



**NACRA**  
NORTH AMERICAN CASE  
RESEARCH ASSOCIATION

# AACSB Accreditation and Case Research: A Conversation with Dr. Jerry Trapnell

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## INTRODUCTION

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**Dr. Cassidy:** I am Chris Cassidy. I am the program chair for NACRA 2017. I would like to welcome you to our keynote address.

First, I would like to introduce to you our NACRA 2017 President, Dr. John Gamble. Dr. Gamble is the Dean at Texas A&M University - Corpus Christi. He is a case writer and author of a leading strategy textbook. Our keynote speaker this evening is Dr. Jerry Trapnell. You know Dr. Trapnell's name because of his work at AACSB, the premiere accreditor for Colleges of Business worldwide. He was the former Chief Accreditation Officer and Executive Vice President for AACSB and served as Special Adviser to AACSB's President/CEO through 2015. He has been serving at AACSB since 1999. **(See Dr. Trapnell's Biography in the Appendix)**. He has had an enormous impact as an academic, as a dean, and as part of AACSB. Please welcome our guests.

**Dr. Gamble:** Jerry, thank you for joining us for the 2017 NACRA conference. Jerry, as former chief accreditation officer, you visited our College in 2014, and your consultation was instrumental in the development of our strategic plan, the development of our faculty qualifications definitions, and new committees such as our faculty qualifications committee and curriculum management committee. It is my belief that the vast amount of knowledge that you have, specially focused on AACSB accreditation, could be beneficial to other schools. Thank you for being here.

**Dr. Trapnell:** I am delighted to be here and thank you for the invitation to be here in Chicago. I am honored by the opportunity. Just one clarification, I no longer work for AACSB. I have not done so for three years. I was chief accreditation officer then I was a special advisor for a couple more years. I left the chief accreditation officer role in 2012 and continued a couple more years as a special advisor. I am now conducting a failed retirement. That is where I am. I did lead the accreditation function for eight years. Part of that work led to the thirteen AACSB Accreditation Standards that we refer to today. Glad to be with you, and look forward to some time with you.

**Dr. Gamble:** Thank you, Jerry. To begin with, can you give us an overview of AACSB accreditation today and its linkage to engagement, innovation and impact?

**Dr. Trapnell:** All right, a few slides here. We will speak to most of these. AACSB today is 796 schools in 53 countries. That is less than five percent of the world's

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business schools, documented by our research at AACSB. In addition, 186 of those AACSB accredited schools also have a separate accounting accreditation in addition to business accreditation.

#### **AACSB**

- **796 accredited schools in 53 countries (<5%)**
- **186 specialized accounting accredited programs**
- **AACSB Vision – *To transform business education for global prosperity***
- **AACSB Mission – *To foster engagement, accelerate innovation, and amplify impact in business education***
- **AACSB Values – *Quality, inclusion and diversity, global mindset, ethics, social responsibility, and community***
- **Applicable accreditation standards adopted in 2013 and revised July 1, 2017**

Source: Dr. Jerry Trapnell, AACSB International

AACSB recently adopted a new vision/mission and overall future focus for the AACSB organization as a whole. I think it is very important to look at these because as you go forward if you are an accredited school or even a school thinking about it you need to take a look at this strategic vision and how that relates to your business school. It is a lot about transformation, about global prosperity, fostering engagement, accelerating innovation, and amplifying impact, those three pillars that were ingrained in the original 13 standards and now being more prominent in the context of the work of AACSB.

The AACSB Standards include values such as quality, inclusion, diversity, having a global mindset, ethics, social responsibility, and community. These are key components and if you have not seen the most recently revised updates, I recommend that you do so.

The most recently adopted standards that we have were adopted in 2013. They were changed after a period of ten years. The last complete standards were updated in 2003. AACSB is mission driven, and I really want to stress to you that the focus is mission-driven. The AACSB accredited schools are an incredibly diverse set of schools, and I think AACSB celebrates that diversity and appreciates that not everybody is the same. That is where the mission driven process is essential. Your mission drives the AACSB accreditation process.

