DISSERTATION

AN EXPLORATION OF THE EXPERIENCES AND PERCEPTIONS OF COMMUNITY

COLLEGE LEADERS IN THE COMBINED ROLE OF VICE PRESIDENT FOR ACADEMIC

AND STUDENT AFFAIRS

Submitted by

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ABSTRACT

AN EXPLORATION OF THE EXPERIENCES AND PERCEPTIONS OF COMMUNITY

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This study provided a view into the world of individuals serving in the role of vice president of academic and student affairs. Collaboration between academic affairs and student affairs has emerged in the literature as critical and essential for colleges to holistically and effectively address the needs of the institution and their stakeholders (Janey, 2009; Kezar, 2009, 2009a; Pace, Blumreich, & Merkle, 2006). The research revealed that some community colleges adopted an organizational structure that merged the two areas together in hopes of addressing fiscal constraints and fostering collaboration (McClellan, 2004; Price, 1999). This study addressed the gap in the literature that existed regarding the experiences, leadership, and perspectives of those serving in the joint position. Twelve individuals from community colleges across the United States were selected to participant in this study. Utilizing interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) five major themes arose; evolution, communication and collaboration, leadership, faculty background, and workload. The findings revealed that communication was an essential element in promoting collaboration, leadership effectiveness, and removing silos that existed between the two areas. Collaboration was perceived to be strengthened as a result of merging the two areas under one leader and uniting them across a common theme. The findings shed light on the critical role of effective leadership and the strategies utilized by participants to unite the two areas and advance the institutional mission. The importance of having experience as a faculty member and a clear understanding of the role

of faculty emerged as an influential factor of the leader's ultimate success and acceptance. Workload issues emerged as the most perceived challenge of the position. This study concluded that while there may be many benefits to the merged model the workload challenges and the culture of the institution should not be overlooked. Moreover, regardless of the organizational structure adopted by an institution leadership appeared to be the factor most influential in uniting the two areas, advancing the institutional priorities, and promoting a centralized collaborative focus on student learning and success. Readers of this study may learn and benefit from the reflections, experiences, perceptions and ultimately the recommendations of the participants.

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for believing in me, I love you and I am grateful to have you in my life and that you were a part of my journey.

To my Dad, Paul and Mom, Henrietta ever since I was a child you emphasized the value of education and instilled in me the importance of being inquisitive and seeking broader knowledge. The foundation you provided paved the pathway that had led me to this point. Thank you for laying that foundation and inspiriting me to challenge myself and realize the value of education. Paul, Paula, and Stacey, as my parents taught me education will expand your horizons. Realize its value and seek to constantly expand your knowledgebase. Finally, I dedicate this to my entire family. In particular, I dedicate this to my brother Stanley Timothy Broadie who remained in my thoughts throughout this journey. His commitment, dedication, and perseverance despites life's obstacles demonstrated to me that everything is possible and there is no room in life to give up or make excuses. Although, he is no longer with us I know he was with me throughout this journey.

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Introduction

Community colleges are focused on providing post-secondary educational opportunities for those that seek one. These institutions offer associates degrees, certificate programs, workforce training and development, personal enrichment programs and a host of offerings that serve the needs of the community and its stakeholders. Community colleges provide educational access to over forty percent of the students enrolled in higher education institutions (Cohen & Kisker, 2009). In order to remain current and address the continuously changing needs of a variety of stakeholders and the communities they serve community colleges are constantly changing to ensure that they fulfill their mission and meet the ever-changing needs of their students, community, and their stakeholders (Henry, 2000; Miller & Deggs, 2012; Matheny & Conrad, 2012).

Despite the critical role community colleges play in the United States, higher educational systems have faced reduced funding support, particularly at the state level (Kiley, 2012). In the face of declining resources institutions must focus on sound fiscal management, effective planning, increased productivity and efficiency (Huba, Kenton, Schuh, & Shelley, 2005). According to Greengard (2009) community colleges need to be prepared to face the challenges presented by increased student demands, fiscal challenges, and growing stakeholder expectations. Moreover, Greengard (2009) suggested that colleges should develop plans to ensure employee effectiveness and efficiency, and explore joint partnerships and programming opportunities throughout the institution and with external partners to address institutional challenges and stakeholder demands (Greengard, 2009).

This chapter discusses the relationship between academic affairs and student affairs, the importance of collaboration, and the critical importance of leadership. The chapter concludes with a review of the purpose, assumptions, limitations, researcher perspective, and significance of this research conducted on the experiences of individuals in the combined leadership role of vice president of academic and student affairs and how such a review adds to the body of research in higher education.

Academic Affairs and Student Affairs Disconnected

As institutions strive to increase retention, persistence, and graduation rates it is imperative that they create an environment that promotes student success. These environments are built on collaborative efforts that focus on what is best for the students. While there are several collaborations that must occur within the institution one of the most critical is the collaboration between academic affairs and student affairs (Kezar, 2006; Kezar & Lester, 2009, Kuh, 1996; Kinzie & Kuh, 2004). Professionals in student affairs and academic affairs have the opportunity to create an environment that fosters holistic student development. These two areas are responsible for ensuring student learning through curricular and co-curricular activities. Both areas play an important role in the development of students (McClellan, 2004; Kramer, 2007).

Cawthon and Havice (2003) recommended that academic affairs and student affairs faculty and staff need to work together to address the needs of students. The two areas need to form partnerships across administrative lines. According to Cawthon and Havice (2003) it is essential for the two areas to work together to develop an understanding of the student population they serve and jointly develop programs, projects, policies, support services, and strategies that will foster student success. Schroeder (1999) posited that partnership between

academic affairs and student affairs is critical to holistically addressing the needs of the student's and create a seamless learning environment.

Unfortunately, these areas often work independently to serve students (Hirt, 2007). Their efforts to serve students are sometimes duplicative and result in a poor utilization of resources. At times a lack of understanding or a lack of respect exists between these areas (McClellan, 2004; Hirt, 2007). According to Evans, Forney, and Guido-Dibrito (1998); and Evans, Forney, Guido, Patton, and Renn (2009 p. 21) student affairs professionals have had a consistent focus on the human growth and development of students. They cautioned that student development should not be recognized as solely the responsibility of the student affairs area of the college. Astin (1984) posited that in order for student learning and growth to take place student affairs professionals and other educators within the institution must jointly create opportunities for students to be engaged inside and outside the classroom.

There are usually silos between the two areas that impede progress (McClellan, 2004; Hirt, 2007; Kramer, 2007). These silos usually stem from organizational structures that do not encourage cross-divisional collaboration as well as a lack of understanding and awareness of the important role each other plays in impacting student success (Kramer, 2007; Kezar & Lester, 2009). There has traditionally been a divide between the two areas with each having very distinct roles and perceived boundaries usually divided between in the classroom and out of the classroom activities. Academic affairs and student affairs professionals often do not understand the others' role and make assumptions and buy into myths and misperceptions (Kellogg, 1999; Hirt, 2007; Reif, 2007; Kezar, 2003). This only serves to impede the institutions ability to create a seamless learning environment (Kellogg, 1999). Leadership is often an important component in bringing about collaboration and a clearer understanding between areas that must work together

toward a common goal (Hirt, 2007; Kinzie & Kuh, 2004; Pace, Blumreich, Merkle, 2006; Dole, 2004; Reif, 2007).

Leadership is Critical

Leadership is a critical component of any organization and is evident throughout the organization (Northouse, 2010). In the future organizations that understand that leadership will look different and that there may be multiple ways to solve problems that differ from traditional methods will be better poised to successfully navigate the changing world (Wheatley, 2006). According to Conchie and Rath (2008), serious problems can occur when individuals lead without being in-touch with their strengths, lack a clear understanding of the areas they oversee and are out of touch with the culture of those areas. Cultural awareness enables leaders to become aware of tensions caused by the organizational structure and operational procedures. Understanding the institutions culture provides leaders with the tools to identify discomfort, manage change, and have more of an impact when communicating the need for change and improving performance. Successful leadership requires a focus on and understanding of the institutions culture (Tierney, 1988; Locke & Guglielmino, 2006; Ferren & Stanton, 2004; & Matheny &Conrad, 2012).

Merged Structure

There are many types of organizational structures within higher education. One organizational structure that some community colleges have adopted is an organizational model where leadership for the areas of academic affairs and student affairs are merged under one leader; usually called the vice president for academic and student affairs (Price, 1999; McClellan, 2004). There was a gap in the literature regarding the experiences, leadership approaches, and perceptions of individuals that hold this merged position, their perception of its

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effectiveness, and the overall benefits for the institution. Therefore, the merged position of vice president of academic and student affairs in a community college setting was worthy of additional exploration and adds to the body of knowledge in the field of higher education.

Purpose of the Study

As institutions explore different leadership models designed to best address the institutional mission, tackle its challenges, and advance its strategic priorities it would be useful to gain an understanding of the benefits and drawbacks of the merged leadership position. However, there is limited research on this merged role. The purpose of this phenomenological study was to explore the experiences, leadership approaches, and perceptions of those community college leaders serving in the combined role of vice president of academic and student affairs. This research also provided insight from their perspective on benefits and drawbacks of this organizational structure.

Casey, Davies, and Hides (2001) indicated that leadership is necessary to effectively navigate the rapidly changing environment of higher education. They defined leadership as the ability to influence a group of individuals in order to achieve the organizations goals. According to Casey et al. (2001) the leader provides clarity and purpose for members of the organization and provides the tools so they can excel.

