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WHAT DO THEY HAVE THAT I HAVEN'T GOT?
COMPARISON SURVEY DATA OF THE RESOURCES AND SUPPORT SYSTEMS OF
TOP CEDA PROGRAMS AND DIRECTORS¹

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John Dewey once said that the net worth of education is not always measured in terms of the student's success or failure. Sometimes the educational process itself can be of greater benefit to the student than the subject matter taught. Forensics is designed to teach. Those of us who direct programs from an educational perspective, would argue that no other activity can better educate our students to think critically, write clearly and speak effectively.

Administrators are quick to extol the virtues of this viewpoint. However, it seems that no matter how educational an activity "might" be, it must be justified in terms of its expense to education ratio. The condition of America's institutions of higher learning reflects a system in the midst of financial crisis. To merit further administrative support, such as an increase in funding and/or resources, "competitive" programs must not only have educational merit, but must also achieve at least some degree of "success." The question is how does one measure success? The administration's answer is often tied to numbers: numbers that program directors are hard pressed to supply. How much will it cost? How many students are involved? What kind of budget do the other programs have? How does their ranking compare to ours? What do they have that we don't and how does it contribute to their success? What kind of resources do we need to build or strengthen a forensics program to a comparable level with at least a chance of equivalent success? This article proceeds from the assumption that the Top 20 programs in the U.S. and the Top 10 programs within each region, as reported by the final 1990 CEDA rankings, have achieved at least some degree of "measurable" success. Administrations often seem to recognize high rankings as a "measure" of success. If directors could provide their administrations with comparison data from the nation's leading programs, perhaps this would satisfy the "evidentiary press." Therefore, this article seeks to provide new and small programs with hard data they can use to more effectively plead their case. Larger and more successful programs may find the data useful in their efforts to maintain the status quo within their support systems.

In addition to program data, there is a section on program directors. Increases in rank, tenure, release time, and salary are

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difficult for forensics directors to negotiate, because they are often based upon everything but their forensics contribution. However, there does seem to be a relationship between perceptions of coaching a successful program and increased compensation in the form of salaries and release time. Again, specific data would be useful. This article seeks to provide the reader with the data necessary to improve the effectiveness of future negotiations.

METHODOLOGY

A listing of all colleges and universities who had paid membership dues for the 1989-90 season was requested from the National CEDA Executive-Secretary. Surveys were mailed out to 324 CEDA member programs. A total of 302 responses were received. Completed survey forms were received from 278 actively competing programs. Eleven directors reported that their forensics programs had been deleted by their departments or administrations. Three programs had switched to NDT. Five programs reported that they were dues paying members only and did not actively compete. Follow up calls provided another five completed forms. Four programs ranked within the top 20 refused to contribute data.

The final CEDA rankings for 1989-90 were used to identify the Top 20 programs in the country and the Top 10 programs within the nine, recognized regions. To assure confidentiality, all data are reported using aggregate means. In this way, no single program's data can be identified.

For a complete comparison, three sets of means are provided: 1.) the nation's Top 20; 2.) the individual region's Top 10; and, 3.) the collective average of all Top 10 programs from the nine regions. Since every program ranked within the Top 20 was also ranked within the Top 10 of its respective region, the third comparison represents cross-regional, aggregate data for the top ninety programs across the U.S. By providing three sets of means for comparison, it is possible for readers to compare their program with the aggregate mean of programs in the Top 20, the Top 10 within their regions, or with the collective, top ninety programs from across the U.S.

The directors' data are reported using an identical format. However, it should be noted that there were eleven programs which had no formal director during the survey period. In the majority of cases, these programs were run by collective student input. In addition, five programs, which were in transition, yielded uncharacteristic data. The effects of these data are noted under Table 3.