It is about you, your mission, not about expecting you to be like several other schools. Peers are identified, but they are used for context, not to say that you have to be like someone else. Being mission driven means focusing on each school's distinctive mission and strategic plan. Your school needs a clear strategic plan. Having a vision, a mission, distinctive attributes and guiding principles are the DNA of a school. Then, you want to have a set of goals and objectives that set your unit's direction. Today, strategic plans are getting much more granular in terms of detail - working out the measurement of outcomes, production of dashboards, tracking of progress, which is where strategic plans are today. The key is having a good strategic plan that is clear.

AACSB also has a strong focus on having sufficient qualified faculty. Faculty have been a key part of the standard for a long time. Accreditation starts and ends with the faculty. It is a critical piece of the pie in accreditation. Accreditation also involves self-assessment. A lot of the work goes into schools evaluating themselves and comparing

themselves to peer schools. Deans also work and evaluate themselves against other Deans. It has been that way, and it very much will continue that way into the future.

Again, the core is the three pillars we call **Engagement, Innovation, and Impact**. These are the core variables. These pillars were introduced with the 2013 AACCSB Standards for accreditation. We had to recognize that we are all in an era of accountability. We are collectively accountable to students, parents, and boards of trustees, governing bodies, and so forth. If your school is a public university, your school is also accountable to politicians and local government. As business schools, we are also especially accountable to employers. We are being held accountable more than ever. That is where assessment came from.

You know, for a long time we were all a bunch of smart people with big degrees, and that was all we needed to tell everybody; we are smart, don't bother us. Those days are over. They do not trust us anymore. We learned a great deal about accountability. As we thought about it, we concluded that business schools are really well positioned to be accountable.

Therefore, **Engagement**, connecting the business school with theory and practice, is a very important dimension. We will link that into our research discussion. **Innovation** is about doing things new, creating, and please understand innovation in AACSB's context is not about unique innovation. It is about new things at your place that you have not done before. If you have never done an online class and you do one that is innovation in your context even though many others are doing it. Innovation is innovation in your context and means taking risks and pushing the boundaries of your school further out.

**Impact** is about making a difference. That is the question. Tell us you are worth something; tell us you make a difference. Well, probably in most universities one of the major units that can make a difference and document that is a business school. This is because we prepare great young people to go out and work, get good jobs, do good things, become citizens in their community, and many other things. I like to use the example that many of us have some successful alums. We have many alums that are successful, some very successful. We can take some credit for that. Do not be bashful. Again, impact is critical, and we introduce this in the context of impactful research, much of what we will talk about here today.

The old idea was a business school that is accredited should be able to document how it is engaged academically and professionally, driven by mission, and should be innovative in its context, mission plan and so forth. It should also be able to document how it is making a difference.

Impact is a multi-dimensional concept. Most schools want to think about impact as citations in the best journals. If that is all an AACSB school has to show after ten years under these new standards, then the context of their school's impact will have sorely failed. Impact is much more and much better than that. Citations are one good measure, but there are many more and that is where the richness comes into play.

Impact is about making a difference, how are we making a difference in many different dimensions, in many different ways. My thought regarding innovation and impact is that nothing is too small. It is easy to find the big stuff, but do not forget about the other things, that one thing that may have changed a person's life. Impact is multidimensional and mission contextual and you have plenty of examples you that you can find at your school.

## AACSB STANDARD TWO

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**Dr. Trapnell:** Just to add a little bit of background, we are here to talk about case research. Here is AACSB Standard Two, I had something to do with some of the writing of the language in this document, and it is still there. An accredited school should produce high quality intellectual contributions, notice that next phrase, consistent with its mission, expected outcomes, and strategy.

