

**Dissertation Summary**

**Title:** THE STEWARDSHIP OF GOVERNMENTAL FUNDING IN PUBLIC HIGHER  
EDUCATION: A HERMENEUTIC PHENOMENOLOGICAL STUDY

**By:** Oderah Anosike, PhD

**Institution:** Liberty University

**Department:** Helms School of Government

**Program:** PhD, Public Administration

**Defense Date:** January 2026

**Degree Conferral Date:** May 2026

## ABSTRACT

Amid sustained fiscal constraints, growing public scrutiny, and increasing commercialization in public higher education, the purpose of this qualitative hermeneutic phenomenological study was to investigate how administrators at four Division I (D-I) four-year Public Higher Education Institutions (PHEIs) interpret, understand, and justify the stewardship of governmental funding across competing priorities such as academics, staffing, and intercollegiate athletics (ICA). Institutional documents, including budget reports and strategic plans, were examined to evaluate fiscal practices and identify organizational objectives. Ten PHEI administrators were also surveyed or interviewed to capture their lived experiences within the industry. The guiding theories were Hood's New Public Management (NPM) and Moore's Public Value Theory (PVT), offering complementary lenses for interpreting how budgetary decisions influence administrative procedure, strategic initiatives, and leadership dynamics within public institutions. Data were analyzed through interpretive coding to classify and derive meaning from the participants' perspectives. Three core themes emerged: holistic student experience; navigating fiscal constraints and pressures; and ethical stewardship, each revealing how administrators balance financial accountability, institutional mission, and stakeholder trust in decision-making. Findings indicate that stewardship in PHEIs is viewed as both a managerial and moral commitment, requiring leaders to reconcile financial discipline with equity, transparency, and the academic and societal aims of public higher education. The study clarifies how stewardship transforms fiscal responsibility into civic value, thereby enriching existing scholarship in higher education, athletic administration, and the central discipline of public administration.

*Keywords:* athletic administration, governmental funding, hermeneutic phenomenology, higher education, intercollegiate athletics, New Public Management, Public Value Theory

## VITA

Oderah (OD) Anosike was born in Staten Island, New York. The son of Nigerian immigrants, he earned a BA in Economics from Siena College (later renamed Siena University) in 2013 and a MS in Sport Management from Texas A&M University in 2016. He completed his PhD in Public Administration at Liberty University in 2026.

While pursuing his undergraduate degree, Anosike excelled as a Division I basketball player at Siena College. After graduation, he embarked on a 13-year professional basketball career that spanned 11 countries (as of 2026). During his offseasons, he worked in athletics operations and developmental leadership roles, including with the Under Armour Association and several other youth basketball organizations. Before retiring, he also undertook an internship in Siena University athletics, focusing on Development/NIL strategy. These experiences equipped him with a unique blend of strategic, operational, and administrative competencies, fostering a global perspective and leadership approach that continue to guide his professional trajectory.

His academic and research interests include higher education governance, resource allocation, capital acquisition and revenue-generation strategy, athletics administration, international sport business, New Public Management, Public Value Theory, and the stewardship of public funds.

Anosike is a member of Phi Kappa Phi, Omicron Delta Epsilon, Alpha Kappa Delta, and Alpha Phi Sigma. In recognition of his scholarly merit, he received the NCAA Ethnic Minority Postgraduate Scholarship, the Bob McCloskey Insurance Postgraduate Scholarship, and the John Shippen Achievement Scholarship.