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ACADEMIC UNIONS IN RECESSIONARY TIMES

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ABSTRACT

THIS ARTICLE INVESTIGATES HOW UNIONIZATION AFFECTED THE WAY COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES HANDLED ISSUES RELATING TO FACULTY PAY AND LAYOFFS, DEGREE PROGRAM CANCELLATIONS AND TEACHING LOADS, AND STUDENT SERVICES DURING THE SEVERE RECESSION THAT HIT THE COUNTRY BETWEEN LATE 2007 AND EARLY 2010. THE DATA ARE FROM A NATIONAL SURVEY OF DEPARTMENT CHAIRS. THE RESULTS REVEAL THAT UNIONIZATION REDUCED THE LIKELIHOOD OF FACULTY PAY ACTIONS AND THAT CLASSES WOULD BE TAUGHT AT EXTENDED TIMES, BUT WAS ASSOCIATED WITH A GREATER CHANCE THAT CLASSES WOULD BE OFFERED AT OFF-CAMPUS LOCATIONS. UNIONIZATION HAD NO EFFECT ON BUDGET CUTS, WHETHER FACULTY WERE LAID-OFF OR HAD THEIR TEACHING LOADS INCREASED, AND WHETHER NEW PROGRAMS WERE SET UP TO MEET STATE AND/OR COMMUNITY NEEDS.

One of the most controversial issues in higher education relates to how faculty unions affect the operation of U.S. colleges and universities. As the American Association of University Professors (AAUP, 2011, p. 17) and the Chronicle of Higher Education (Schmidt, 2011, p. 2) report, governors and legislators in several states recently acted to limit or ban collective bargaining by state employees (including those working in higher education) in the belief that it creates excessive compensation and prevents institutions from streamlining their operations by cutting budgets and eliminating outdated programs and unneeded employees.ⁱ Examples of such anti-union behavior include a 2011 Wisconsin law that required yearly recertification of public sector unions and limited the issues over which they could collectively bargain; Ohio Senate Bill 5 (SB5), which attempted to circumscribe unions at public universities by classifying faculty as managers; and a proposed Florida regulation that would severely restrict the rights of public employees to form unions.ⁱⁱ

While controversies over collective bargaining have been part of academia since faculty unions formed a half-century ago, recent conflicts occurred within the context of the financial problems stemming from the severe national recession between late 2007 and early 2010, as higher education expenditures nationwide dropped by \$4 billion from 2008 to 2009 and by 15 percent overall between 2008 and 2012 (Clark, 2009; Nicas and McWhirter, 2012).ⁱⁱⁱ As Douglass (2010, p. 8) notes, in 2009 and 2010 there were major spending cuts on higher education in 34 states, while AAUP surveys from 2009 to 2011 also show that the downturn also created steep decreases in the values of endowments and reductions in donations, which affected campuses nationwide (AAUP, 2009; 2010; 2011).^{iv}

These revenue-related problems resulted in campus budget cuts across the country and pressured institutions to revise student-education methods, to create new programs to meet community needs, and to deliver instruction at times, locations, and by methods more convenient for students (DeVise, 2009; Carnevale, 2010, p. viii; Douglass, 2010, pp. 9-10).^v Overall, these trends demanded that institutions shift their focus, eliminate outdated departments and nonproductive faculty, and cut administrative overhead (AAUP, 2009, p. 18; Selingo, 2012, p. A19), which magnifies the political demand to limit the role of unions in higher education (Chubb and Moe, 1990; Ponak, et. al., 1992; Deckop, et. al., 1993; Porter and Stephens, 2010).

Despite these controversies over how unions function in academia, Wickens (2008) and Schmidt (2011) report that there has been little research on how unions affect the way colleges and universities handle these types of financial problems. Instead, the research to date has focused on such issues as: why unions form and what issues are addressed with collective bargaining; how unions affect faculty salaries, benefits, and productivity; and how collective bargaining affects campus decision-making. Regarding union formation, for example, Cameron (1985) and Wickens (2008) maintain that unions are most likely to appear when faculty members have weak ties to their disciplines and there are administration/faculty conflicts; Goldey, et. al. (2010) indicate that the probability of union formation is enhanced when faculty members harbor pro-union sentiments and regard unions as useful for fighting injustice; Benedict (2012) states that unionization is more likely when pro-union faculty leaders establish personal ties to other faculty members and that administrators are somewhat passive; and Rassuli, et. al. (1999) note that, when forming unions faculty members tend to focus almost exclusively on salary and job security issues.