Given the attention and strong focus on collaboration between academic affairs and student affairs, institutions are reevaluating the traditional thought that the sole role of student affairs is to provide student support and the sole role of academic affairs is to challenge and teach (Guarasic, 2001). These lines between academic affairs and student affairs are becoming blurred as more institutions are realizing that in order to effectively promote student success both areas must support, challenge, and teach students (Guarasic, 2001).

Price (1999) and McClellan (2004) ascertained that some institutions have attempted to achieve collaboration between academic affairs and student affairs by merging the two areas under one leader. This sometimes involves a reorganization of the organizational structure and the dean of students reporting to the chief academic officer. If these mergers are not well thought out they could have a negative impact on increasing collaboration and creating a student-centered learning environment (Price, 1999). Price (1999) and McClellan (2004) further discussed that these mergers open up the doors for partnership opportunities but the new organizational structure does not ensure partnership and collaboration between the two areas. For example, the researchers highlighted that given that one area no longer reports to the president, that areas leader may feel isolated from the key decision maker and /or experience a decreased ability to advocate for the needs of their area.

As evidenced by the research of Price, 1999; Kezar, 2003; Culp, 1995; McClellan, 2004; and Janey, 2009 mergers of academic affairs and student affairs could have severe pitfalls and must be well thought out. These mergers should not be entered into lightly to save money or force collaboration (Price, 1999). There was a gap in the research on the experiences, leadership, and perceptions of those in the combined role and the benefits and drawbacks from their perspective. This highlighted the need to address an important research question.

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Research Question

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This study focused on answering the following research question: What are the experiences, leadership approaches, and perceptions of those community college vice presidents in the combined role of vice president of academic and student affairs? The research question was critical in shedding light on the lived experiences of participants in the joint position. The

identification of delimitations, assumptions, and limitations associated with this study was equally important.

Delimitations

This research study was delimited to individuals serving in the capacity of vice president for academic and student affairs at a community college. The study was delimited to participants with a minimum of one year of experience in the merged role and employed at a community college within the United States. The area of student affairs is sometimes referred to as student services or student development. While the title of academic affairs is fairly common it may also be referred to differently by some institutions. In order to ensure that each participant was serving in a similar capacity the job responsibilities of each participant was reviewed for consistency in responsibilities. The study was delimited to those individuals. Given that this study focused solely on community college vice presidents serving in a dual capacity caution should be exercised when attempting to generalize the findings to private colleges and universities, and research institutions, as well as online and proprietary institutions of higher education. This study made some assumptions and has some limitations that deserve further disclosure.

Assumptions and Limitations

For this study some of the assumptions and limitations were as follows:

a. This study will not be able to be generalized beyond the experiences of the twelve participants.

b. Participants will be honest about their perceptions and their own limitations and challenges.

The remainder of this chapter provides a discussion of the significance of the study and the researcher's perspective.

Significance of Study

Casey, Davies, and Hides (2001) highlighted the critical importance of leadership and the leader's role and ability to bring about organization success during changing times. During these challenging times community college leaders will need to employ approaches that enable them to achieve success (Davies & Stoeckel, 2007). Bass (1990a) and Davies and Stoeckel (2007) have suggested that an institutions success or failure can be attributed to the organizations leaders. Their studies surmised that the success of a community college is dependent on the abilities of the institutions leaders. Realizing this there have been calls for academic and student affairs areas to work together to address the institutions challenges. Major contributing researchers, Kezar (2001); Bierhoff and Muller (2005); Kezar (2003); Reif (2007); Doyle (2004); Price (1999); McClellan (2004); Janey (2009); Hirt (2007) and Kezar (2009a) highlighted several barriers such as, disconnected priorities, cultural differences, and long standing perceptions and myths, that have served to impede collaboration between academic affairs and student affairs.

This study shed light on the effectiveness of the merged position and may help inform decisions to adopt or abandon such a position. This research is important since the findings provided information and a better understanding of the role, the experiences and thoughts of those in the role, and the overall perceived impact on the institution through the eyes of those serving in that capacity. This study has added to the body of research and could assist educational institutions in making an informed decision when contemplating various organizational models or making adjustments to their existing structure.

This research study has the potential to offer information that may help advance the efforts of community colleges to evaluate their organizational model. The research was designed to provide valuable information and a better understanding of the combined role. These findings may enable colleges to make more informed decisions when contemplating the adoption or elimination of a combined leadership position for the areas of academic affairs and student affairs. The overall objective of the research was to provide institutional leaders with additional knowledge that can help inform their decisions as they attempt to address organizational challenges, institutional change, adopt new organizational structures, and create seamless learning environments.

Researcher's Perspective

I have been employed in the field of higher education for the past twenty-four years. During those years I have held various positions within the areas of academic affairs and student affairs. I have spent the past ten years in the position of vice president of student services. In this capacity I work with all areas of the institution but most closely with the area of academic affairs. During my twenty-four years in higher education, my experience in the area of student affairs and my educational background have served to shape my impressions of the critical role of both academic affairs and student affairs within the institution and their influence on carrying out the institutional mission and the strategic priorities developed to address the needs of the institutions stakeholders.

Given my current experience as a vice president for student services and my previous experience working in both academic affairs and student affairs, I understand the significance of each area. In my current role I work closely with the academic affairs area of the college to develop policy, implement change and serve students. As a result of this experience I value the

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importance of collaboration and effective leadership. As evidenced by the literature some institutions are adopting an organizational structure that merges the positions of vice president for student affairs and vice president of academic affairs into a combined position of vice president of academic and student affairs (Findlen, 2000; Price, 1999, McClellan, 2004; & Janey, 2009). The experience of individuals in this combined role intrigued me and as a result I was drawn to this topic as an area of research interest. These two roles embody the core aspects of my worldview; the promotion of education, knowledge and academic success and providing support services that that will guide, support and change lives. Interestingly, I am aware of three institutions that made this switch only to reverse their decision a few years later. While this combined role may seem fiscally attractive and appear to have the potential to foster collaboration and partnerships among the two areas I was unable to locate research that could help institutions make an informed decision. Therefore, this research study not only advanced my own knowledge but may serve as a resource for others.

CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Introduction

Higher education has evolved significantly since its inception. As one looks at the significant changes occurring in society it is important to attempt to gain an understanding of how the higher education industry has kept pace with those changes. The industry has been faced with increased competitiveness, an increased focus on accountability, and declining funding (Bischoff & Scott, 2000; Doyle, 2004; Goldstein, 2007; Kezar, 2003). Like most organizations community colleges must also address internal challenges such as interpersonal conflict, managing change, student issue, curriculum matters and fulfilling the institutions mission and strategic priorities. Many of these issues fall under the purview of the areas of academic and student affairs and require focused attention (Gibson-Harman, Haworth and Rodriguez, 2002; Guglielmino, 2006; Hughey and Smith, 2006; Shults, 2008; Yoder, 2005). Davies and Stoeckel (2007) have suggested that an institutions success or failure can be attributed to the organizations leaders. Their studies inferred that the success of a community college is dependent on the abilities of the institutions leaders. In order to keep pace with these challenges and the constantly changing environment we should turn our attention to the effectiveness of our institutions leaders. Since the president is not the sole leader of the institution it is important to look at the leadership of other areas of the college. Academic affairs and student affairs must be responsive to the needs of the stakeholders, work to fulfill the mission of the institution, as well as maintain service, academic standards, efficiency, and productivity in the face of declining resources (Casey, Davies & Hides, 2001; McClellan, 2004). Effective leadership in these two areas is critical (Janey, 2009). In order to gain a better understanding of higher education leadership with a specific focus on academic affairs and student affairs it is important to review the literature.

Leadership Defined

There are many definitions of leadership and the literature contains several leadership theories. Blanchard, Hersey, and Johnson (1996) viewed leadership as the ability to influence individual and or group behavior in order to achieve desired goals (p.91). Caple and Newton (1991) explored the definitions of leadership contained in the literature. They summarized leadership as the ability to engage, mobilize, motivate, and transform followers to strive for a set of goals that represent the values of the organization (p.113). Northouse (2010) defined leadership as being able to influence others to strive for and accomplish common goals of the organization.

McGregor (1960) in his examination of leadership developed a theory called Theory X and Theory Y. According to McGregor's Theory X leaders believe that employees do not like to work and will avoid it at all costs. These leaders lead by threatening, controlling, and punishing their employees. Theory Y leaders believe that overall work is acceptable to employees and given sufficient rewards employees will embrace their roles and commit to the objectives of the organization naturally. McGregor (1960) indicated that Theory Y leaders believed that employees have the desire to excel and strive to be creative and innovative. McGregor (1960) recommended that leaders provide their employees with flexibility, decision making authority, and increased control. According to McGregor doing so would increase organizational commitment, productivity, and morale. Argyris (2000) supported McGregor's work and proposed that increased employee control over their work and decisions would lead to greater self-actualization. The author believed that greater autonomy would motivate employees to assume more responsibility and exhibit pride in their work.

Blanchard, Hersey, and Johnson (1996) introduced a leadership theory called situational leadership. Blanchard et al. (1996) did not support the theory that one style of leadership could be applied in all situations. They instead theorized that leaders have to adjust their style based on the situation. In this model of leadership an effective leader has the ability to analyze a situation and then adjust their leadership style accordingly. Northouse (2010) noted that the situational approach focuses on leadership in situations suggesting that different situations require different leadership approaches. This approach is founded on the premise that leaders should understand what the employees need and adjust their leadership style to fit those needs and the needs of the situation (Northouse, 2010).