TABLE 1

PARTICIPATION:

REGION:	PROGRAMS:				Ratio ⁴	Part. in CEDA NAT's	SQUADS: Average number of students	
	% who return	Programs Average # of Open	Average # of Teams: Reported number of Novice LD tournaments	Ratio ⁴				
TOP 20	.83	16/201	21	4	0	1:1	100%	27
JrColl(0)2	.71	7/10	11	2	1	8:1	.145	17
SEast(2)	.84	7/10	15	3	0	3:2	.86	24
SCentral(5)	.83	7/10	15	3	1	2:1	.71	13
SWest(2)	.58	7/10	17	5	1	3:1	.86	57
NEast(3)	.66	6/10	16	3	4	3:1	100	28
NCentral(1)	.71	6/10	15	2	1	2:1	.50	31
NWest(1)	.68	6/10	16	3	0	2:1	.83	24
ECentral(3)	.81	6/10	15	2	0	4:1	.83	19
Rocky Mt(3)	.72	5/10	20	3	3	3:1	.80	26
Average3	.69	7/10	17	2	1	4:1	.75	19

1 278 of 324 colleges and universities with a competitive CEDA program responded. Statistical representation

is based upon aggregate means of the nation's top 20 CEDA programs and/or the regions' top 10 programs of 1989-90.

2 The number in parenthesis immediately after the region's name represents the number of programs from that region that finished in the CEDA top 20.

3 Represents aggregate means for all ninety programs ranked within the top 10 of their respective regions.

4 Ratio represents the number of state and regional tournaments attended as compared to the number of national tournaments.

5 While this number may seem low, 87% of the Junior Colleges reported attended the National Ceda Novice Championships or Phi Rho Pi.

RESULTS/DISCUSSION

Data are fairly simplistic and straight-forward. The goal of this article is to provide practical information for fledgling and/or transitional programs, which they can use to craft a more persuasive argument for increased resources and funding. The data is simple and should speak for itself; therefore, few comments are necessary. However, some discussion might provide insight and ease in accessing information from the tables and in emphasizing what the author considers phenomenon worthy of note.

It's interesting to note that the region with the smallest number of students participating, the South Central, was the most successful in terms of programs ranked within the Top 20 with five programs earning that distinction. Of course, they also had one of the highest return rates at 83%. They were also "top heavy" in more seasoned teams with a ratio of 3:3:1.

TABLE 2: SUPPORT SYSTEMS:

REGION:	GRAD. ASST.	FUNDING:		SCHOLARSHIPS:			COURSE CREDIT:		admin. fees	alum	SGA
		Budget:	High:	Low:	Source:	% who grant	% who grant				
%	no.	%	F	P	H	%	%				
TOP 20		\$41,346	\$100,000	\$18,000		.56	.11	.11	.22		
.63	2.5	.50	.37	.50	.88	.59	>3hrs				
JrColl		16,571	27,000	9,000		.40	.30	0	.30		
0	0	.57	100	.75	.50	100	>3				
SEast		39,500	80,000	15,000		.36	.09	.27	.27		
.50	2	.71	.20	.20	.80	.50	<3				
SCentral		31,750	65,500	19,000		.40	.30	.10	.20		
.71	2	.71	.60	.60	.60	100	>3				
SWest		32,371	100,000	18,000		.30	.50	.10	.10		
.43	5	0	0	0	0	.86	<3				
NEast		22,200	35,000	10,000		.33	.22	.22	.22		
.50	2	.33	.50	0	.50	.33	<3				
NCentral		18,858	70,000	8,000		.43	.29	.14	.14		
.50	1	.66	0	0	100	100	>3				
NWest		33,540	70,000	10,000		.63	.13	.13	.13		
.50	2	.66	.25	0	100	.83	>3				
ECentral		20,666	25,000	16,000		.83	0	0	.17		
.33	1	.66	.50	.25	.75	.66	>3				
Rocky MT		43,720	70,000	27,500		.83	.17	0	0		
.40	2	.80	.75	.50	.75	.43	>3				
Average		27,243	n/a	n/a		.55	.22	.08	.15		
.37	1	.59	.31	.16	.75	.75	>3				

* e.g. .50% of the Top 20 programs granted scholarships. Of the programs offering scholarships, .37% had full-time, .50% had part-time and .88% had at least partial scholarships available.

As a rule, larger programs, with an average of 19 students, with a return rate of at least 69% seem to represent a threshold for success. Competitive participation is also important. Success at the regional level was satisfied by attending an average of 17 tournaments with a 4:1 regional to national tournament ratio. Seventy-five percent of the regional group attended CEDA Nationals. Top 20 success required an average of 21 tournaments with a 1:1 ratio. National competition is critical for preparing a program to compete effectively at the CEDA National Tournament. No program was included in the "successful" grouping that did not compete in at least three national tournaments. One-hundred percent of the Top 20 programs who reported competed at the CEDA Nationals.