Regarding research on salaries, benefits, and faculty productivity, while Barbezat (1989) found that collective bargaining led to higher salaries for tenured faculty members and Benedict (2007) reports that the ability of unions to raise salaries appears to grow over time, a reanalysis of the issue by Hedrick, et. al. (2011) with different data and control variables suggests that unions may do little to increase faculty pay. As for the issue of salary inequalities, there is widespread agreement that unions reduce department-to-department variations in pay (Barbezat, 1989); some, but not all, of the salary inequities between men and women (Kesselring, 1991; Ashraf, 1997; Benedict, 1999); and compensation differences between minorities and other faculty members (Ashraf, 1997). Additionally, the analysis of how unions are related to faculty productivity reveals that unions may be associated with less faculty research activity (Meador and Walters, 1994), but do not affect faculty members' willingness to engage in service activities or to work

with students and teach (Deckop, et. al., 1993; Wickens, 2008) and do not protect incompetent faculty (Rothgeb, 2014).

Finally, investigations of how unions affect academic decision-making reveal that unionization increases the probability that faculty members receive tenure; that senior faculty obtain promotions; reduces some male/female differences in tenure and promotions (Benedict and Wilder, 1999); and also may enhance faculty influence over chair appointments and teaching loads (Porter and Stephens, 2010). Ponak et. al. (1992) and Wickens (2008) note, however, that unions typically do not intrude into matters normally handled by college/university senates and/or department chairs, such as governance issues, graduation requirements, hiring decisions, and teaching and committee assignments.

While this research has been extremely valuable for providing insights into the role of unions in higher education, an important gap remains regarding the part unions played in resolving some of the issues that recently emerged. Research seeks to address these issues by investigating how unionization affected the way colleges and universities handled problems relating to faculty pay and to lay-offs; to the elimination of degree programs; to faculty teaching responsibilities; and to meeting their students' educational needs in the 2008-2010 time period. Exploring these issues should provide useful additional insights into how unions operate in an academic setting and into the validity of the recent anti-union sentiments expressed by many political leaders.

RESEARCH DESIGN

The data used in this analysis are from the authors' survey of department chairs at 1,248 U.S. colleges and universities.^{vi} The questionnaire was mailed to the chairs in February 2010 and requested information about the period from January 2008 to January 2010.^{vii} The American Political Science Association (APSA) provided the list of addresses.^{viii} Only one questionnaire went to the political science department at each college/university. Faulty addresses led to 36 returns for an effective population of 1,212. Responses were received from 361 chairs (58 doctoral departments, 77 offering a master's degree, and 226 with a bachelor's program), yielding a response rate of 30 percent. Since the survey was anonymous, there were no follow-up mailings.^{ix} The survey instrument is in Appendix A.

The survey asked the chairs whether their institution had unionized (coded 1) or nonunionized (coded 0) faculty. This unionization measure follows the operationalization procedure utilized by Meador and Walters (1994) and Porter and Stephens (2010). Approximately 18 percent of the responding chairs reported that their college/university was unionized. Among chairs at public institutions, 36 percent indicated they were unionized, a figure similar to the 35 percent unionization rate Metchick and Singh (2004, p. 47) report and the 38 percent rate Wickens (2008, p. 546) discusses for public colleges/universities.^x Hence, the data from the current survey appear representative of unionization in higher education nationwide.