Harrell (2006) compared various leadership models while conducting research on perceived student affairs leadership and employee job satisfaction. Harrell explored the models of Quinn (1984), and Birnbaum (1988). The author also reviewed research from Bolman and Deal (2003). According to the author Bolman and Deal's (2003, 2008) research consisted of four frames. The human resources frame is focused on meeting the needs of the employees. These leaders are accessible and demonstrate a commitment to their employees. The symbolic frame is concerned with culture and rituals these leaders were described as finding the value in events and communicating their vision through stories. The structural frame was outlined as being focused on process, rules, hierarchy, and procedures. Harrell (2006) described these leaders as well prepared, focused on carrying out their vision, and solving problem through careful analysis and reorganization. According to the author the political frame is concerned with negotiation, bargaining, scarcity of resources and conflict. These leaders are described as being skilled at garnering support and negotiating for the benefit of the institution. Harrell (2006) suggested that while each of these leadership frames had positive implications there is a

potential for negative implications as well. The author mentioned how overemphasis on political leadership could lead to unending conflict, symbolic leadership has the potential to appear unauthentic or deceiving, human resources leaders have the potential to disregard organizational structure and ineffectively handle political conflict, and structural leaders had the potential to neglect employees and those essential to make the organization productive. Bolman, Deal, and Lee (2008) emphasized the positive benefits of leaders understanding and utilizing the four frames when attempting to fulfill their responsibility to facilitate the advancement of the organization.

Vandervoort (2006) discussed emotional intelligence which involves interpersonal and intrapersonal intelligence such as self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, the ability to manage emotions, relationship management, empathy, and altruism. Vandervoort (2006) emphasized that in order for a leader to be effective the most important emotional intelligence qualities they should possess are self-awareness, communication, influence, commit, and integrity. According to Vandervoort (2006) failure to exhibit or develop these qualities could affect a leader's ability to build solid relationships with individuals throughout the organization. Emotional intelligence can help leaders become better political navigators and can prove useful when leaders are faced with difficult decisions (Vandervoort, 2006).

According to Hannum, Leslie, Ruderman, and Steed (2001), leaders with high levels of emotional intelligence have been known to practice participative management and garner buy-in on initiatives quickly. Utilizing emotional intelligence leaders are able to put people at ease and understand their own strength and weakness (Hannum et al., 2001). Moreover, Hannum et al. (2001) surmised that leaders with emotional intelligence have established a healthy balance between their work and personal life. These leaders were found to be composed,

straightforward, decisive, and are not afraid to confront ineffective employees. Most institutions are evolving and conflict exists in all organizations (Hannum et al., 2001). A leader with high emotional intelligence would be effective in facilitating change and would be skilled at building and mending relationships (Hannum et al., 2001). According to Hannum et al. (2001) emotional intelligence can be learned and all leaders should strive to enhance their emotional intelligence. Vandervoort, (2006) posited that colleges and universities that develop or encourage programming that train employees on and emphasize the importance of emotional intelligence could create a thriving and progressive institution that can effectively advance its strategic priorities.

Mazeh (2011) conducted a qualitative study of nine community college leaders and their perceptions, knowledge and utilization of emotional intelligence theory. As a result of the study Mazeh (2011) found that the overwhelming majority of participants were not familiar with emotional intelligence or did not fully understand the concept. According to Mazeh (2011) the majority of participants had not applied the theory of emotional intelligence although some applied components of the theory while carrying out their responsibilities. Mazeh (2011) highlighted that participants that applied the concepts of emotional intelligence utilized the theory to manage personnel matters, gain a better understanding of others, manage their own emotions, address and resolve conflict, motivate employees, and stimulate collaboration. Mazeh (2011) emphasized that emotional intelligence is an important leadership theory that can prove beneficial for community college leaders given their multiple responsibilities. According to Mazeh (2011) the application of emotional intelligence theory can assist leaders in promoting collaboration, building positive relationships and a healthy atmosphere, increasing productivity, improving performance, making decisions, and managing conflict.

Northouse (2010) in his book titled *Leadership: Theory and Practice* discussed several leadership theories and approaches. These included the trait approach, skills approach, style approach, contingency theory, path-goal theory, leader-member exchange theory, transformational leadership, authentic leadership, and team leadership. The trait approach hypothesizes that leaders are born with the qualities that will make them successful leaders. Researchers have determined that there is a connection between leadership and the traits leaders possess (Northouse, 2010). These traits include intelligence, integrity, self-confidence, sociability, and determination (Northouse, 2010). Expanding on trait theory Northouse (2010) discussed the five-factor personality model. This model suggests that researchers are in agreement that neuroticism, extraversion, openness, agreeableness, and conscientiousness are the five personality factor associated with being an effective leader (Northouse, 2010). The skills approach focuses on the skills of the leader. In this approach the skills can be learned and developed. This approach indicates that leaders should possess three skills; problem-solving skills, social judgment skills, and knowledge (Northouse, 2010). The style approach places an emphasis on the behavior of accomplishing goals and relationship behaviors with others. Primarily the style approach focuses on how leaders apply task behavior and relationship behavior in order to achieve their goals (Northouse, 2010). The style approach gave rise to the Leadership Grid which aids organizations and leaders in assessing leadership behavior in terms of concern for people and concern for production using a nine point scale to plot the individuals scores in terms of five leadership styles; authority-compliance, country club management, impoverished management, middle-of-the-road management, and team management (Northouse, 2010).

Furthermore, Northouse (2010) discussed Contingency Theory which pairs leaders based on the situation. In this theory a leader's style is deemed effective in some situations and ineffective in others. Therefore, this theory supports the belief that effective leadership is dependent on ensuring that the leader's style matches the setting (Northouse, 2010). Path-goal theory posits that leaders must select a style of leadership that adapts to the needs of the employees and the duties they are performing. The theory looks at the leadership style, subordinate characteristics, and the characteristic of the task in order to help the leader determine what leadership style will motivate employees and enable them to accomplish their tasks successfully (Northouse, 2010). Leader-Member Exchange Theory focuses on the relationship leaders develop with employees. The theory highlights that leaders may not have the same relationship with all employees. In this theory employees can be separated into two groups the in-group and the out-group. In-group members typically are those members that go above and beyond and provide a great deal of assistance to the leader. The out-group members typically usually work within their job description without going above and beyond. This theory helps to make leaders aware of the existence of the two groups and helps them stay in-tune with unconscious biases against employees (Northouse, 2010). Yukl (2006) encouraged leaders to develop relationships with all employees which were contrary to leader-member exchange theory which encourages leaders to develop relationships with a small group of employees. In contrast to this, Yu and Liang (2004) recommended that working closely with a select group of individuals would be detrimental to the organization leading to low morale, decreased productivity, and lower organizational buy-in.

Transformational leadership involves inspiring, transforming, and influencing individuals, groups and teams and cultures to achieve personal and institutional goals and

visions. It involves creating connections that increase motivation and ethical standards. These leaders assist followers in reaching their maximum potential and they are concerned with the values, emotions, ethics, and long term goals of their followers (Bass, 1990b; Johnson, 2005; Northouse, 2010; Chan & Chan, 2005). There are four factors of transformational leadership. Idealized influence is the first factor and involves serving as a role model for followers. These individuals are respected and have high moral standards. The second factor is inspirational motivation; these leaders inspire followers to embrace a shared vision. The third factor is intellectual stimulation; this involves motivating employees to challenge their own beliefs and the beliefs of the leader. This factor encourages resourcefulness, creativity, and forward-thinking. The final factor of transformational leadership is individualized consideration. This involves listening to the needs and concerns of employees and providing the necessary support to help them grow and address their challenges (Northouse, 2010). Transactional leadership is centered on the exchange between the leaders and the employee. The individual is carrying out a task or function in exchange for a something. Failure to carry out what was assigned or agreed to can also results in punishment or negative consequences. Leadership can be based on contingent rewards, management-by-exception (corrective criticism, negative feedback, and negative reinforcement (Northouse, 2010). Authentic leadership develops in leaders over time. It focuses on what is good for the individual, the organization and its employees. According to Northouse (2010) authentic leaders poses the following qualities; value centered, compassionate, self-disciplined, self-aware, transparent, and moral. Authentic leaders should be viewed as trustworthy, believable and focused on what is best for the organization and individuals they serve. Finally, Northouse (2010) inferred that team leadership is one of the most rapidly growing areas of leadership theory. In the team leadership approach the leader's role is to make sure that

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the team has what they need to be successful. The leader engages in ongoing team monitoring and adjustments looking for weaknesses in need of attention. In this model the leader serves as coach, mentor, and innovator focusing on building commitment, develop employees, and share their expertise and experiences, develop new approaches to accomplishing tasks, and ensuring that the team functions effectively (Northouse, 2010). Heifetz, Grashow and Linsky (2009) discussed adaptive leadership highlighting that it involves mobilizing individuals to address challenges through the adoption of strategies that flow from diagnosis, building on the past, experimentation, and diversity of views. Individuals applying this leadership strategy should be aware that adaption takes time, and that they must work to build an organizations adaptive capacity imbedding adaption into the culture moving it beyond the leaders short term mobilization and influence over addressing challenges (Heifetz, Grashow, & Linsky, 2009).