**AACSB Standard 2: Intellectual Contributions, Impact, and Alignment with Mission**  
**The school produces high quality intellectual contributions that are consistent with its mission, expected outcomes, and strategies and that impact the theory, practice, and teaching of business and management.**

Source: AACSB International

It does not say do the same thing that Harvard does, the same thing that Yale does, the same thing that Portland does, or Chicago, or Michigan, or Cal Berkeley, or anywhere else. Your intellectual contributions are created within the context of your mission, outcomes and strategy. Your schools' intellectual contributions can be shown to have impact on the theory and practice of business. The old standards used to say discipline-based research and contributions to practice, and those were fine words. **In the new standards, AACSB went to three categories of research: (1) basic, (2) applied, and (3) teaching and pedagogy. Based on the school's mission it needs to decide where it wants to play, and then, do it. That is what the standard says.**

**AACSB Definition of Intellectual Contribution**  
**“Research” is a broad term to describe forms of scholarly inquiry that lead to intellectual contributions of various types. Intellectual contributions across all categories (Basic, Applied and Pedagogical) must be the result of systematic scholarly inquiry and be available for assessment by others.**

Source: AACSB International

**Dr. Trapnell:** So, what is an intellectual contribution? It is a contribution that has been reviewed by academic and/or professional experts prior to publication, and it is available for the public view. A proprietary consulting report is not an intellectual contribution. Maybe a wonderful game changing event, but is not intellectual contribution. It may relate to impact, but it is not intellectual contribution.

Somewhere in your school's strategic plan, you need clarity on your **scholarship mission**. What is your school going to do? Are you going to be a basic research place, an applied research place, or a blend with teaching and pedagogy? You want to state what your research focus is. It is fine to say we primarily do applied research with some teaching and pedagogy and some basic research. That is fine just say it. Then, demonstrate it.

So, what are the other expectations here? It is to align the school's research with the mission and the strategic plan. What is the general goal, what is the focus, so on, and are the Intellectual Contributions (ICs) produced by a substantial cross section of the

faculty. That is there to make sure a good bunch of people participating. You cannot be successful in accreditation, if one person does it all or just a few are involved.

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Intellectual Contributions, Impact, and Alignment with Mission</b></p> <p><b>Intellectual contributions (ICs) expectations:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- ICs are to be generally aligned with the school's <i>mission</i> (basic, applied, blended, with some teaching/learning)</li><li>- A <i>portfolio</i> of ICs is produced by a substantial cross-section of faculty in each discipline</li><li>- <i>Portfolio</i> of ICs is composed of significant proportion of peer reviewed journal articles or equivalents</li><li>- ICs are assessed for <i>quality</i> (guidance needed)</li><li>- ICs are assessed for <i>impact</i> (guidance needed)</li></ul>
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Source: Dr. Jerry Trapnell

There is a lot of professional judgment in accreditation. During a five-year window, there is a portfolio of work that is counted up in all these different categories of intellectual contribution. You count those up and the evidence should be that a significant portion of that portfolio is peer reviewed journal articles or the equivalent. What is the equivalent? Well, it is things like scholarly books, scholarly book chapters, research monographs; conceivably you get to define some of that. It is not predefined, you know. Narrow or broad, that is up to you, and it is mission contextual. That gives you some leeway.

ICs should be **judged for quality**. That implies you need some guidance on quality, and they should be judged for **impact**. How is this work impactful? Now, here is where impact is critically important to understand. There is no way that AACSB expects every piece of work coming out of your business school is going to be impactful. It is just not going to happen. Some of it will, maybe even a body of work will make a difference.

Impact can be many different things but not every piece of work is going to be impactful. Sometimes it takes something to be nurtured for several iterations to get it to the point of having impact. That is why we have conferences. We go present papers, get criticism and improve them. Quality is key, but you need guidance on quality.

Schools need to be aware of predatory publishing. Unfortunately, predatory publishing is a scourge on our work. Your school will want to avoid that at all possible cost. Interdisciplinary research across disciplines is interesting and ought to be allowed. Obviously, the school needs to have a policy for its research expectations regarding quantity, minimum quality, and so forth. However, these are only guidelines. You want to say, "Under normal conditions this is the way to go."

