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Responding to mission creep : faculty members as cosmopolitan agents

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**Abstract**

Across the field of U.S. higher education, regional teaching and comprehensive universities are striving for national research status. This tendency has most often been explored at the organizational level, but in this paper, the views and actions of faculty members are the unit of analysis. Based on qualitative data, I put forward a three pronged frame-work that organizes overarching faculty responses to one university?s transition. I focus most specifically on one faculty response, which I call operationalizing in order to show how faculty members take agency in a moment of complex change that illuminates tensions between faculty, university leaders and the field of higher education, more generally. Contributing to the literature on faculty agency, mission creep/striving and change in higher education, I unpack specific ideas and practices that faculty used as they took agency over their careers. (HRK / Abstract übernommen) Gonzales, Leslie D., E-Mail: leslieg@clemson.edu