These leadership definitions, approaches, theories, and models provide a good foundational framework for the review and understanding of effective leadership.

Effective Leadership

Leadership is a critical component of any organization and is evident throughout the organization. Leadership can be hierarchical or flat depending on the institution, the organizational structure, and the culture (Northouse, 2010). Some effective leadership approaches are focused on the strengths of the organizational members and rotated by task. Effective leadership often requires this type of innovative and open-minded thought to help advance the organization. According to Lipman-Blumen (2005) while there are many effective leaders there are also many ineffective leaders, both can have a lasting impact on the organization. In order to become a more effective leader it is important to understand one's own strengths and limitations as a leader as well as be able to identify effective and ineffective

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leadership. Leader must be careful not to become toxic leaders and organizations should keep a watchful eye for both toxic leaders and toxic followers (Lipman-Blumen, 2005). Toxic leaders engage in destructive behaviors, stifle criticism and opposition, treat followers poorly, and have no regard for the cost of their actions. Toxic followers justify and condone the actions of their leaders and at times copy their behaviors (Lipman-Blumen, 2005). Toxic leadership and toxic followers have the ability to cripple organizational growth, change, and success. Leadership can transform or destroy an organization and can have a lasting impact on productivity and morale (Lipman-Blumen, 2005).

Harrell (2006) discussed Quinn's leadership model which looked at four types of leaders: the democratic leader, the synergistic leader, the authoritarian leader, and the combative leader. The author indicated that the democratic leader was supportive, open and responsive to their employees. The synergistic leader was team-oriented and visionary. The authoritarian leader was concerned with maintaining control and being precise. The author described the combative leader as aggressive, forceful, assertive, and competitive. Harrell (2006) conducted a quantitative study which applied these models to their study of the perceived leadership orientation of senior student affairs officers and the job satisfaction of their employees. Leadership Orientation Instruments and the Mohr man-Cooke-Mohrman Job Satisfaction Scale were used to measure leadership and employee job satisfaction. The researcher found that the student affairs officers participating mostly fell into the category of human resources leader followed by structural leader. Overall the participating leaders demonstrated that they leaned towards one style but were able to apply a variety of frames and styles. The utilization of two or fewer frames or styles was associated with decreased employee job satisfaction. Harrell (2006) emphasized that her research demonstrates that most leaders leaned toward one preferred

leadership style. However, she mentions that one leadership style may not be applicable to all situations. The author recommended that leaders should become familiar with the various leadership frames and styles so that the most effective frame or style could be applied based on the situation (Harrell, 2006).

Casey, Davies, and Hides (2001) explored the rapid changes that higher education institutions are undergoing which is driven by a variety of stakeholders. According to Casey et al. (2001) the insular environment that focused on developing knowledge and conducting research has been challenged by stakeholders such as the government, students, and the local communities to conduct their affairs in a more business-like manner in order to succeed. The authors investigated how higher education leaders created vision, communicate policy, and develop strategies. They looked at the European Foundation for Quality Management's Excellence Model (EFQM) and how it could be utilized to improve leadership in higher education. Utilizing a case study they demonstrated how EFQM could be applied to address the challenges faced in higher education. Casey et al. (2001) indicated that leadership is necessary to effectively navigate the rapidly changing environment of higher education. The authors defined leadership as the ability to influence a group of individuals in order to achieve the organizations goals. According to Casey et al. (2001) the leader provides clarity and purpose for members of the organization and provides the tools so they can excel. They indicate that leaders should develop the mission, vision, values and set the tone and model for the organization. They should be focused on continuous improvement and must motivate and support their employees. The authors also indicated that leaders should become closely involved with the institutions stakeholders.

In addition, Casey et al. (2001) reviewed a study of leadership and change in the University of Salford's Centre School of Management. They concluded that traditional top down approaches utilized by leaders were not very effective in the current higher education environment. According to the authors leaders need to drive change, they need to be skilled at motivating others, leaders have to be trained, supported and nurtured and institutions need to adopt a business-like approach to satisfy the needs of stakeholders.

Bryman and Lilley (2009) conducted a qualitative study in which they interviewed individuals that conduct leadership research. Their main focus was to look at leadership effectiveness in higher education. The main question the researchers were seeking to answer was what styles of or approaches to leadership were most closely associated with higher education leadership effectiveness. Twenty-four leadership researchers from UK higher education institutions were interviewed. The researchers had to meet one out of three categories and had to have made a significant contribution to the leadership field. The categories were as follows: school leadership, leadership in business or management, and leadership in higher education. The interviewee's were asked questions about leadership in general and then asked more specifically about higher education leadership. Bryman and Lilley (2009) utilized thematic coding to identify reoccurring themes resulting from the interviews. Trust, honesty and integrity were the behaviors identified most often tied to leadership effectiveness in higher education. Other behaviors identified were collegiality, transparency, values, supportiveness and protection of one's staff. Ineffective leadership was most closely associated with a lack of integrity, a failure to consult others, ignoring problems, and a laissez-faire leadership style (Bryman & Lilley 2009). A significant finding as a result of the study was that there were no significant common styles or approaches associated with higher education leadership. This supports the

research of Blanchard et al. (1996). There may be no guidebook a leader can follow to guarantee effectiveness. Each leader must be able to adapt to the environment they find themselves in while ensuring that they remain honest, trustworthy, collegial, supportive, and transparent (Bryman & Lilley 2009).

Korkmaz (2007) conducted a qualitative study with the purpose of investigating the relationship between school health, leadership style, and employee job satisfaction. This study was conducted utilizing teachers working at 46 high schools in Ankara, Turkey. A Likert-type questionnaire was distributed to 875 teacher of which 630 (75%) responded. Two-hundred and eighty-four (42%) of those responding were female and 346 (55%) were male. The questionnaire was broken into three sections designed to gather information on their principals' leadership style, their schools organizational health, and their job satisfaction. Transformational and transactional leadership styles were examined throughout the questionnaire. Organizational health was analyzed utilizing an organizational health inventory. Participants answered questions regarding academic concern, professional leadership, institutional integrity, their principals' influence, resource support, and teachers' commitment. The final section of the questionnaire focused on job satisfaction. The five grade Likert-type instrument gathered information on the quality of their job, salary, professional growth and promotion opportunities, working conditions, interpersonal relationships, and organizational atmosphere (Korkmaz, 2007). Korkmaz (2007) concluded that the more the teachers viewed their principals as transformational leaders the higher their level of job satisfaction. There was also a significant correlation between transformational leadership and positive organizational health. Korkmaz (2007) determined that transactional leadership led to lower levels of job satisfaction and decreases in organizational

health. This study provided insight into the positive impact transformational leadership has on an organization and its employees.

Doolen and Hacker (2007) conducted research that explored the impact that top managers had on project success. In order to complete their research 110 employees of a large federal agency involved in struggling technically complex projects were surveyed utilizing a Likert-type survey. The findings demonstrated that a lack of alignment by executives, managers, and sponsors lead to poorly defined scope and was a barrier to project success. Their findings also demonstrated that a lack of alignment and focus at the top leads to dysfunction, confusion, a lack of clarity and stifles productivity. This study highlighted how important it was for leaders to work together, communicate, and align their efforts for the good of the organization.

Institutions of higher education are faced with a set of leadership challenges that are unique to the industry. According to Smith and Wolverton (2010) leaders must balance their authority and wishes with the powerful voice and desires of the faculty when faced with decisions. They must do this while also attempting to meet the needs of multiple stakeholders such as students, community leaders, elected officials, trustee members, and staff throughout the college (Smith & Wolverton, 2010). In order to look into this further Smith and Wolverton (2010) conducted research to identify and determine the competencies necessary or critical for effective leadership. By conducting this study they were attempting to answer the following research question; does the higher education leadership competencies that were developed by McDaniel (2002) fit into four categories – context, content, process, and communication which mirror McDaniel's representation? According to Smith and Wolverton (2010) McDaniel's model has the following categories: (a) context- understanding trends and complex issues in higher education, (b) content – understanding the various components of the organizational structure,

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(c) process – knowledge and understanding of leadership and successful leadership strategies, and (d) communication – providing good verbal, nonverbal and written communication.

Given that there was no survey to measure the importance of the higher education leadership competencies (HELC) the researchers developed a HELC Survey. This instrument was created using feedback from experts, research literature, and a pilot study. Multiple methods to determine validity were considered. To address content validity a group of experts developed a list of necessary competencies for senior higher education leaders. Afterwards approximately 100 college presidents and vice presidents reviewed the list of competencies and provided feedback. In the final step, the American Council of Educational Leadership reviewed the list. Feedback was considered and incorporated into the instrument to enhance validity (Smith & Wolverton, 2010).

The survey was emailed to 971 individuals 350 responded, of which 295 completed the entire survey which constitutes 30% of the original sample. Factor analysis was used to reduce the 59 variables into smaller components; a five component model was created as a result. Cronbach's alpha coefficient indicated that the five components were reliable with alphas from .72 to .92. The five components were analytical leadership capabilities (20.48% of the variance), communication leadership competencies (8.71% of the variance), student affairs leadership competencies (8.31% of the variance), behavioral leadership competencies (7.89% of the variance) and external relationship competencies (7.84% of the variance) (Smith & Wolverton, 2010). This study supported some of McDaniel's HELC model confirming the communication competency but it also provided a new model that can be applied to future studies.

