) notion of mimetic and normative isomorphism given the voluntary nature of the adoption of the inter-regional agreement.

The pressure to post codes may also exist because universities of lower international institutional stature may emphasize teaching alongside research. This is in comparison to universities of higher international institutional stature which may primarily emphasize research. Furthermore, universities of lower international institutional stature, with a dual emphasis on teaching and research, may experience a more significant number of problematic teaching behaviors practiced by their faculty members. The greater prevalence of these problematic behaviors enhances these institutions' vigilance regarding teaching role performance by faculty. Consequently, universities of lower international institutional stature develop and publicly post codes of conduct to convey to internal and external stakeholders the teaching behaviors of faculty desired by their university, as well as to deter and detect the problematic teaching choices of faculty members at their university.

Secondly, we found that universities of lower international stature in the Times Higher Education rankings tend to display a higher number of tenets related to moral behavior: that is, faculty members must not have sexual relationships with students enrolled in their classes; faculty members must not come to class intoxicated from alcohol or drugs; and faculty members must not harass students enrolled in their classes. This suggests that these institutions are more likely to display tenets where the ethical infringement has legal ramifications, in order to protect their students as clients.

Infractions of the tenets of teaching codes of conduct exhibited in Tables 1 and 3 negatively affect the welfare of students and quality of teaching and, therefore, constitute faculty misconduct in teaching role performance (Braxton &

Bayer, 2004). Faculty violations of tenets evoke a need for institutional mechanisms of social control (Braxton & Bayer, 2004; Braxton et al., 2004) that deter, detect and sanction such violations (Zuckerman, 1988). Therefore, we recommend that those universities without codes of conduct that are publicly posted develop, implement and promulgate them in order to deter and detect faculty violations and their negative consequences for students. This recommendation pertains particularly to the 31 universities within the category of the higher rank (1-200) of the top-400 universities of the Times Higher Education World University Rankings for which none of the 11 proposed tenets were found. In making this recommendation, we echo a similar recommendation advanced by Lyken-Segosebe et al. (2018). DeAngelis (2014, p. 216) notes that having a code of ethics may increase faculty members' sensitivity to ethical issues but not actually promote ethical or discourage unethical behavior. We therefore also recommend reinforcement activities such as periodic training of faculty members and reinforcing mentoring sessions on academic integrity, ethical principles regarding teaching and students, parameters of faculty misconduct and proactive measures that can be undertaken to avoid such misconduct (Kelley, Agle, & DeMott, 2005; Whitley Jr. & Keith-Spiegel, 2001). These measures complement the functions of a code of conduct in an institution's ethics infrastructure. In addition, where universities participate in inter-regional agreements to harmonize higher education systems, we recommend teaching codes of conduct that clearly define misconduct within wide parameters and that recognize the existence of within- and between-country differences on what constitutes unethical academic behaviors even among culturally similar countries (Altbach, 2012; Denisova-Schmidt, 2018).

Complementary to the above recommendations for institutional action, we also offer some recommendations for future research. One such recommendation concerns the extent to which individual faculty members across the different top-400 universities adhere to the tenets of codes of conduct posted by their university in their teaching practice. Future research should examine the incidence of tenets of codes of conduct among universities ranked below the top-400 universities. Such a study will determine whether these institutions display similar features to those among the universities of lower international stature (in the 201-400 rankings) in this study. Another recommendation pertains to whether those

universities that publicly post codes of conduct display and implement sanctions for faculty violations of the tenets of such codes of conduct. If known and publicly communicated, sanctions may deter wrongdoing (Ben-Yehuda, 1985; Tittle, 1980). We also recommend that future research examine the existence of institutional arrangements for the reporting of faculty violations of tenets of the codes of conduct. Without such institutional arrangements, their detection and possible sanction are unlikely (Braxton & Bray, 2012).

Implications and Conclusion

We offer three conclusions that we derive from the pattern of findings of this study. These conclusions are as follows:

1. We posited that universities included in the Times Higher Education World University Rankings top-400 institutions constitute an organizational field. A little more than half (52%) of the top-400 institutions on the Times Rankings publicly posted codes of conduct that contain one or more of the eleven tenets proposed by Braxton and Bayer (2004) and Lyken-Segosebe et al. (2012). Consequently, we conclude that tepid isomorphic pressures prevail for the public posting of such teaching codes of conduct within this organizational field.
2. Within the organizational field of universities ranked among the top-400 institutions of the Times Higher Education World University Rankings, those universities ranked lower (201-400) constitute a sub-organizational field with isomorphic pressures to post comprehensive codes of conduct for undergraduate teaching. Put differently, universities of lower international institutional stature form a sub-organizational field.
3. A mixed picture of isomorphic pressures prevails for the teaching practices that pertain to tenets of the code of conduct. Within the broader organizational field of universities included in the Times Higher Education World University Rankings top-400 institutions, isomorphic pressures tend to exist for all these teaching practices but those pertaining to moral behavior. Within the sub-organizational field populated by universities of lower institutional international stature, isomorphic pressures present themselves for the three teaching practices pertinent to moral behavior.

The increasing globalization of higher education places isomorphic pressures on its institutions. Through intergovernmental agreements and non-governmental organizations, international universities are encouraged towards practices like cross-border academic collaboration, consistency in credentialing, and implementation of quality assurance processes. It seems inevitable that these isomorphic tendencies will lead to greater particularity and granularity in defining and assessing quality—including faculty members' performance of the teaching role—and that codes of conduct for undergraduate teaching and the tenets described by Braxton and Bayer (2004) and Lyken-Segosebe et al. (2012) will be a critical part of identifying and assessing teaching quality in higher education.

Codes of conduct for undergraduate teaching present a way for institutions to balance and preserve the rights of stakeholders while ensuring desired outcomes. Faculty autonomy is critical to the academic work of research and teaching. And yet, respectful treatment of students as clients demands clear articulation of prescribed and proscribed behaviors. The manner of promulgating such a code of conduct may be critical to its success. A code of conduct developed by faculty members with broad-based input and feedback would likely be more accepted than one imposed by university administration or governmental authorities. And, as noted above, the public accessibility to the teaching code of conduct, along with clearly stated sanctions for violation and processes for reporting violations would be vital for its acceptance by students and other stakeholders. Regardless of these details, a code of conduct for undergraduate teaching helps faculty members understand the parameters of their autonomy and establishes mutual expectations for students and faculty in teaching role performance.

Limitations

There are at least four limitations that temper our conclusions and recommendations. The first limitation relates to the restriction of our sample to universities among the 2020 Times Higher Education World University Rankings top-400 institutions. It could be that universities not included among the top-400 universities exhibit a different pattern of findings than that found in this study. The second limitation relates to our random selection of universities. Randomness resulted in findings for single-digit numbers of universities within particular

regions, thus limiting our analysis. For example, our sample comprised of one university in the Africa region that possessed a code of conduct with tenets.

The third limitation relates to the information that a university makes available on its website. While policies about undergraduate teaching reflecting the tenets proposed by Braxton and Bayer (2004) and Lyken-Segosebe et al. (2012) may exist at a given university, these policies may not appear on their websites or are accessed only in a password-protected section of the websites. The keywords used in the search process presents a fourth limitation as they may not match the languages or terminologies used by the universities in the sample.

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