ness to their (leaders’) respective organizations, and early access to top leadership. One of the book’s main conclusions is that it is important for universities to develop internal talent by identifying and mentoring people who show leadership promise, as they might become the best presidents of the future.

Indeed, four of the six presidents studied in this book were internal candidates for the offices they held. Only Slaughter and Gray became presidents after proving themselves at other institutions. Padilla considers Gray an internal candidate, because she had been a member of the faculty at the University of Chicago before accepting administrative posts elsewhere, making it possible for her to return there as president. Yet Kerr, Friday, Hesburgh, and Bowen did not have to move from one institution to another to be promoted, as Gray and Slaughter did. Since Gray and Slaughter are the only members of this group who are not White males, one wonders if this is a coincidence or a pattern, an issue that Padilla does not address.

This matter deserves further investigation because, if appointing internal candidates to high-level positions tends to result in more presidents who are White males, recommendations that institutions of higher learning seek to grow their own leaders should include the qualification that they do so in a way that actively engages, rather than further marginalizes, women and minorities. In particular, it would be important to analyze the perceptual biases that may prevent women and minorities from being considered leadership material, so that such prejudices can be countered, allowing these candidates to rise to the top of internal lists in searches for administrative posts. Padilla’s eminently well-written and thought-provoking book deserves a sequel.


Reviewed by Marc Kaulisch, Research Associate, Center for Higher Education Policy Studies, University of Twente, The Netherlands

The massification of higher education during the 1960s and 1970s around the world opened enormous opportunities for academic careers. In most countries during that period, academic staff (the equivalent of the American “faculty”) received permanent positions. Those academics who entered higher education 30 years ago are now approaching retirement age. In several countries, concerns have arisen about the future recruitment, retention, and retirement of academic staff. Is higher education still an attractive workplace for young graduates? Do they continue their career in higher education? In countries with mandatory retirement laws, are there enough young academics to fill vacancies and how do we keep productive and valuable staff past their retirement age? In countries without mandatory retirement how do we organize voluntary retirement to ensure a necessary staff turnover to renew staff structure?

Robert Clark and Jennifer Ma’s Recruitment, Retention, and Retirement in Higher Education deals with these important questions in the American context. Based on a conference held in April 2004 and sponsored by the TIAA-CREF institute, the main perspective of the chapter authors is how American universities and colleges can manage current challenges such as aging academic staff, rising health care costs for retirees, and the stimulation of voluntary retirement. Although the title gives another impression, there are no chapters on how institutions can manage the recruitment or retention of academic staff. Institutional policies on health care and retirement benefits are instead seen as triggers to attract academic staff and retain them. Thus, this book provides the reader with insightful analyses and valuable descriptions of case-specific institutional policies in these areas, even as the authors pass over broader faculty management issues.

Health care benefits are good instruments with which to attract academic staff. But spiraling inflation in health costs makes the provision of health-care benefits a costly policy. Schieber (chap. 6) discusses the opportunities for universities and colleges to restructure their health care benefits for retirees but also for any staff member. He develops his description from a detailed analysis of developments in health-care benefits in the larger American society. Employers’ main response to increases in health-care costs is a greater cost-sharing between employers and employees/retirees.

Rust (chap. 7) presents an adapted life-cycle model which he calls an “Academic Retirement Model” to evaluate, as his chapter title puts it, the “impact of retiree health plans on faculty retirement decisions.” Rust argues that his model can help institutions model the effects of their benefit plans. I am rather skeptical of this claim. It is, at best, speculative to predict future rates of inflation and economic wealth and to forecast academics’ decision-making on their retirement.

In a system without mandatory retirement, administrators have little control over the retirement age of staff. All of the chapters on retirement address this steering problem. Three basic types of retirement plans are described in more
detail by various authors: basic retirement plans, phased retirement plans, and buy-out programs. In summarizing the findings, it is fair to conclude that planning voluntary retirement is a difficult business. Shoven (chap. 13) shows that basic retirement plans with simple monetary incentives might work adequately, as, for example, at Stanford University.

The responsiveness of faculty to monetary incentives is also proven by Pencavel’s analysis (chap. 10) of the University of California’s buy-out programs at the beginning of the 1990s. But Pencavel also shows that this responsiveness has its limits. Phased retirement plans seem effective in helping academics retire earlier and make smoother transitions into full retirement (Allen, chap. 9; Leslie & Janson, chap. 11; Switkes, chap. 12). Those plans may have severe effects for departments, especially in situations when phased-retirees are not adequately replaced. In general, the assessment of these plans shows that both teaching-active (faculty members focused on teaching rather than research) and less satisfied staff use such early retirement plans at a higher rate. A very important influence on retirement decisions is the general economic condition, especially the value of their investment portfolios.

The book focuses on health-care benefits and retirement plans but also includes chapters on the changing nature of the academic labor market and institutional research and policymaking. These chapters seem disconnected from the others. The chapters on the increasing employment of postdocs (Ma & Stephan, chap. 4) and non-tenured/tenure-track faculty (Ehrenberg & Zhang, chap. 3) point to important issues regarding the contractual composition of academic staff in an institution and nationally. However, their findings have not been integrated into the other chapters’ analyses of human resource policies.

Berberet et al. (chap. 5) provide the reader with insightful findings on late- and early-career faculties’ work patterns, values, and perceptions on various kinds of benefits and retirement. Palmer et al. (chap. 8) give a good overview on the development of human resource policies at Syracuse University. Baer et al. (chap. 14) call for collaboration among institutional researchers in gathering adequate data about recruitment, retention, and retirement issues.

This book is a good source for those who want to be informed about American higher education institutions’ policies on health-care benefits and retirement plans. It offers chapters that present both national data and case studies. I find it very positive that most of those chapters presenting specific institutional cases discuss general developments on national level or analyze national data as well. I was, however, disappointed to find that most authors stick to their specific topics and do not discuss, for example, the interrelations between health-care benefits and retirement plans. The order of chapters is, in my opinion, rather odd. And some authors, in describing staff as expensive costs, seem to forget that staff members are also universities’ most valuable asset.

Such critiques are, however, minor; this book enlightens the reader about two important policy issues, health-care and retirement plans, by addressing both broad macro issues and specific concerns of higher education administrators. Such content is both valuable and practical for the concerned higher education researcher and administrator.


REVIEWED BY SHARON MCDADE, DIRECTOR, CENTER FOR EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP AND TRANSFORMATION, THE GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY

This book will appeal to five audiences. First, it will interest presidents and those concerned about the higher education presidency. It provides commentary by presidents about their jobs, scholarly analysis, and a “sort of presidential troubleshooting handbook” (p. 135). Second, those who study research universities will find this book noteworthy. While the institutions are in the United States, the book provides insights adaptable for research universities in other countries.

Third, the book documents the history of U.S. research universities during the 1980s, thus appealing to scholars of this era and these institutions. Fourth, the book serves those interested in qualitative research and interview analysis. Students can see the relationships between transcripts and analyses, and then try their hands at analyzing the transcripts for their own purposes and instruction. Fifth, the book will interest scholars of Erikson and life-cycle theory, as this project provides application of this concept.

Using retrospective, in-depth interviews with eight research university presidents who served during the 1980s, authors H. Keith Brodie and Leslie Banner provide fascinating glimpses into the roles and responsibilities of CEOs of the largest, most prestigious higher education institutions. The authors began with a hypothesis, borrowed from Erikson, that there is “an identifiable pattern or life cycle... including a series of predictable tasks and milestones that must be successfully