In Table 2, the data would seem to suggest a couple of things concerning funding. First, the average budget for the "successful" ninety is reported at \$27,243.00. All programs ranked with both TOP 20 and regional success were funded significantly above this figure with the exception of one. No program funded below this level would have made the CEDA TOP 50 list. While they may have been competitive within their region, they would not have been successful outside of their region. The Top 20 budget average is reported as \$41,346.00. It should also be understood that these programs had a significant commitment from their administrations who contributed 55% of their funding base.

Sixty-three percent of the Top 20 programs averaged 2.5 graduate assistants. This figure drops to 37% for the collective who averaged one graduate assistant per program. The argument could be made that graduate assistants make an important contribution towards a program's success. The data would seem to contribute to this argument. First, the most successful region, the South Central, has the highest percentage of programs with graduate assistants assigned at 71%. Second, a review of the survey sheets shows that 82% of the bottom five programs within eight of the regions have no graduate assistants assigned. It should come as no surprise that scholarships and course credit hours for participation are important to a program's success. Ten of the Top 20 programs grant scholarships to not less than 50% of their squads with 88% of those programs offering at least partial scholarships. Only two regions, the South West and the North East, with 0% and 33% respectively, have been successful without significant scholarship programs. It should be noted, however, that if very few or none of the programs within a region offer scholarships, no program is competing from a position of disadvantage within that region. This explanation is mitigated by the fact that these two regions successfully ranked five programs within the top 20. This would seem to indicate that they were not at a disadvantage when competing outside of the region. However, since winning rounds from regional and national tournaments are scored identically, it is impossible to verify. "Points is points," as one director reported.

TABLE 3: DEGREE/POSITION:

REGION:	SALARY:	RELEASE TENURE:	TIME:	DEGREE: RANK:					POSITION:		
				BA	M	MFA	ABD	PhD	JD	Fac	Staff
G/A	Other	Yes	track	No	Ins.	Asst.	Asso.	Full			
TOP 20	\$38,920	.56	+3hrs	0	.31	.06	.38	.19	.06	.88	0
.06	.06	.25	.25	.50	.38	.31	.13	.19			
Jr Coll	32,728	100	-3	.14	.71	.14	0	0	0	100	0
0	0	.71	.14	.14	.57	0	.14	.29			
SEast	25,428	.53	+3	0	.43	.14	.29	.14	0	.71	0
.14	.14	.14	.14	.71	.57	.29	0	.14			
SCentral	21,416	.94	+3	.14	.43	0	.29	0	.14	.71	.14
.14	0	.14	.43	.43	.43	.43	.14	0			
SWest	36,014	.56	-3	0	.29	.14	0	.57	0	.86	.14
0	0	.43	.14	.43	.57	.14	.29	0			
NEast	12,800	.86	-3	.33	.33	0	.33	0	0	.67	0
.17	.17	0	.33	.66	.40	.40	.40	0			
NCentral	30,833	.50	-3	0	.33	0	0	.67	0	.67	.17
.17	0	.33	.17	.50	.50	.33	0	.17			
NWest	29,527	.83	+3	0	.17	0	.33	.50	0	.83	0
.17	0	.50	.33	.17	.17	.33	.33	.17			
ECentral	34,366	.71	+3	0	.17	.17	.33	.33	0	100	0
0	0	.33	.33	.33	.17	.17	.17	.33			
Rocky Mt	39,600	.56	+3	0	.40	.20	0	.40	0	.80	0
0	.20	.60	.20	.20	0	.40	.20	.40			
Average	\$31,190	.74	+3	.05	.41	.07	.15	.31	.01	.81	.05
.09	.06	.33	.27	.40	.40	.29	.16	.16			

1 Salary averages for the NEast and SCentral regions are figured using 2 graduate assistants and 3 nonfaculty positions. For full-time faculty members the salary averages are NE: \$30,100; SC: \$24,003.

2 Release time; e.g. 44% of the Top 20 directors receive more than 3 credit hours in release time.

Table 3 reports current salaries, release time, degree, and employment status. The average salary for the top, regional program directors across the country is \$31,190.00. Top 20 directors received an average salary of \$38,920.00. This represents a difference of \$7,730.00. This difference might be used to argue that increased perceptions of success might be translated into dollar amounts. Additionally, while it is not reported in Table 3, directors whose programs were ranked in the Top 20 or the top 5 of their respective regions were significantly more likely (79%) to receive an additional stipend for debate activities.