However, a faculty member should be able to make a case that his or her work that is high quality. There could be a number of factors at work. Maybe the journal articles are nowhere in a standard journal listing (ABDC, ABS, etc.), it is nowhere in the directories like Cabell's. Maybe it is in an interdisciplinary journal or it is in an entirely different field. When I was at Clemson, we had a lot of business faculty publishing with engineers, and they publish a lot in engineering journals that are not on our lists. We also had a very good psychology department at Clemson. We had business faculty publishing with psychology as well as with sociology.

What should you be looking for with interdisciplinary publications? Well, obviously the journal, how long it has been around, its review process, who is the association it is

tied to, who is the editor, the natural things we look for to tell us this a credible place. Is this a credible place is the critical issue. Interdisciplinary research ought to be recognized, and it is interesting and ought to be accepted after a thorough review. You do not want to tie your hands. You want to have some flexibility in your research expectations. This is an important link.

### AACSB Standard 15

#### AACSB Standard 15: Faculty Qualifications and Engagement

**The school maintains and strategically deploys participating and supporting faculty who collectively and individually demonstrate significant academic and professional engagement that sustains the intellectual capital necessary to support high-quality outcomes consistent with the school's mission and strategies.**

Source: AACSB International

**Dr. Trapnell:** Standard fifteen on faculty qualifications is important to colleges of business and their faculty. In this new model, you have (1) scholarly academics, (2) practice academics, (3) instructional practitioners, and (4) scholarly practitioners identified, four-block model. The new model, four blocks, and they mean specific things. It is more flexible which is good and very intentionally so. A lot of thought went into this, recognizing faculty over their career, particularly traditional faculty coming with a PhD and over the time things change. The old AQ/PQ model just was not as adaptive as it should be.

So, a practice academic is a person who has evolved from a scholarly academic moving into a role or working in practice linking up to the business world: consulting, board work, professional associations, executive education, and continuing education, all those kinds of things. You still need the scholarly academics, who are published, and then you got the instructional practitioners. Instructional practitioners are the typical old PQ. Professional people, why do you hire them, for professional experience, not because of academic credentials. We also recognized that we needed a category for somebody that comes as an instructional practitioner and gets the bug to do scholarship. That is the scholarly practitioner category. We do not see many of those, but you need a policy for that category.

Here is a very important point - you have to have enough scholarly academics, based on percentage of total faculty recourses. That links back to standard two because that group should be doing the research. Standard fifteen talks about faculty engagement and qualifications. A person who is doing scholarship is engaged through scholarship. That is where engagement comes from. They might be engaged academically doing deep basic, or they might doing things professionally and are practice oriented, that is fine, and some teaching and pedagogy. These things are clearly linked.

### CASE RESEARCH AS A SCHOLARLY ACTIVITY

**Dr. Gamble:** That is a good point. How do you see case research meeting AACSB Standards related to qualifying scholarly activity?

**Dr. Trapnell:** First, AACSB's statements about intellectual contributions are very general. Also, a general statement about peer review. Intellection contributions, again, (1) have been reviewed by professional and/or academic experts prior to publication and (2) are available for public review. That is it. Let us talk about peer review. It is

subject to review by subject matter experts professionally or academically prior to publication. Blind review or editorial review, it does not mandate one or the other. **Both are acceptable, so clearly the kinds of scholarship that I think case research can represent fit into that model.**

Now, again the key is making sure your school and your mission and your strategic plan talk about your research focus. It may not have to say cases. Your policies need to address it, but it needs to embrace what you think cases are in terms of scholarly research. **Obviously, much of what you have been working on here (at NACRA), a lot of it is about teaching and pedagogy. You know, helping present and do cases that others can use to teach students about the real world, and in particular, cases that are based on field research, meaning real examples.**

If you think about this, this is my interpretation. **Case research that is well grounded in solid field research could really be applied research because you are applying your knowledge into investigating, finding out, building out the facts so that you can build and write the case and all the learning material that goes with it. I think that is a very valid piece.**

At your particular school, there is no prohibition in the AACSB Standards that says case research cannot be counted. Nowhere will you find that. The statements and AACSB Standards are broad, intentionally so. We recognize 796 different schools around the world with different mission statements and strategic plans and everything else. That is really you and your colleagues at your school working with your leadership and articulating your standards.