Hughey and Smith (2006) deduced that leadership was the most critical factor that contributes to the success or failure of any organization. Their article further highlighted the

myriad of challenges community colleges leaders will need to address. According to the authors, excellence or mediocrity and survival or extinction has a direct link to the institutions leadership. Waters, Marzano, and McNulty (2003) conducted a meta-analysis of the impact of school leadership on student success. They reviewed seventy studies involving 2,894 schools which translated into a sample of 1.1 million students and 14,000 teachers. Their findings revealed a correlation with an effect size of .25 between principle leadership and student achievement. The findings also yielded 21 leadership responsibilities that demonstrated a positive correlation with student achievement. Some of the items on the list included fostering shared beliefs, establishing clear goals, establishing strong communication lines, and being willing to challenge the status quo. They also found that leaders can have a negative impact on achievement which can be avoided if they are effective change agents focused on improving the institutions practices.

These effective leadership approaches and models that have been discussed provide insight into research that demonstrates strategies that have enabled leaders to achieve success and influence progress. Building on this it is important to discuss the change leadership. .

Leadership and Change

Higher Education is not immune to change and must be just as responsive as the business community. Educational institutions are facing changes such as decreased funding streams, state and federal policy changes, changing demographics, increased accountability and stakeholder demands, rapidly evolving technology, and increased competition (Casey, Davies & Hides, 2001). Gilley, Quatro, Hoekstra, Whittle, and Maycunich (2001) suggested that changing technology, market competition, financial issues and declining resources incite organizational change. They indicate that this prompts organizations to search for change agents that have the ability to facilitate change and motivate individuals to step outside of their comfort zones to

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address the challenges of the organization. Based on this position there appears to be some association between leadership and bringing about organizational change.

Influencing Change

Gilley, Gilley and McMillan (2009) studied the behaviors associated with leadership effectiveness in facilitating change. According to the authors in order to maintain a competitive advantage in these rapidly changing times an organization must employ competent leaders. This is because leaders need to function as change agents and develop strategies that move the organization forward. According to Gilley et al. (2009) organizations that promote transformational change will achieve a competitive advantage. Transformational change involves changing mindsets, culture, strategies, and organizational focus. They indicated that organizational change does not occur unless individuals within the organization embrace the change. Unfortunately, they believe that many leaders do not have a clear understanding of how to implement change and engage members of the organization. The research they examined by Beer, Eisenstat, and Spector (1990) indicated that 58% of the organizational change programs failed and 20% did not obtain the value expected. According to Gill (2003) the failure of change programs was a direct result of a lack of effective leadership. In order to examine this closely Gilley et al. (2009) conducted a qualitative study to explore leadership effectiveness in implementing change and the variables that influence their effectiveness. They utilized focus groups and surveys to explore whether employees thought their leaders were able to effectively implement change and possessed the skills and behaviors associated with effective implementation. Four hundred and seventy individuals responded to the survey. They were asked to rate their managers effectiveness at implementing change from a scale of (1) never – (5) always. Then the same scale was utilized to determine how frequently manages did the

following: coached, rewarded, recognized, motivated, and communicated with employees. They also asked whether they involved employees in decision making, encouraged teamwork and promoted collaboration.

The results of the study indicated that 74% of the respondents believed that their leaders never, rarely, or only sometimes were effective at implementing change. The skills and behaviors they noted as being most closely associated with effectively implementing change were the ability to coach, motivate, and communicate with others. Gilley et al. (2009) also noted that the study revealed that it was important to build teams and involve others. The authors believe that given the results of this study it is important for organizations to focus on developing the interpersonal skills of leaders so that they could evolve into transformational change agents and effective leaders.

The article titled *Organizational Change and Characteristics of Leadership Effectiveness* authored by Gilley, Gilley, and McMillan (2009) emphasized that leadership is a critical factor in bringing about change which is essential in these constantly evolving and demanding times. They emphasize that organizations that are effective in implementing ongoing change efforts will excel above their peer organizations or institutions. Unfortunately, the researchers note that most change efforts fail usually due to the lack of effective leadership. Gilley, Gilley and McMillan (2009) conducted research to address the following research questions: How effective are leaders in implementing change within their institutions? What specific leadership behaviors are most closely associated with an individual's ability to implement change? In order to best address the research question Gilley, Gilley and McMillan (2009) decided to focus on the perceptions of employee's regarding whether or not their leaders are effective in implementing change and how often their leaders demonstrate the skills and abilities necessary to facilitate effective change.

In order to create the initial instrument Gilley, Gilley and McMillan (2009) relied on the results of three focus groups consisting of business leaders and literature on effective leadership. The instrument was piloted with 59 volunteer undergraduate business capstone students in their senior year. The instrument was revised based on their feedback and then piloted with 14 employed volunteer business PhD students. Their feedback was utilized to make additional revisions and the draft survey. At this time the revised survey was shared with experts in the field who also provided feedback. This led to the creation of the final survey instrument (Gilley, Gilley & McMillan, 2009). The survey was administered to MBA, organizational development and PhD students attending three universities over three years. The researchers included Masters and PhD students in an effort to ensure diversity (Gilley, Gilley & McMillan, 2009).

Voluntary surveys were given to 507 individuals of which 470 (92.7%) responded. The independent variables in the study were coached employees, rewarded and recognized employees, communicated appropriately, motivated employees, involved employees in decision making, and encouraged teamwork and collaboration. The dependent variable was perception. Participants were asked to respond using a five point scale ranging from never to always. The respondents indicated that their supervisors seldom implemented change effectively. The study also revealed that there were positive correlations between change effectiveness and motivating (.71), communicating (.69), and team building (.63). Through regression analysis the six independent variables were reduced to four; motivating, communicating, teambuilding, and coaching. The researchers used F scores for inclusion at $p \leq .05$ and $p \geq .10$ for exclusion. Motivating, communicating, and team building were significant at $p \leq .001$. Coaching was significant at $p < .05$. The four variables accounted for 59% of the variance in leadership change effectiveness. In response to the research question this study revealed that 74% of the

participants perceived that their manager was never, rarely or only on occasion are able to effectively implement change. Motivating, coaching, team building and communicating was most closely associated with the skills and abilities necessary for leaders to effectively facilitate change (Gilley, Gilley & McMillan, 2009). The findings from this study can be used for further research and can be applied to institutions and organization in order to identify and train effective leaders and change agents. A major drawback to the study was the utilization of convenience sampling. Replicating this study utilizing random sampling would provide stronger external validity

Gilley, Quatro, and Whittle (2001) emphasized the importance of building credibility with internal and external stakeholders, addressing employee's professional and personal needs, motivating others to aspire for excellence, and helping others to formulate long term goals that will advance the organization well into the future. These are described as the core roles for change agents. Gilley et al. (2001) outlines five competencies for the core role of business partner. The competencies are stakeholder relationship, system thinking, organizational analysis, industry experience and technical skills, and project management skills. According to the authors baseline skills necessary include theoretical understanding, interpersonal skills, organizational skills, and task-specific competencies. They posit that strengthening one's skills in these areas will increase their credibility throughout the organization, which will open the door to successful change efforts. On the other hand, a lack of perceived credibility could have long-term negative effects and inevitably stifle one's ability to implement change. According to Gilley et al. (2001) as you advance through each role, business partner, servant leader, change champion, and future shaper, the change agent's realm of influence grows. Successful change agents must take the time to get to know their employees, become familiar with their goals, focus on their success,

and gain their trust and commitment. Successful change efforts garner the support of the employees who are moved to partner with the change agent to bring about personal and organizational change (Gilley et al., 2001). According to Olson and Eoyang (2001) individuals responsible for change should have the ability to adapt and see things from various perspectives. They reviewed a change approach called Complex Adaptive Systems (CAS). CAS outlines three groups of skills that are essential for change agents: (1) the ability to perceive what is happening in the organization at any point in time; (2) the ability to act and realize the results of the actions; (3) the ability to build relationships.

Change is difficult for most individuals since it is easier to be complacent. The change agent's role is not easy since change efforts are often political hot potatoes, require solid problem identification and problem solving skills, and require a thick skin in the face of criticism and rejection. A successful change agent must be able to overcome obstacles, stay focused and strategically lead their staff and the organization to achieve the strategic priorities (Gilley et al., 2001). Conflict can be healthy for an organization as long as conflict is embraced, addressed openly and respectfully, and not allowed to fester (Gilley et al., 2001). Conflict could be viewed as the healthy exchanges between individuals or departments that have differences. Unfortunately, conflict also has the potential to cripple change efforts (Olson & Eoyang, 2001).

Rahim (2002) emphasized that leaders must employ strategies to reduce the occurrence of conflict that creates dysfunction and demonstrate the ability to identify conflict so that it could be addressed accordingly. Gilley (2006) stated that not all conflict is bad and that functional conflict enhances and has a positive impact on the institution. According to Rahim (2002) and Gilley (2006), leaders must understand that conflict is unavoidable but is usually valuable. The presence of tension and conflict are essential components of a growing organization. Positive

conflict promotes inquiry, questions, and helps to challenge the status quo. This type of conflict referred to as substantive conflict also stimulates discussion and debate, promotes better decision making and creates greater understanding of issues and the impacts of decision. Substantive conflict will bring about changes in tasks, policies, and a variety of institutional issues (Rahim, 2002; Gilley, 2006).