The chairs also were asked for information about control variables. These questions included whether their institution was publicly supported (coded 1) or private (coded 0); was rural (coded 1) or urban or suburban (coded 0); treated teaching as the most important factor in a tenure case (yes = 1, no = 0); and whether it enrolled fewer than 5,000 students (coded 1), 5,001 to 10,00 students (coded 2), 10,001 to 20,000 students (coded 3), or 20,001 or more students (coded 4).^{xi} These variables were incorporated into the analysis because in their discussions of collective bargaining in higher education Cameron (1985), Ashraf (1997), Metchick and Singh (2004), Hedrick, et. al. (2011), and Benedict and Benedict (2012) suggest such controls.^{xii}

Additionally, the questionnaire asked about three categories of dichotomous dependent variables. Dichotomous measures were used because of the nature of the political arguments (see above) that depict unionization as preventing colleges/universities from taking certain types of action. That is, unionized campuses are described as unable to engage in the behavior needed to cope with the circumstances they confront, while those that are not unionized typically are described as better able to do so.^{xiii}

The first group of dependent variables dealt with faculty employment, and included whether the institution in question experienced during the previous two years: moderate to severe layoffs of faculty members (coded yes = 1, no = 0)^{xv}, and faculty pay actions -- that is, pay cuts or pay freezes (yes = 1, no = 0).^{xvi} A second group of variables pertained to the institution's programs and teaching loads and comprised whether in the prior two years degree programs were cancelled and/or suspended (yes = 1, no = 0)^{xvii} and (2) faculty members were required to take on a higher workload by teaching more classes (yes = 1, no = 0). The third group of dependent variables related to whether the chair's college/university during the previous two years sought to better serve students by offering classes earlier in the morning, later at night, and/or on weekends (yes = 1, no = 0);^{xviii} (2) teaching more classes at off-campus locations (yes = 1, no = 0); and (3) creating new degree programs to meet state and/or community needs (yes = 1, no = 0).

The chairs also were asked for information regarding budget cuts at their institution. Budget cuts were examined because budgetary issues represent one of the more fundamental problems higher education institutions faced between 2008 and 2010 and, as will be discussed below, such cuts are a key to a potential indirect mechanism by which unionization may affect the dependent variables. Specifically, the questionnaire asked if during the previous two years the responding institution experienced moderate to severe budget cuts (coded yes = 1, no = 0).

Previous research suggests that among the dependent variables, unionization would have its greatest effect on salary cuts and freezes since the contracts emerging from collective bargaining almost uniformly set pay scales and limit administrative discretion about adjustments (see Barbezat, 1989, p. 453; Kesselring, 1991, p. 70; Ponak, et. al., 1992, p. 418; Meador and Walters, 1994, p. 383; Ashraf, 1997, p. 445; Porter and Stephens, 2010, p. 16). Ponak, et. al. (1992, p. 418) point out that most contracts also have clauses pertaining to layoffs, but note that such provisions primarily specify the procedures that must be followed when taking such actions and are not meant to foreclose them. Hence, unionization may not affect faculty layoffs. As far as program closings, faculty workloads, extended teaching times, off-campus locations, and new programs are concerned, the research to date points in two possible directions:

Ponak, et. al. (1992, pp. 418-22) Rassuli, et. al. (1999, p. 215), and Porter and Stephens (2010, pp. 15-16) note that faculty generally do not expect collective bargaining to address such issues and that most union agreements do not do so, and Deckop et. al. (1993, p. 94) report that unions do not affect faculty commitments to their teaching and service duties, indicating that there would be no association between unionization and these variables.

Cameron (1985, pp. 389, 400), however, found that unions tend to form when faculty and administrators experience conflict, and a more recent study by Goldey et. al. (2010, p. 343) indicates that faculty are more inclined to favor unionization when they distrust administrators. Wickens (2008, p. 555) also reports that substantial previous research suggests that unions tend to emerge when faculty/administrator relations are strained.

When one considers the wrenching dislocations associated with the cancellation of programs, layoffs, increased teaching loads, and teaching at extended times and at off-campus locations, one might surmise that a cooperative faculty/administrator atmosphere is essential and that the presence of unions could signal that such a climate does not exist. If this is the case, then unionization may be negatively related to these dependent variables.