#### Case Research and Qualifying Scholarly Activity

##### Key Factors:

- **Clarity of research focus in mission/strategic plan, i.e. is case research embraced by the school through its focus on applied and/or teaching/pedagogy scholarship?**
- **Focus on real-world issues faced by enterprises and entrepreneurs with details developed from solid field research**
- **Place cases in high quality case journals with solid peer review/editorial review processes consistent with the school's guidance on quality**

Source: Dr. Jerry Trapnell

**Dr. Trapnell:** Another piece, AACSB's expectations for policy on research outcomes and faculty qualifications do not have to be the same as your promotion and tenure requirements, and at most schools they are not. At many schools, the AACSB policy on research is generally seen as a floor, the minimum. For promotion and tenure, the bar goes up. Now, I do know a few schools where the two are the same, fine, your choice. AACSB does not say anything on this point. AACSB does not care about faculty title, tenure or tenure track, no tenure track available, anything like that. All that AACSB cares about is what your faculty do.

If you have a tenure system, you have your own tenure standards. That is what you should do. AACSB could be different instead of acting as the floor. Well, if a person is SA (scholarly academic) qualified for AACSB and they do not get tenure, is that a problem? If you say these standards are not equivalent to tenure, it is clear. This is not about tenure. This is simply about setting a floor, a minimum.

### Case Research and Qualifying Scholarly Activity (Continued)

#### Additional perspectives/positive outcomes:

- **Case publications can demonstrate impact if others adopt/use the cases as well as through citations**
- **Cases developed from field research support professional engagement**
- **Case research/publications can enhance student engagement if involved**

Source: Dr. Jerry Trapnell

## DEMONSTRATING QUALITY AND IMPACT WITH CASE RESEARCH

**Dr. Trapnell:** AACSB works with schools all over the world and AACSB gives a lot of thought to school policies in this area. **Quality** is key. You need to set your school's quality guidelines, not anybody else's. There are two main approaches. One, many schools turn to existing directories, ABDC (Australian Business Deans Council), Association of Business Schools (ABS), Cabell's. Those are the three most popular. ABDC seems to be the most popular in our experience, but the others are widely used. In fact, some schools we see use two or more lists because they are not all the same. We advise to use one of these directories. Some schools develop their own list of journals by discipline; however, this is tedious work and it is challenging to be consistent and fair across disciplines. However, schools may choose this option.

The other piece, then, is to set a general guideline for maximum acceptance rates for the journals, an accepted general guideline. We actually recommend for most schools that it be a thirty percent acceptance rate. That does not say every piece of work has to go in a journal with thirty percent or less. That is not what we are saying. That is a guideline. We would hope we are submitting our papers to quality journals. Remember quality, we need quality guidelines, and maximum acceptance rate is a quality indicator. Why is quality in here? Well, the thought is that quality is the first step to having impact. So, set a maximum acceptance rate, and use that.

One of the things you will be asked to do is present a portfolio of work summarized over five years, and discuss how it stacks up against your quality guidelines. Well, we set our quality guidelines where faculty normally put stuff in journals with thirty percent acceptance or less. What percent of the overall portfolio is in journals like that? Clear question, the peer review team will ask for it repeatedly if you have not provided it. That is why you need some clear guidelines. Do not leave that part undone, it is important.