However, Rahim (2002) indicated that negative conflict or unmanaged conflict can adversely impact individual and group performance. According to Rahim (2002) this type of conflict usually presents itself in the form of personal attacks, harassment, and unconstructive criticism of others or institutional policies and procedures. Negative conflict which is often referred to as affective conflict impedes the ability of staff to stay on track, forces them to focus on minimizing threats, seeking more power, or garnering support instead of focusing on the task at hand (Rahim 2002). Rahim (2002) emphasized that this type of conflict reduces loyalty, causes negativity, irritability, mistrust, increases conflict, stress, and poor job satisfaction. This form of conflict is unhealthy for the institution and could have lasting and damaging affects if not addressed (Rahim, 2002).

According to Tierney (1988); Locke and Guglielmino (2006); Ferren and Stanton (2004); and Matheny and Conrad (2012) a critical component of change involves creating a culture of change. The organization's culture is demonstrated through the institution's actions, such as the decisions made, who is involved in decisions and the institution's process for making decisions. A clear understanding of the organization's culture can help a leader become more effective and enhance their ability to bring about change. Failure to become familiar with the institution's culture could negatively impact a leader's ability to address institutional challenges and could bring about conflict between administrators, faculty, staff, and even students. Leaders that make

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an effort to understand the institution's culture can more effectively gain support and create buy-in when making difficult decisions. Instead of rallying against the leader when tough decisions are being made, institutional members will be more open to the organizational change. These individuals will work with the leader to develop shared goals. A clear understanding of the organization's culture will help to foster strong relationships. Awareness of the institution's culture will enable leaders to assess the potential consequences of a decision prior to applying the decision rather than after. This will enable the leader to determine the best possible decision and develop the most effective communication and implementation strategy. Cultural awareness will also allow leaders to become aware of tensions caused by organizational structure and operational procedures. Understanding the institution's culture provides leaders with the tools to identify discomfort, manage change, and have more of an impact when communicating the need for change and improve performance. Successful leadership requires a focus on and understanding of the institution's culture.

Gilley et al. (2001) highlighted the importance of anchoring change in the culture. According to the authors an organizational culture is powerful and could be firmly invested in its current way of doing business. Leaders must take great strides to reduce resistance to the change efforts. According to Kotter and Schlesinger (2008) people often resist change efforts because they do not want to upset the status quo, like the way things are going, or fear that change may impact their job security. They posited that change is an emotional experience for individuals mainly as a result of the pending uncertainty and loss of comfort or even control. When initiating change it is critical to provide education, ongoing communication, encourage participation and to carefully facilitate the change effort and provide constant support.

In their article titled *Change through Persuasion*, Garvin and Roberto (2005) posited that in order for change to be sustainable it is important for leaders to implement a persuasion campaign. Leaders should spend the time to ensure that staff understand, listen and embrace new ways of operating while carefully analyzing and questioning the effectiveness of current operating practices. This will help set the stage for acceptance and convince individuals that change is warranted. According to Garvin and Roberto (2005) ongoing support and follow-through by leaders during the implementation of the change effort is critical. Success will clear the pathway for sustainable change and opens the door for future change efforts to be embraced.

Gilley et al. (2001) developed an eleven step model and Kotter (2007) developed an eight stage process on leading change which was discussed by Britnell, Dawson and Mighty (2010). A review of these models revealed that they had the following recommendations in common: create a sense of urgency, develop and communicate a vision, select a change team, and anchor the change in the culture. The failure to create a great sense of urgency, a poorly selected guiding coalition, a lack of vision or poor communication of the vision, ignoring obstacles, poor planning, premature victory and failure to imbed the change into the culture are major mistakes made during the change effort and will often lead to unsuccessful change efforts (Kotter, 2007). Casey, Davies and Hides (2001) indicated that leaders need to drive change should be skilled at motivating others, trained, supported and nurtured.

According to Conchie and Roth (2008) effective leaders surround themselves with the right individuals and work hard to enhance and highlight their strengths and the most successful teams contain members varying in strengths. Kellerman (2008) indicated that it is important for leaders to allow followers to lead up and both leaders and followers must form an integrated bond that transcends and transforms the organization. Leadership distributed can create greater

buy-in and advance the organization. According to Wheatley (2006), in the future organizations that understand that leadership will look different and that there may be multiple ways to solve problems that differ from traditional methods will be better poised to successfully navigate the changing world.

Team leadership is a revolutionary approach and recognizes that diversity and differences within teams yield vital sources of creativity and innovation (Kezar, 2009). Top down leadership is not as effective as society once thought. There are three basic truisms in traditional theory; change starts at the top, if you have control you have efficiency and managers can predict the results of your change effort. Each of these have not held true particularly in the environment of constant change (Olson & Eoyang, 2001). Instead, Olson and Eoyang (2001) highlighted the importance for leaders to practice what they referred to as transforming exchanges. These exchanges encourage feedback, encourage partnerships and linkages within the area and throughout the organization, and encourage learning.

 Each of the studies on leadership, leadership effectiveness, and leadership and change provide essential information on the area of leadership. It is equally important to explore ethical leadership from the standpoint of what leaders should embody to further enhance their effectiveness.

Ethical Leadership

Leaders have tremendous influence over organizations, their employees, and society (Johnson, 2005 p.9). Given their level of influence these individuals have the responsibility to ensure they are making ethical decisions and exhibiting integrity, loyalty to others, and loyalty to the organization. Their decisions must be free from personal gain and harm to others (Eberhardt

& Valente, 2007). Leaders are obligated to demonstrate moral behavior that is based on explicit values that highlight their moral capacity to make decisions (Ciulia, 2004 p.111).

Berry's model of acculturation defines acculturation as a dynamic psychological process of adoption that occurs as the individual adapts to the culture of the organization this adoption is ongoing (Gottlieb, Handelsman, & Knapp, 2005). Gilley, Anderson, and Gilley (2008) posited that many professionals have not examined their own ethical identity. Handelsman, Gottlicb, and Knapp (2005) developed an acculturation model which built on the work of Berry model of acculturation. The model they developed clearly demonstrates the necessity of an inward look at one's own values, beliefs, and ethical origins. This model can also aid leaders in determining their fit within the organizations culture, values and delivery of service.

According to Gilley, Anderson, and Gilley (2008 p.197) individuals new to the organizational culture encounter two questions that they must evaluate. First, they need to assess how much of their identity, values, morals, and beliefs must stay in place. Second, they should determine how much of the new culture they will absorb. The authors surmised that the individual's decision results in high or low adoption which leads to placement in one of the acculturation strategies. The four strategies are marginalization, separation, assimilation, and integration. An individual in the marginalization strategy has no desire to become a part of the organizations culture and no desire to maintain his or her own personal values. These individuals have no personal values and they have no ethical base to guide their decisions making. This could translate into the individual making decisions for personal gain, they may make unethical decisions to hide mistakes, or they may make unethical decisions that go against the organizations values and professional practices. An individual in separation strategy holds their personal values, ethics and beliefs in high regard but does not have any regard for the

organizations culture, values, and ethics. This individual is prone to act on their own beliefs, which could be in conflict with the organization's mission, visions, values, goals, and operational strategies. Assimilation strategy describes an individual that has adopted the organizations culture but has limited interest in maintaining his or her own personal values, culture and beliefs. This person tends to over identify with the organization and will make ethical decisions from this perspective only. These individuals are unlikely to challenge policies and practices even if they are found to be unethical. The ideal strategy is integration. This is where individuals maintain the important aspects of their culture, values, and beliefs while adopting the culture, values and beliefs of the organization. They use the balance between themselves and the organization to make healthy ethical decisions (Gottlieb, Handelsman, and Knapp, 2005).

As individuals achieve the ability to utilize integration strategy it has been noted that they also demonstrate an increased moralistic focus when making decisions (Gilley, Anderson, and Gilley, 2008 p.200). Given that an individual's moral beliefs play a role in their decision making process it is important to understand the theory of James Rest. Rest highlighted four concepts that must be present for moral behavior to occur. These concepts are moral sensitivity, moral decision-making, moral motivation and moral character. Moral sensitivity involves evaluating how the decisions one is about to make will affect others. Moral decision-making prompts the individual to analyze and explore all possible options utilizing their ethical and moral values to answer the questions of what ought to be done. Moral motivation involves analyzing for conflicts of interest and competing values between the organization, an individual's professional motives, and their personal motives. Moral character involves the individual following through on their decision. All four concepts must occur but in no particular order, if all four do not occur moral behavior will not be present (Anderson, Wagoner, & Moore, 2006, pp.50-51). Leaders or

individuals in roles of authority need to strive for moral behavior drawing on their moral code, moral compass, and a greater understanding of human values. This will help leaders remain focused during times of uncertainty or pressure (Badaracco, 2006 pp.33-34).

In order to expand one's ability to make the best ethical decisions it is important to understand the approaches and theories that have been proven to address a variety of ethical and moral options. While there are other approaches I have decided to highlight utilitarianism, Kart's categorical imperative, justice as fairness, communitarianism, altruism and ethical pluralism for the purposes of this study. Utilitarianism is frequently used to make decision where the goal is to provide the greatest benefit for the greatest amount of individuals. This approach forces leaders to anticipate the results of their decision weighing its cost and benefits (Johnson, 2005, pp.129-130). Kart's categorical imperative is built on the premise that individuals must always do what is morally correct. This approach promotes consistency in ethical decision-making but lacks the flexibility to apply exceptions when warranted (pp. 132-135). The justice as fairness approach expects that individuals abide by the following principles of justice. First, everyone is entitled to the same equal rights and basic liberties. Second, everyone is entitled to employment and educational opportunities free from discrimination. The justice as fairness approach also indicates that when inequalities exist priority should be given to the poor and other disadvantaged groups. This approach encourages leaders to treat followers fairly (p.137). Communitarianism encourages individuals to place their responsibilities first and seek what is best. It emphasizes the leader's obligation to unselfish leadership, collaboration, open dialog and building character. Altruism focuses on service to others regardless of the personal cost. This approach promotes sensitivity, respect and compassion (p.144). Often leaders need to apply ethical pluralism which involves combining the perspectives in order to

address ethical dilemmas (p.146). Each of these approaches has benefits and drawbacks but exploring these approaches can help expand a leader's ethical knowledge base and capacity. This can lead to improved ethical decision-making.

