Dr. Philip H. Birnbaum  
Indiana University  
School of Business  
Bloomington/Indianapolis  
10th and Fee Lane  
Bloomington, Indiana 47405  

Dear Dr. Birnbaum:

Thank you for your reprint on status con/discordance. (Quite possibly I was a denizen of one cell of your study as a member of a number of interdisciplinary efforts at Stanford until 1978).

I suspect that the prenatal periods of projects -- which you cannot readily capture -- mold their organization. In a multidepartmental academic environment, there can hardly be too much status for an entrepreneur to succeed in bringing together the relevant experts in the face of structural barriers. Once the project has been launched, the entrepreneur may well tire of routine stewardship or turn to other enterprises. Then the project will be passed on to more routine (nominal) administration.

Status discordance may however be merely a formal concealment, in the nominal T/O of the actual frame of initiative and decision making.

The report enclosed also makes some remarks about institutional design, and I would welcome your comments, as well as particular references to pertinent literature on the motives and consequences of departmental/disciplinary organizational structures.

Yours sincerely,

Joshua Lederberg

Encl. ARP  
RYC