Next is demonstrating **impact**. What are some of the quantitative measure of impact? These include indices like Google Scholar, Social Science citations, and others. This is where you get the quantitative indicators via citations, **but you can also use downloads**. In addition, you know, we can extend this into our discussion on case research. A quantitative measure would be usage, and I think you measure how many people acquire or use a case study, correct?

**Dr. Gamble:** That is correct. Case study usage data is readily available from textbook and journal publishers.

**Dr. Trapnell:** Perfect. **A case is published and others are using it and you have evidence of how much that is. That is a great measure, quantitatively.** You know, you can enrich your database with that kind of information. That is the quantitative piece.

How about the qualitative piece? This is where it really gets rich when you talk about impact.



This is where it really gets good. Because of someone's research record, they are now an editor of a journal, associate editor, a reviewer, great. They are in a leadership position in academic professional associations, they have won awards for their scholarship, they are a go-to person by the press, when something is going on they want to talk to a person in their field, usage of cases by others, and you see those. These are qualitative measures, but really very rich in the kinds of things you could view, and this is not an exhaustive list, there may be others. Teaching an executive development program based on your expertise, expert witness testimony, consulting work by a faculty, taking students into companies and using their background and directing those students to do research or work for a company. That is why impact is so much richer in a local context. You are making a difference locally, helping community service organizations with their business model, advertising, and things like that. I cannot think of anything better about impact for a business school. Your community being changed because of your scholarship, your cases being used in teaching, very important outcomes.

So, let us conclude this. Your mission and strategic plan needs to be clear about the school's research focus. **Now when you work this out in policies, cases ought to be there, stating what we are valuing. You know to say applied research and teaching and pedagogy are clearly within the scope of our work, for cases, I think, to be recognized.** You want a minimum quantity expectation. You know, two to three peer reviewed journal articles every five years is a minimum. I hope that people will exceed that. You need expectations for quantity and quality. Moreover, you want to start thinking about some potential impact measures.

Right now, schools are being asked to put some forethought into their perspectives on **engagement, innovation and impact** before their next AACSB review. You need to be thinking about how do we define engagement, how do we define innovation, how do we define impact in broad terms. Clarity of research mission in the school's mission and strategic plan, in other words. Case research is embraced, not excluded, that's key. It can be a focus in applied and pedagogical type research endorsed by your school. **It seems to me, that embraces case research.** Focus on real world issues, real fieldwork case research and build that out. Try to get it in the best case journals you can with good review processes. **Your Case Research Journal here has an excellent peer review process. It is legitimately peer reviewed, no question. Moreover, it is challenging. That is the standard in our academic business, so you do not have to apologize for that. It is the right place, I think, so hopefully your schools can go there.**

A couple of last things here. Again, clearly if others use the case, that is impact. Others use it for teaching and other things. Cases developed by field research support professional engagement because you are working with a business. Any organization, which you are engaging with to get the information you need, that is engagement. If you happen to involve students, all the better because they are getting professional engagement as well by being a part of the process. **Case research has a rich ability to do many things and deliver on a number of fronts.**

**Dr. Gamble:** Jerry, thank you for explaining how case research meets the standards for a qualifying academic activity and how case research has impact. Chris, are there questions from the audience that Dr. Trapnell may address?

**Dr. Trapnell:** Let me just add that I do consulting work with some of the premiere business schools in the world, some of which have cases as their dominant research outcome. Their cases are incredibly valued and used widely and so on. They believe that playing in that space is critical to their success. They are very applied schools. They are not empirical or theoretical schools that do basic research. They are applied even though they are premiere schools. There are examples of that.

**Dr. Cassidy:** I would like to ask if any of you have questions. Please jot them down on a piece of paper, and I will come around. I will give you a few minutes to jot those down.

## **AUDIENCE QUESTIONS**

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**Audience Question:** A question about peer review. Shouldn't cases have more impact if they were peer reviewed? This is an issue I think which is different from basic where I think that cases are not always peer reviewed. Wouldn't they have more impact if they were?