In addition to these direct effects of unionization, it's important to consider the potential indirect impact from budget cuts by examining a two-step process. The first relates to the possibility that unionization renders budget cuts less likely, either due to the complex contracts produced by collective bargaining or because of administrator fears cuts would lead to union protests that might harm the institution (Deckop, et. al. 1993, p. 85; Porter and Stephens, 2010, p. 4). Second, if budget cuts are a major reason for change, then if a unionized campus faces a lower probability of such cuts, it would be less likely to make changes.

The analysis of the direct and indirect effects of unionization involved the use of logit regression, a technique that assesses how an independent variable affects a dichotomous dependent variable while controlling for the remaining variables in the analysis.^{xix} Assessing the direct and indirect relationships required the use of three basic equations. The first investigated the effect of unionization on the intervening variable, budget cuts. The second examined the effect of unionization on each dependent variable. The third analyzed unionization and budget cuts together for their impacts on the dependent variables. Nie, et. al. (1975, pp. 386-87) and Asher (1976, pp. 11-20) discuss using regression for examining direct and indirect relationships of the sort investigated here. The model used for the first equation was:

$$\text{BudgetCut} = a + b_1\text{Union} + b_2\text{Public/Private} + b_3\text{Rural} + b_4\text{Teaching} + b_5\text{Enrollment} + e$$

The model used to examine cancelled programs provides an example of the second type of equation:

$$\text{Cancel} = a + b_1\text{Union} + b_2\text{Public/Private} + b_3\text{Rural} + b_4\text{Teaching} + b_5\text{Enrollment} + e$$

And finally, an example of the third type of equation is:

$$\text{Cancel} = a + b_1\text{Union} + b_2\text{Public/Private} + b_3\text{Rural} + b_4\text{Teaching} + b_5\text{Enrollment} + b_6\text{BudgetCut} + e$$

Before turning to the findings, it should be noted that when reading Table 1 in the next section, the first row lists the independent variables and the second row contains the logit results for the effect of each variable on budget cuts. In Tables 2 and 3 the independent variables are listed across the top and the dependent variables are on the left side with the results for each logit model running across the rows.

RESULTS

Table 1 has the results for the relationship between unionization and budget cuts. As can be seen, the former has no effect on the latter.^{xx} This casts doubt on the possibility that unionization indirectly affects the dependent variables by way of its effect on budget cuts. Among the remaining variables, one finds that the probability that public institutions would experience budget cuts was .13 greater than for private.

The results for the effects of unionization on the dependent variables without a control for budget cuts are in Table 2. Here one finds that unions decreased both the probability that faculty would receive a pay cut or freeze (by .21) and the chance that classes would be offered at extended hours and/or on weekends (by .15), but increased the likelihood that classes would be taught at off-campus locations (by .11).

Table 2 also indicates that public institutions had a greater probability of pay cuts (.15 higher), of program cancellations (a rise of .13), of higher teaching loads (a .12 increase), and of classes taught off campus (.13 higher). In addition, each unit increase in an institution's size produced a .06 greater probability that it would offer classes at extended times, and teaching-oriented colleges/universities were .10 more likely to create new degree programs to meet community needs.

The final set of results in Table 3 shows that budget cuts increase the probabilities of pay cuts or freezes (by .27), faculty layoffs (by .28), program cancellations (by .17), higher teaching loads (by .08), and teaching at extended hours (by .07). Budget cuts also reduced (by .07) the chance that new degree programs would be set up to help the community; however, these effects were independent of any prior relationship with unionization. In addition, one should note that controlling for budget cuts eliminated the impact of the public/private variable on pay actions and program cancellations, suggesting that the effect of public/private on these variables is indirect and results from the effect of public/private on budget cuts.

The implications of these results are discussed in the following section.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

This research used a survey of department chairs to assess how academic unions affected some of the problems colleges/universities faced between 2008 and 2010. While the current data and research design did not allow for the examination of how recessions affect the way unions operate in higher education, it was possible to gain some understanding of how unionization impacted such things as faculty employment

issues, programmatic and teaching load decisions, how student and community needs could be addressed, and budget cutting.^{xxi} As discussed earlier, these are among the pressing issues many observers and politicians argue unions prevent higher education institutions from dealing with.