The salary figure for the top, regional directors reflects the aggregate mean for all directors not ranked in the Top 20. Top 20 directors were factored separately to avoid redundancy, since all

Top 20 programs were also ranked within the top 10 of their regions. No claim is made that regional differences in salary based upon demographic factors such as cost of living do not contribute to this variance. However, both salary figures are based upon cross-regional data; thus variance due to regional differences in cost of living should be minimized.

The majority of successful directors receive a reduction in their class load of at least three credit hours per academic semester. Seventy-four percent of the average received four to six hours per year of release time during the survey period. There is nothing remarkable concerning degrees held with the majority of program directors holding a Master's or Ph.D. Age was not surveyed. However, with 38% of the Top 20 directors currently holding an ABD and 31% holding a Master's for a total of 69%, the argument that an interest in and commitment to forensics is pursued early within the professional career might have at least some credence.

Eighty-eight percent of the Top 20 directors and 81% of the regional directors currently have faculty status. While it is not reported in Table 3, the survey data indicates that 91% are employed in a full-time, permanent status. This would lend support to the argument that programs which are constantly in transition (e.g. graduate assistants and temporary positions) may find success more elusive. While this data would be more accurate if measured over time, it would seem to indicate that as directors change, programs lose continuity and momentum, which is then transferred into rankings.

Rank and tenure demonstrate no unusual distribution. The North East Region is atypical in that the majority of the directors within the region are non-tenure track (66%). Both tenure and salary are affected by the number of director positions filled by graduate assistants and non-faculty positions in the North East and South Central regions. Adjusted figures are noted.

Table 4 reports publication and convention presentation activity. Top 20 and individual, region aggregate means cannot be compared directly to those figures listed as "Average" in the table. The Top 20 and individual, region figures represent totals, while the "Average" figures represent a typical forensics director from across all regions.

Sixty-five percent of the forensics directors within the top ninety programs in the country publish or make convention presentations. Each director averages one article in a forensics journal, one article in a speech journal, two regional convention presentations, three national presentations and one international presentation. It should also be noted that high figures within regions are most often accounted for by a single individual.

TABLE 4: PUBLICATIONS/PRESENTATIONS

REGION: Presentations:	%ofDirectors who publish or present.	Publications:		Convention	
		Forensics Journals	Speech Journals	Regional	National
Inter.					
TOP 20 32	.63	66	11	38	67
JrColl 0	.14	2	1	7	1
SEast 0	.50	6	2	12	7
SCentral 0	.29	2	1	7	3
SWest 4	.86	26	1	39	44
NEast 0	.50	3	0	4	2
NCentral 30	.83	18	14	32	40
NWest 2	100	7	7	30	32
ECentral 0	.83	3	13	11	21
RockyMt 6	.80	8	8	12	17
Average 1	.65	1	1	2	3

Top 20 and region data reflect total figures. 63 percent of the directors in the Top 20 are published for a total of 66 forensics journal articles.

The Average reflects the aggregate mean of the top 90 programs and represents the typical director's publishing and presenting record.

Top 20 directors do not have much higher averages. Sixty-three percent of the Top 20 directors publish or present for a total of 66 forensics and 11 speech publications. This averages to four forensics articles and less than one speech article per Top 20 director. Again, three directors skewed the results for the group with numerous publications and presentations. A very persuasive argument can be made that "successful" forensics directors, as a group, do not publish extensively.

CONCLUSIONS

All data are descriptive and inferences must be made with some degree of caution. The nature of the study is not without limitations. First, the sample is somewhat skewed by self-selection bias. One-fifth of the Top 20 programs refused to supply data for the study. Participation for each region varies from a low of 50% to a high of 80%. However, cooperation from the top ten national programs and the top five programs in each region was excellent. In the majority of cases, the data is very representative of those top programs.

Second, there is also the issue of data collection design. All data is self-reported, which brings up questions of reliability and validity. It is impossible to verify the data supplied through any independent means. However, a cross-check of the survey sheets and the additional comments from directors failed to yield any uncharacteristic data except in one case. That program director was contacted by phone and the information was verified. In the final analysis, all of the information contained within the tables is only as good as the participants' honesty.