It is important that leaders explore the various normative leadership theories that helped provide them with insight on how they ought to act. These theories focus on the relationship between leaders and those that follow them. Transformational leadership involves building self-esteem, ability, self-fulfillment and strengthening motivation and morality. These leaders seek to energize their employees, stimulate knowledge growth and serve as role models providing support and guidance. Postindustrial leaders establish goals for their employees and then work to have them achieve the goals. Effectiveness of leadership is determined based on the accomplishments of the employees. Taoist leaders do not seek the spotlight and glory. They lead by example and allow their employees to perform their duties without intervention. This approach calls for teamwork, innovation, spirituality, collaboration, empowerment, listening and negotiation. Servant leaders put the needs of their employees before their own. Leaders practicing servant leadership focus on ensuring the growth of their employees (Johnson, 2005). I believe that it is important that as individuals grow and develop they gain a clear understanding of the normative leadership style that best mirrors their personality and values. They should then strive to understand the moral principles on which each theory was built. This will ensure a clear understanding of the leadership style chosen to help guide their moral and ethical actions when working with employees and stakeholders. The literature provides good insight into various aspects of ethical leadership and it importance. Given the critical role of leadership and the influence of academic affairs units within the institution it is important to look more closely at academic affairs leadership.

Academic Affairs and Leadership

The academic affairs area plays a prominent role in the institution. The academic affairs culture consists of many layers according to an article written by Hardy, Kuh, Love, and MacKay (1993). The authors determined that the academic affairs profession consisted of three cultures: the academic profession, the institutional culture, and the culture of the discipline. Hardy et al. (1993) determined that faculty in the area tended to value seeking and distributing knowledge, autonomy, and collegiality. The authors indicated that the size, type, and history of the institution help to shape the culture of the faculty. Faculty at research institutions were focused more on research than teaching, the faculty at small liberal arts colleges were focused on both teaching and research, and the faculty at community colleges were focused primarily on teaching. The mission of these institutions played a role in shaping the culture of the academic area. According to the authors the relationship between institutional type, mission and culture was evident particularly when reviewing mission statements and promotion and tenure criteria. Ferren and Stanton (2004) reviewed job descriptions in the Chronicle of Higher Education. Their review revealed that the chief academic leader was referred to in multiple ways. These included academic dean, dean of the faculty, vice president for academic affairs, and provost. Ferren and Stanton (2004) discovered that there was a monumental list of responsibilities these individuals are responsible for carrying out. The job descriptions disclosed that academic leaders were being asked to enhance the curriculum, develop assessment measures, grow faculty leadership and development opportunities, increase student satisfaction and retention, ensure that academic programs are cost-effective, encourage diversity, support collegiality, streamline operations, and foster trust and open communication. Ferren and Stanton (2004) indicated that these positions are difficult to fill and recommend that these individual have political savvy, are able to build

confidence in others, learn the institutions culture, and balance their academic experience with leadership and management strategies. Ferren and Stanton (2004) suggested that that the position of chief academic officer is one of the most difficult positions on the campus given the multiple expectation and high demands placed on the position.

Klein and Takeda-Tinker (2009) conducted a study whose purpose was to determine whether a significant relationship existed between the job satisfaction levels of full-time business faculty in the Wisconsin Technical College System (WTCS) and the leadership practices of their direct supervisors. They also explored whether demographics had an impact on job satisfaction and the leadership practices of their supervisors. The study utilized the Leadership Practice Inventory and the Job Satisfaction Survey to compile data from their sample. The Leadership Practice Inventory measures leadership based on five practices; bringing about change, creating a shared vision, motivating others, modeling desired behavior and providing encouragement. The Cronbach alpha coefficient was used to test the reliability of the instrument. The instrument consisted of two sections self-reporting and observer-reporting. The coefficients for the self-reporting survey section ranged from .75 to .87, and the observer-reporting coefficients ranged from .88 to .92. These results indicated that both survey respondent categories were found to be internally reliable with observer-reporting being more internally reliable. The authors indicated that by utilizing both sections of the instrument they would gain more information and run a more in-depth statistical analysis. The instrument has also been used in academic research for areas such as business, education, healthcare, religious organizations and non-profit agencies (Klein & Takeda-Tinker, 2009). The reliability of the Job Satisfaction survey which measures nine areas of employee satisfaction was evaluated in several ways. In an effort to measure internal consistency of the survey coefficient alpha was applied. Each of the nine categories had

coefficients that ranged from .60 to .91. The researcher indicated that they used a .50 coefficient to indicate reliability. According to Gliner, Leech and Morgan (2009) reliability to be at least marginal needs to be a minimum of .60. Discriminate and convergent validity was determined using a comparative analysis of the Job Satisfaction Survey and the Job Descriptive Index. Although no data was provided the authors indicated that the correlation between the two instruments determined validity of the Job Satisfaction Survey. Based on information contained in the article the survey has been utilized in multiple academic research studies and has been identified as a solid way of collecting and analyzing data as it pertains to job satisfaction (Klein & Takeda-Tinker, 2009).

The target population was 935 faculty members teaching business at one of the sixteen colleges in the Wisconsin Technical College System. The researchers decided to sample the entire population and decided against identifying a sample from the population since the target population was determined to be small. However, it is important to note that only 710 full-time business faculty in the Wisconsin Technical College System were surveyed. The reason for this discrepancy was not explained. There were 231(32.5%) respondents of which 215 (30%) responded correctly which the authors determined valid to conduct their research. Correlation test were conducted to explore relationships between job satisfaction and leadership practices. The results revealed strong correlations (.875) between faculty satisfaction with supervision and the leadership practices of their supervisor. Faculty satisfaction with contingent rewards and leadership practices had a moderate positive correlation of (.561). Satisfaction with communication and leadership practices had a strong correlation of (.450). Furthermore, faculty satisfaction with operating conditions and leadership had a small correlation of (.246) and satisfaction with their work assignments and leadership had a small positive correlation of (.373).

These results indicated that faculty with higher job satisfaction and contingent rewards levels

that were satisfied with communication rated leaders high in leadership practices.   Moreover, the

results indicated that faculty satisfied with their operating conditions and work assignments rated

their leaders high in leadership practice (Klein & Takeda-Tinker, 2009). Although the statistical

details were not provided, the researchers indicated that they conducted Chi Square tests in an

effort to analyze if a relationship would be found between job satisfaction and age, gender,

education level, or the number of years employed at the institution. The researchers determined

that there was not enough evidence to determine that job satisfaction was dependent on any of

the four demographics tested. Therefore, based on the Chi Square test they conducted they

determined that age, gender, education level and years of service did not play a significant role in

the participants survey responses (Klein & Takeda-Tinker, 2009).   Klein and Takeda-Tinker

(2009) determined whether a significant relationship existed between the job satisfaction levels

of full-time business faculty in the Wisconsin Technical College System (WTCS) and the

leadership practices of their direct supervisors revealed that faculty with higher job satisfaction

and contingent rewards levels that were satisfied with communication rated leaders high in

leadership practices.

According to Klein and Takeda-Tinker (2009) it is critical to recruit qualified faculty and

institutional leaders in order to increase quality and effectiveness. They posited that leaders need

to understand what leads to job satisfaction among faculty. The authors suggested that if a leader

failed to promote job satisfaction it would have a negative impact on the institution resulting in

high turnover and poor quality of instruction. Their researchers suggested that their research can

be used to closely match candidates for leadership positions with identified high job satisfaction

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leadership practices. Moreover, the results indicated that faculty satisfied with their operating conditions and work assignments rated their leaders high in leadership practice.

The position of vice president for academic affairs is typically the second in command. This position is described as playing one the most critical roles within the institution. Some describe it as equally important as the role of president. These individuals are typically responsible for all academic programming, instructional integrity, curriculum development, and anything related to teaching and learning, all of which are considered central to the community college mission (Anderson, Murray, & Olivarez, 2002). Anderson et al. (2002) conducted a study which sought to identify the managerial roles emphasized by community college vice presidents of academic affairs. The researchers obtained a 73.6% response rate from a stratified random sample population of 250 vice presidents from six accreditation regions across the United States. Their findings revealed that leaders serving in this capacity need to be effective in motivating, communicating and collaborating with others in order to carry out the institutional mission and goals. A study of industrial leaders conducted by Gilley, Dixon, and Gilley (2008) provided additional support for the findings of Anderson et al. (2002). Gilley et al. (2008) revealed leaders must be able to motivate, communicate, build teams and involve others in order to successfully infuse change throughout the organization. The results of these studies highlighted that motivating and communicating were the most critical abilities a leader should possess in order to be successful. Ferren and Stanton (2004) surmised that academic leaders must have the ability to think analytically, be organized, have the ability to make persuasive presentations, understand the institutional culture, demonstrate the ability to make collegial decisions, collaborate institution-wide, understand and strive to reach the goals of the institution, and perform as an agent of change. Ferren and Stanton (2004) indicated that the chief academic

affairs officers often rise from the ranks of the faculty and have limited experience overseeing multiple campus units and large budgets. Most pull from the strengths that they developed as faculty members, department chairs, or program directors (Ferren & Stanton, 2004). Similar to academic affairs the area of student affairs and leadership deserve attention.