The results revealed that, with the exception of the tendency for unionized facilities to experience fewer pay cuts and freezes and less teaching at extended times, unionization had few effects on the way institutions handled things. That is, the findings indicate that unionization did not hamper the ability to cut budgets, to cancel or suspend academic programs, to lay off faculty, to increase faculty teaching loads, or to develop new degree programs to meet community needs. Additionally, unionization was associated with a greater tendency toward teaching classes at more convenient off-campus locations. These findings call into question the oft-heard political assertions about union obstructionism.

Of course, it should be recognized that further research is needed. In particular, the examination of efficiency and cost savings might focus on how higher educational institutions are handling new educational technologies, how cost effective these technologies are, and on the role unions play when these technologies are introduced to a campus. And the evaluation of student services might examine exactly what academic programs colleges and universities have created in recent years, how they contribute to the students and/or communities they serve, how well they perform as regards student graduation and employment rates, and what role unions played in creating these programs. Beyond this, it would be useful to investigate whether unionization affects the connections colleges and universities have with employers in the private and public sectors and how students are affected.

In closing, this research provides a beginning toward answering questions central to the national debate on higher education and to the role of unions. Much work remains, especially when one considers the upward trend in the costs colleges and universities face and the low probability that governmental institutions will substantially increase their contributions toward defraying the price of a college degree in the near future (see Belkin, 2013a, pp. A1, A5; Belkin, 2013b, p. A3).^{xxii} One thing this research suggests, however, is that an excessive focus on limiting academic unions probably will make a minimal contribution to solving higher education's problems.

TABLE 1: THE EFFECTS OF UNIONIZATION ON BUDGET CUTS

Union	Public	Rural	Size	Teaching	Constant	Cox and Snell R ²	Nagelkerke R ²
.12 (.42) [nc]	.76 ^a (.39) [.13]	.02 (.32) [nc]	.04 (.20) [nc]	-.42 (.31) [nc]	1.07 ^c (.42)	.04	.07

Note: N = 336, a is $p < .10$, b is $p < .05$, c is $p < .01$, and d is $p < .001$.

The numbers in parentheses are standard errors, and the figures in brackets indicate the change in the probability of the dependent variable resulting from a change in the independent variable (nc = no significant change).

TABLE 2: THE EFFECTS OF UNIONIZATION WITHOUT A CONTROL FOR BUDGET CUTS

	Union	Public	Rural	Size	Teaching	Constant	Cox and Snell R ²	Nagelkerke R ²
Pay Actions (N=336)	-.92 ^c (.32) [-.21]	.68 ^b (.33) [.15]	.11 (.28) [nc]	-.05 (.16) [nc]	.26 (.27) [nc]	.46 (.34)	.04	.05
Lay-offs (N=334)	-.22 (.36) [nc]	.24 (.36) [nc]	.41 (.30) [nc]	.06 (.17) [nc]	-.20 (.31) [nc]	-1.47 ^d (.39)	.01	.02
Cancel Program (N=333)	-.43 (.39) [nc]	.79 ^b (.39) [.13]	.18 (.32) [nc]	.17 (.18) [nc]	.27 (.33) [nc]	-2.29 ^d (.45)	.03	.06
Teaching Load (N=336)	.13 (.44) [nc]	1.22 ^c (.47) [.12}	-.36 (.40) [nc]	-.35 (.22) [nc]	.35 (.39) [nc]	-2.13 ^d (.52)	.03	.05
Extend Teach (N=332)	-.65 ^a (.33) [-.15]	.24 (.32) [nc]	-.19 (.27) [nc]	.27 ^a (.15) [.06]	-.06 (.27) [nc]	-1.02 ^c (.35)	.04	.05
Classes Off Campus (N=333)	.55 ^a (.32) [.11]	.68 ^a (.35) [.13]	-.10 (.29) [nc]	-.04 (.17) [nc]	.28 (.29) [nc]	-1.50 ^d (.38)	.03	.05
New Program (N=332)	.24 (.31) [nc]	.10 (.31) [nc]	-.38 (.26) [nc]	.15 (.15) [nc]	.43 ^a (.26) [.10]	-.15 (.33)	.02	.03

Note: a is $p < .10$, b is $p < .05$, c is $p < .01$, and d is $p < .001$.