**Dr. Trapnell:** I think you are talking about cases and making an argument that a case is an intellectual contribution without peer review. I do not think you are going to get very far with that argument. I think the strength of the argument has to be that good case research goes through a thorough peer review process. This is the common standard in our business. Articles are peer reviewed or blind reviewed, and ending up used by others or whatever, having some degree of scrutiny prior to publication and so on is an appropriate process. Without that, that is not going to be research. It might be very useful, very interesting, but unless 10,000 schools adopt it because it is so good; you are not going to have a leg to stand on, in my personal opinion. That is all I have, a personal opinion.

**Audience Question:** How do we convince deans at research-oriented schools that case-based research is valued?

**Dr. Trapnell:** How do we convince deans at research-oriented schools that case-based research is valued? I do not have an easy answer for that. I think you can clearly know the Standards. I know we tell our students to read the book, so read the AACSB Standards. It does not say no to cases. It says there is a wide range. I think a business school, if all they have is case research, that would be a problem in an accreditation review. We want a portfolio richer than that. **But, having faculty members who do solid cases based on good field research and all that and have success with it, I think I would encourage schools to think about that.** I am not talking about PhD granting doctoral education focused on basic research as ninety percent of their portfolio. You know, that is not where you are talking about. It would include most master's, most schools, a large portion of our schools are master's and undergraduate degree granting schools and some undergraduate only. **In that context, case research and adding knowledge that way is a great addition.**

**Dr. Gamble:** We had another question about demonstrating impact with a case publication. You previously stated that the case research community needs to develop appropriate impact metrics.

**Dr. Trapnell:** I think the ability to document impact on educational experiences has two dimensions. One is clearly adding to the knowledge base in some form, expanding our knowledge base through various ways. It is also about the faculty members, those who are involved in scholarship working to keep themselves current in their respective field. There are other ways, but AACSB says a business school must have a research function, and a good proportion of that faculty needs to be keeping themselves current through research. That is the nature of the standard, nonnegotiable.

**The Standards do not preclude case research. I will say that, again, they do not preclude it.** You need to be able to recognize your work and make a case for it. In this and other organizations like this informing schools about the quality of their work, the review process, the quality of the kinds of things that are published, and then the

extent of their use. There are many ways that you can document that. That is the evidence of truly making a difference.

I do not think you need a new concept of impact. We discussed citations and that is a very easy place to start, Google Scholar and all those things. In the online space there are downloads, and those are counted. In cases, just like textbooks, if you want to embrace textbooks in your scholarship definitions you perfectly well can. In addition, to talk about impact is to talk about how the materials is used. John's (Gamble) book is a case of a textbook widely impacting higher education in business. It is widely used. Many of you may be involved in textbooks. You get to be flexible, and AACSB is not trying to say your standards on research must say everything is basic research and nothing else and you have to look like Michigan State or the University of Texas. That is not the way it is. It is okay.

**Audience Question:** At the same time, you encourage the schools and deans to draw on third party lists that base their ratings on citation counts.

**Dr. Trapnell:** There are factors beyond citations. However, I think there are representative measures that are reasonably similar to actual citations that could be presented to make your argument. I really do believe that. Now if they do not want to accept that, I think they are being very narrow minded, in my personal opinion. I cannot tell the ABDC crowd what to do and they have their own process. **Case research is a valid area of scholarship.** That is my personal opinion, and I am glad to be here to share that with you.

**Dr. Gamble:** A related question is interesting. How did the ABDC list become somewhat of a global benchmark for journal quality?

**Dr. Trapnell:** I think they got into the space with their early work in 2011 and when the journal list was released in 2013. At that time, I do not think the Cabell's list had anything like impact factors, you know those kinds of measures. There were many of Cabell's listed journals at that time that did not even have a listed acceptance rate, I think. I may be mistaken. I am not an expert in this area. I think ABDC got into it in much more specificity. The work that they did then and are still doing is the solid kind of academic based work that gives it a great deal of credence and credibility.