Third, the use of aggregate means to report the data somewhat limits the level of statistical sophistication. The tables are descriptive. Direct correlations through statistical analysis are not possible; and therefore, again, inferences must be made with caution. It is also impossible to compare your program with any one program in particular. It should be understood by the reader that this data set represents general trends.

Fourth, this data set represents a snapshot in time. The data was collected in only one survey year. Rankings, budgets, directors and participants change from year to year. Some programs that participated in the survey were in transition and supplied uncharacteristic data. Fortunately, only one program qualified for inclusion in the "successful" program grouping and the impact of that data was mitigated through the design of reporting aggregate means. All other uncharacteristic data (Table 3) is noted. Long-term predictions are not possible and any generalizations concerning the "health" of a region or of CEDA debate as an activity should be made with extreme caution.

Finally, it cannot be assumed that pouring money and resources into a program directly correlates with success. If every program had a \$50,000 budget, ten senior teams and lots of coaching experience on staff, they could not all make the Top 20. There will always be "winners" and "losers." You can't "buy" success. However, without at least an adequate funding and resource base, one cannot reasonably expect to "earn" success. The nature of the CEDA ranking system makes it impossible to compete with the "big boys" without some kind of resource base to travel and offer incentives to prospective competitors.

With the above limitations in mind, some general conclusions can be advanced. At the foundational level, a reasonable resource base is essential for "success" as it is defined in this study. Programs which were ranked with regional success averaged funding

at the \$27,243.00 level. Top 20 programs reported average budgets of \$41,346.00. It is important to note that only one program of the top ninety, which was funded below the \$20,000.00 level, was competitive in the Top 20 and across all other regions. Money may not directly correlate with success, but without it, success will be elusive, at best.

The relationship between graduate assistants, scholarships and course credit and the success of a program is less obvious, but must have some impact. As success increases so does the number of graduate assistants. A comparison of successful programs to less successful ones demonstrates that as success increases, so do the incentives offered by that program. The resulting inference may not have statistical power and must be made with caution, but without qualified coaching assistance and incentives to keep the students interested, success will be difficult to achieve.

Finally, competitive success is based on active participation. Regional success required participation in an average of seventeen tournaments at a four regional to one national ratio. Top 20 programs averaged twenty-one tournaments in a one to one ratio. No program that competed in less than fourteen tournaments was included in the success grouping. Again, caution is imperative in making generalizations from the data set, but without competitive experience a team cannot grow in ability.

Successful directors also exhibit some common characteristics. First, those who direct forensics programs know the tremendous commitment of time required to effectively discharge their duties. They function under a completely different set of time constraints than other members of their departments. Every director of the successful program grouping was granted at least some release time. Fifty-three percent reported significant reductions, as much as a half load, in exchange for coaching debate.

Second, additional incentives, in the form of debate stipends or portions of their regular salaries specifically tied to their debate activities, were reported by seventy-five percent of the successful directors. Though not reported in this data set, as salaries went down and additional stipends were absent, a drop in rankings was observed. While a direct correlation is not supported by this data set, the implication is obvious to those of us in the profession.

Finally, the "publish or perish" paradigm appears to function at a somewhat more relaxed level. Forty percent of the directors in the successful grouping are not in a tenure track position and it is not an issue. However, thirty-three percent of the directors are tenured with an average of only two publications. It is important to note that three directors skewed the results with several publications to their credit. Six directors were tenured with no publications.

In summary, inferences concerning directors must be made with caution. However, two common characteristics seem supported by the data. First, having the time available to focus attention on the director's coaching responsibilities is important to success. Release time and a lesser commitment to publication seem to provide

at least some of the time necessary. Second, some incentives, such as a stipend, seem to have at least a motivational impact to excel.

In conclusion, this study does not reveal anything that a seasoned director didn't already suspect. It is full of limitations. Direct Correlations are impossible. Caution is advised when making generalizations of any kind. However, the data set should prove useful to program directors of smaller, less "successful" programs who are trying to convince their administrations to commit more resources to build a more successful program. Larger programs, already included in the successful grouping, may also find the data useful in maintaining their current level of support within their resource bases. Finally, the data should prove interesting as a snapshot of the status of the Cross Examination Debate Association.