The numbers in parentheses are standard errors, and the figures in brackets indicate the change in the probability of the dependent variable resulting from a change in the independent variable (nc = no significant change).

TABLE 3: THE EFFECTS OF UNIONIZATION WITH A CONTROL FOR BUDGET CUTS

	Union	Public	Rural	Size	Teaching	Budget Cuts	Constant	Cox and Snell R²	Nagelkerke R²
Pay Actions (N=336)	-1.07 ^c (.34) [-.24]	.26 (.36) [nc]	.07 (.30) [nc]	-.08 (.17) [nc]	.30 (.20) [nc]	1.19 ^c (.20) [.27]	-1.68 ^c (.51)	.14	.19
Lay-offs (N=334)	-.27 (.39) [nc]	-.47 (.42) [nc]	.40 (.32) [nc]	.04 (.18) [nc]	-.32 (.33) [nc]	1.56 ^d (.26) [.28]	-4.48 ^d (.67)	.14	.22
Cancel Program (N=333)	-.47 (.40) [nc]	.29 (.43) [nc]	.13 (.33) [nc]	.19 (.19) [nc]	.28 (.35) [nc]	1.06 ^d (.25) [.17]	-4.39 ^d (.67)	.10	.15
Teaching Load (N=336)	.10 (.44) [nc]	.83 ^a (.49) [.08]	-.24 (.40) [nc]	-.28 (.23) [nc]	.34 (.39) [nc]	.75 ^c (.28) [.08]	-3.70 ^c (.75)	.04	.09
Extend Teach (N=332)	-.64 ^a (.34) [-.15]	.04 (.33) [nc]	-.13 (.28) [nc]	.30 ^a (.16) [.07]	-.03 (.27) [nc]	.31 ^a (.18) [.07]	-1.67 ^d (.48)	.05	.07
Classes Off Campus (N=333)	.57 ^a (.32) [.11]	.61 ^a (.35) [.12]	-.08 (.29) [nc]	.00 (.17) [nc]	.32 (.29) [nc]	.02 (.19) [nc]	-1.63 ^d (.51)	.03	.05
New Program (N=332)	.26 (.32) [nc]	.18 (.32) [nc]	-.39 (.26) [nc]	.17 (.15) [nc]	.44 ^a (.26) [.11]	-.29 ^a (.17) [-.07]	.37 (.45)	.03	.04

Note: a is $p < .10$, b is $p < .05$, c is $p < .01$, and d is $p < .001$.

The numbers in parentheses are standard errors, and the figures in brackets indicate the change in the probability of the dependent variable resulting from a change in the independent variable (nc = no significant change).

APPENDIX A: THE SURVEY INSTRUMENT

2010 ACADEMIC SURVEY: Please circle your answer and skip items you cannot answer.

The highest degree offered by my department is: Bachelors Masters Doctoral

The number of tenure track and tenured faculty in my department is: 1-10 11-20 21-30 over 30

My college/university is: Public Private

The location of my college/university is: Urban Suburban Rural

My college/university has a religious affiliation: Yes No

The faculty at my college/university is: Unionized Not Unionized

Total enrollment at my institution is: under 5000 5000-10,000 10,001-20,000 over 20,000

Over the past two years, at my institution:

Faculty experienced a pay freeze or pay cut: Yes No

Classes have been taught earlier in the morning, later at night, and/or on week-ends: Yes No

More classes have been taught at off-campus locations: Yes No

Degree programs have been canceled and/or suspended: Yes No

New degree programs have been created to meet state and/or community needs: Yes No

Budget cuts have been: Few Moderate Severe

Lay-offs of faculty have been: Few Moderate Severe

The teaching load of tenured and tenure track faculty has: Increased Been constant Decreased

(SURVEY CONTINUED)

At my college/university:

The most important factor in tenure decisions is the candidate's research productivity: Yes No