I am delighted to see where the Cabell's list has gotten to today with their work. However, early on, I do not think there was high regard for all that was Cabell's listed. They have improved a lot. The ABDC list achieved credibility based on a sound process to evaluate journals. It may have been flawed, but at least it was something the academic community found acceptable.

The issue will be that, for any case journal, you are going to have to get someone in Australia or New Zealand to be your advocate. You are not going to be able to do it from here. You can support the application package, but you are going to have to do it from there. That is just their deal. Fascinating the way they go about it because they speak to it. You read the ABDC website: This is for Australian and New Zealand business school faculty. That is why we did it. We are not worried about the rest of the world. The rest of the world happens to like it, but that is what they say.

**Dr. Gamble:** One last question. We have discussed the importance of the mission statement specifying the College's research focus, whether it is basic research, applied or teaching and pedagogical. Are there examples of benchmark or aspirational schools with a focus on case research?

**Dr. Trapnell:** I can speak to a list of schools where this is a dominant thing. I do know some we work with, that I work with directly. Drucker School of Management is a good case school out in Claremont, California. Their faculty is very small and graduate only but very focused into case research. You may already know that they work closely

on cases with IMD in France. Then there is Harvard. Harvard is the mecca for case research, and they have their own case workshops and everything else. They publish cases. They are a big engine in the space. Teaching cases is still a very prominent part of the Harvard MBA program. Those schools come to mind. There are other examples.

**Dr. Gamble:** Well Jerry, thank you for joining us.

**Dr. Trapnell:** Thank you all for having me.

## **APPENDIX**

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### **Dr. Jerry E. Trapnell**

Part-Time Special Advisor to AACSB, 2012-2015

Former Chief Accreditation Officer and Executive Vice President of AACSB Int'l, 2004-2012

Various Board of Director Positions, AACSB, 1999-2004

Former Dean of the College of Business and Behavioral Science, Clemson University, 1993-2004

### **Education**

Ph.D., University of Georgia

M.Sc., Clemson University

B.S., Clemson University

### **Accomplishments**

Prior to becoming Dean at Clemson, Dr. Trapnell served as director and professor of the Clemson University School of Accountancy. He joined the Clemson accounting program in 1986 after serving on the faculty of the department of accounting at Louisiana State University-Baton Rouge for 10 years. At LSU, he also was assistant dean for undergraduate studies in the College of Business. He earned his Ph.D. from the University of Georgia in 1977, his B.S. and M.S. from Clemson University in 1968 and 1970, respectively. A CPA (inactive) in Louisiana, he serves or has served on committees and boards of directors of the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants, Accounting Programs Leadership Group (including serving as president) of the American Accounting Association, Federation of Schools of Accountancy, Institute of Management Accountants, AACSB International, Southern Business Administration Association (SBAA) and the South Carolina Association of CPAs (SCACPA). He is a past president of the SBAA. He received two teaching awards at LSU and was recognized as the 1987 Outstanding Alumnus by the Clemson Chapter of Beta Alpha Psi, the national honorary and professional accounting fraternity. In 1983 he was recognized by Beta Alpha Psi as one of the top faculty advisors in the country. He received the Award of Excellence from the Louisiana Society of CPAs for earning the highest score in the state on the May 1978 CPA examination. He has published articles in a variety of professional and academic journals including Management Accounting, The Internal Auditor, Contemporary Accounting Research, Advances in Accounting, Journal of Accounting, Auditing, and Finance, Managerial Planning, Journal of Financial Research, National Public Accountant, and Business and Economic Review. He has presented programs at a variety of professional organizations at the local and national level including the Southern Business Administration Association, AACSB International, the South Carolina Association of CPAs, Institute of Management Accountants, Federation of Schools of Accountancy, and the American Accounting Association. He has served on the board of directors of three companies and is active in a variety of civic and local community activities.