The most important factor in tenure decisions is the candidate's teaching record: Yes No

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ENDNOTES

¹ The AAUP (2011, p. 17) depicts several governors and former governors as hostile to unions. Included are Mitch Daniels (Indiana), Mitt Romney (Massachusetts), Rick Snyder (Michigan), Tim Pawlenty (Minnesota), Christine Todd Whitman and Chris Christie (New Jersey), John Kasich (Ohio), and Scott Walker (Wisconsin). For examples of discussions and research relating to public employee compensation questions, see Keefe (2010) and Schmitt (2010). A description of the politically contentious atmosphere regarding unions and higher education is provided by Benedict and Benedict (2012).

² SB5 was defeated in a statewide referendum in 2011.

³ Economists agree that the recession began in December 2007 and formally ended in June 2009. The AAUP (2011, p. 4) reports that the impact on higher education continued throughout 2010. The Pew Research Center (2010), Samuelson (2010), Trumbull (2010), and Warner (2010) also argue that the recession's effects were felt in 2010.

⁴ These cuts were on top of a twenty-year trend toward less state spending on higher education and a nine percent reduction in public spending between 2001 and 2008 (Martin and Lehren, 2012; Tandberg, 2010, p. 417).

⁵ The ongoing nature of these problems is illustrated by controversies over budgetary disputes and pressures to serve students more efficiently that led to the dismissals and resignations since November 2011 of presidents at the Universities of Oregon, Wisconsin, and Illinois and at Louisiana State University. Additionally, presidents at the Universities of Texas and Virginia clashed with governing boards for the same reasons. See Lewin (2012) and Nicas and McWhirter (2012).

⁶ The Miami University Institutional Review Board for Human Subjects Research approved this project.

⁷ The survey was sent to political science department chairs because the authors are political scientists and one of the authors has previous experience working with the APSA list to conduct national higher education surveys. Since this analysis focuses on whether unions hampered colleges and universities as they responded to the many challenges posed between 2008 and 2010, the institutional level data acquired from department chairs was considered appropriate. It should be noted that in their study of collective bargaining in higher education, Porter and Stephens (2010) acquired their institutional data from a survey of college/university presidents and chairs of faculty Senates. Such a procedure was not employed herein because a pilot survey of the chief administrators (usually presidents or provosts) in the authors' home state yielded a response rate of less than 5 percent.

⁸ Using a chair survey raises the question of whether chairs can provide an accurate picture of the events that transpire at their college/university. Research shows they are well positioned to do so. Hubbell and Homer (1997, p. 209) report that chairs are a key part of an institution's "management team," Leslie (1973, p. 423) and Wildavsky (1992, p. 87) note that chairs must understand all parts of their college/university in order to do their jobs, and Knight and Hoken (1985, p. 677) assert that chairs do up to 80 percent of the administrative work in academia. Hence, by virtue of their position chairs must understand other departments and administrative offices and must be familiar with the issues confronting their institution. Moreover, the authors' previous research shows that chairs are an excellent source for the information needed to conduct the current research (see Rothgeb, et. al., 2007; Rothgeb and Burger, 2009; Marshal and Rothgeb, 2011; Rothgeb, 2014).

⁹ The APSA maintains a list of political science and related departments (i.e. History and Political Science, Government, Political Science and Public Administration, etc.) in the United States. The APSA seeks to ensure that all such departments are included. Many of those who research issues pertaining to the profession of higher education employ the APSA list and/or lists from similar professional organizations. Examples of such research include Euchner and Jewell (1989), Park and Riggs (1993), Dolan, et. al. (1997), Schlozman (1998), Premeaux and Mondy (2002), Fuerstman and Lavertu (2005), Rothgeb, et. al. (2007), Hartlaub and Lancaster (2008), Rothgeb and Burger (2009), and Hesli, et. al. (2012). While the use of lists from professional associations is a standard procedure, it is important to note that the findings obtained from such surveys may reflect a bias due to the omission of some departments or institutions. Hence, the reader should use caution when examining the results.

¹⁰ Response rates for professional higher education surveys typically range between 18 percent (Hartlaub and Lancaster, 2008) and 40 percent (Deckop, et. al., 1993). The 30 percent response rate obtained herein falls near the middle of this range. It is important to note that the responses from surveys of this sort are not random. Since the survey was conducted anonymously (as required by the Miami University Institutional Review Board for Human Subjects research), it was not possible to compare the characteristics of the respondents and non-respondents. Thus, while the results from this survey provide a useful starting point for examining how unions affect the dependent variables examined herein, additional analysis is required.

¹¹ It should be noted that the proportion of unionized institutions nationwide varies over time as some colleges/universities join and leave the ranks of the unionized.

¹² Teaching as the most important factor in a tenure case was meant to assess the institution's commitment to teaching as its primary mission. To evaluate the effects of alternative control variables, the analysis was conducted with controls for research as the most important factor in a tenure case and for whether the responding institution had a religious affiliation. In neither case were the results affected.

¹³ The public/private variable also was included because, as Metchick and Singh (2004) and Benedict and Benedict (2012) note, in *National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) v. Yeshiva* (1980) the United States Supreme Court ruled that faculty at private institutions could not unionize if they played a managerial role. This decision made the organization of unions at private colleges and universities more difficult since it required faculty to demonstrate that they played no role as managers, but the decision did not directly affect publicly funded institutions since they are subject to state unionization laws. The public/private variable is meant to control for this difference.

¹⁴ Kay (1991, p. 9) and Pampel (2000, p. 1) point out that employing dichotomous data is a time-honored and useful approach to research that can yield valuable information about the relationships between variables. Regarding the questionnaire design, Babbie (1973, p. 143) states that “the respondent should be able to read an item quickly, understand its intent, and select or provide an answer without difficulty.” Agnew and Pyke (2007, p. 217) agree, arguing that the key to constructing successful questionnaires is to include items that can be answered without forcing the interviewee to do research before answering it. The scales employed in the present survey were designed to follow these recommendations. It also is important to note that the surveys went to professional political scientists who were instructed to “skip any items you cannot answer” and omit “any part of [the] survey [that] makes you uncomfortable or [that] you find inappropriate.” Given these considerations, it seems safe to assume that if the survey items or the potential responses accompanying those items were problematic, the chairs either would have refused to answer or would have commented on any problems they detected. This did not happen.

¹⁵ The terms “moderate” and “severe” were employed to distinguish the substantial from the negligible. That is, to capture a situation in which a relatively large proportion of faculty members are affected as opposed to one in which very few or none are impacted. Regarding budget cuts (see below in the text), the goal is to distinguish fairly large scale cuts from more normal circumstances (i.e. saving money by cutting the consumption of paper by using e files).

¹⁶ Although pay cuts and pay freezes are different, both restrict faculty salaries and the AAUP treats both as indicators that an institution is engaging in an act that undermines appropriate faculty compensation (see AAUP, 2009, p. 18; 2010, p. 7; 2011, p. 5)

¹⁷ It should be noted that suspending and cancelling a degree program would have the same basic short-term effect since in either case the program would not be available to students and the faculty in the program would confront the need to rearrange their professional schedules. Indeed, the use of “suspension” as opposed to “cancellation” primarily reflects institutional preferences about how it refers to the act of downgrading a degree program.

¹⁸ This variable represents an institution’s attempt to make an education more convenient for students by scheduling classes on weekends and/or at times of day that better fit students’ schedules. See Devise (2009) for a discussion of how colleges have been forced to confront this issue.

¹⁹ For discussions of logit, see Pampel (2000) and Menard (2002).

²⁰ Similar results were obtained when parallel analysis was conducted that controlled for whether the construction of new facilities on campus and the number of new students at the institution were increasing, decreasing, or constant.

²¹ As one of the anonymous reviewers noted, an assessment of how recessions affected the role of unions in higher education would require surveys from recessionary and non-recessionary periods so that a pooled cross-temporal data set could be created and a unions/recession interaction term could be incorporated into the analysis.

²² The Delta Cost Project has estimated that higher education will confront financial challenges for many years to come (Desroucher, et. al., 2010, p. 5).