Student Affairs and Leadership

The student affairs area is increasingly being seen as an important area of the college and essential to fulfilling institutions mission. The mission of the student affairs varies from college to college but they tend to be administrative and service oriented. These areas tend to be focused on providing service to students that help facilitate their academic and personal success. Student affairs units typically have independent cultures that exist within the larger institutional culture (Kuk, Banning, & Amey, 2010). Kuk and Banning (2009) posited that the area of student affairs has become more complex and vital to the institution. According to the authors, increased demands for a variety of programs and services have positioned student affairs units as critical components of student success and a major influence on a student's educational experience.

While there are a variety of structures utilized in higher education there is no identified structure that is guaranteed to ensure the effectiveness of student affairs units. Given the varying cultures and focuses of higher education institutions each institution must analyze their institution and decide on a reporting relationship that demonstrates effectiveness for the institution. The majority of higher education institutions have an organizational structure that is hierarchical and categorized by function. The student affairs units are commonly headed by a student affairs leader that holds a title that reflects their authority, responsibility, and place within the organization. Four variables commonly influence the reporting relationship for student affairs, the president, institutional size, mission, history and tradition (Barr, 1993).

In the article titled, *The Chief Student Affairs Officer and the President*, Shay (1984) reviewed the reporting structure of student affairs leaders indicating that two models were common in higher education. One model consisted of the student affairs leader reporting to the chief academic affairs officer and the other model consisted of the student affairs leader reporting to the president. Shay (1984) indicated that it was difficult to define the optimal reporting structure and reporting structure was usually based on the preference of the president. According to the author this had little to do with the level of importance the president placed on the student affairs area. Barr (1993) concurred that two of the most common reporting models that exist for student affairs units are reporting to the president or reporting to another college leader. Reporting to the president of the institution is often seen as ideal and supporters of this model believe that it sends a message to the academic community that the student affairs unit plays a critical role within the institution. The author also mentioned that disputes tend to be resolved collegially rather than by power and the agenda. In this model the student affairs leader has the ability to contribute to major decisions that impact the campus operations. The disadvantage noted was that the president may not be available due to the many off campus obligations. This may limit the student affairs leader's ability to get timely feedback to make decisions (Barr, 1993). The other common model involves student affairs units reporting to a campus leader that is not the president, usually the vice president of academic affairs or provost. This is considered an effective structure when the president has limited time to focus on the issues of the area. In these instances, the other campus leader provides better access, greater communication, and more timely feedback for decision making. It was also noted that more partnerships and collaborations may occur as a result of this model. The disadvantages include a campus perception that the student affairs area is not an equal player in the education of students

and is not valued as high as other areas of the college. There is also concern that the area and its challenges may not be advocated for or revealed to the president (Barr, 1993). Culp (1995) reviewed organizational models for student affairs units and discovered that there are multiple ways that community colleges organize student affairs. The study revealed a reporting structure that merges academic affairs and student affairs under one leader. The author notes that this model offers opportunities for collaboration but could establish the area of student affairs as second to the academic area.

Regardless of reporting structure student affairs was often viewed as the sub-culture of the institution. Locke and Guglielmino (2006) emphasized that there is a relationship between the organizations culture and the success of change initiatives. They indicated that it is important for leaders to understand, manage and mold the institutions ethos. The organizations culture consists of individuals with common values, beliefs, assumptions, philosophies, attitude and expectations. According to the authors, an organizations culture consist of the dominate culture which encompass the larger ethos of the institution and the sub-culture which comprises groups that form their own beliefs, customs, practices, and expectations. They indicated that in order for change to be sustainable leaders must recognize and understand both the dominant culture and the sub-culture. Their research on the sub-culture and organizational change revealed that student affairs leaders that recognize the influence of the sub-culture are able to more effectively implement change. Anderson, Lujan, and Hegeman (2009) also discussed the importance of campus leaders respecting the values of the sub-culture. These studies demonstrate the importance of recognizing the vital role the sub-culture plays in institutional success.

Navigating Change and Perceptions to Promote Success

There are many perceptions that exist regarding student affairs. Student affairs leaders should understand and be equipped to address these perceptions in order to help advance the student affairs area. Brown (1997) in his study of the chief student affairs officer and leadership effectiveness highlighted the continuously expanding role and responsibilities of student affairs leaders. According to Brown this role and responsibility expansion required holistic leadership skills. Brown (1997) indicated that the student affairs professionals' role had expanded primarily as a result of the changing demographic makeup of the student body on college campuses. This includes an increase in physically challenged, learning disabled, and more ethnically and financially diverse students. The author pointed out that student affairs professional play an important role in helping student address challenges, navigate the institution, and develop while at the institution. According to Brown (1997) unlike academic affairs professionals student affairs professionals were constantly seeking institutional respect. The researcher indicates that many faculty and administrators viewed student affairs work as a duplication of academic affairs work and competitive to academic programs and services.

Dalton and Gardner (2002) discussed the constantly changing environment of student affairs and how student affairs leaders can navigate and introduce change into the organization. The article focused on the importance of good planning and staying in tune with emerging trends in student affairs. The authors emphasized that it was important not to adopt every new trend, model, or fad that became popular. He expressed that change that is not well thought out or done just to do it could have a negative impact on the leader's credibility and effectiveness. According to Dalton and Gardner (2002) change that was introduced into the institution must be in line with the mission of the institution and the division as well as have a lasting impact on the

institution. Leaders were cautioned not to bow to every wish of an enthusiastic president who is looking for an infusion of new ideas to present to the board.

Kuk, Banning, and Amey (2010), mentioned that there were often calls for student affairs units to be more nimble and adopt more business operating practices. This is difficult due to the uniqueness of student affairs. However, the student affairs area is facing several challenges and changing times that test their organizational effectiveness. It will be important to promote an understanding that change should be viewed as constant and necessary for organizational growth, success and survival. According to the authors organizations whose employees are flexible, adaptive and comfortable with change are typically more successful than those that are not.

Sandeen (1991) stressed in his book that student affair leaders must be effective and have the ability to communicate the areas role, responsibility, goals, and impact both internally and externally in order to dispel stereotypes and highlight the critical importance of the area. Brown (1997) indicated that student affairs leaders need to provide proactive leadership and view their positions as visionary and invaluable. The author also discussed the importance of exhibiting leadership that promoted interaction with faculty, other administrators, members of the board of trustees, students, and the community. Brown (1997) encouraged student affairs leaders to participate in larger campus-wide decisions and move beyond focusing specifically on their divisions. The article provided information on the importance of collaboration between academic affairs and student affairs and encouraged student affairs leaders to seek out these partnerships in order to advance the academic mission, the student affairs mission, and the overall college mission.

 Hirt (2007) utilized narratives to look at how the student affairs area was viewed within higher education. Hirt (2007) demonstrated how the way student affairs leaders present their

agendas may not be aligned with the new market-driven focus of institutions. The author utilized

the Seven Principles of Good Practice to look at the distinctions between student affairs and

academic affairs at institutions and then offered suggestions for closer alignment. According to

Hirt (2007) there was a strong belief that those in the academic area did not understand or value

the critical role that student affairs leaders played within the institution and that the two areas had

different focuses. This opinion was solidified after the author participated in two meetings one

lead by a student affairs administrator and the other lead by an academic affairs administrator.

The author indicated that the academic affairs administrator was focused on what is best for the

institution and the student affairs administrator was focused on what is best for the students. Hirt

(2007) chose to use first and second order narratives to look at individual perceptions and the

collective experience of individuals over time. The author explained that the utilization of

narratives is effective when looking at how members of an organizational culture view the

organization. Hirt (2007) effectively demonstrated how distinctively different the two areas

operate. Prior to doing this the researcher provided an overview of how higher education has

evolved over the past two decades. Hirt (2007) indicated that federal policies have shifted,

funding had declined, there was more focus on accountability, and institutions had a more

corporate focus. The article highlighted the growing focus on research and its financial benefit

to the organization as well as the growing focus on obtaining corporate support and funding.

Hirt (2007) believed that this prompted academic leaders to develop policies that capitalize on

the benefit of faculty research, addressed stakeholder needs, and helped to advance the

institution. According to Hirt (2007) student affairs leaders were primarily focused on serving

students. They are often trained in student development theory which shapes their agenda and

programs. The author looked at a publication widely used to guide student affairs professionals

and demonstrated how slight language modifications could help student affairs leaders better align themselves with the goals of the institution without losing their focus and direction. According to the author it was critical for student affairs leaders to utilize language and terminology that attempted to align their interests with those that academic affairs leaders can understand and embrace.

Leading for Success

It is important for student affairs leaders to embody the strategies and approaches that will enable them to be successful. Dalton (2002) suggested that practical wisdom is critical for successful student affairs leadership. According to Dalton (2002) two key components of practical wisdom were good judgment and sound knowledge. The author utilized the stories of ten exceptional student affairs leaders to illustrate the key strategies utilized by these individuals and how they can be applied to help facilitate success. Dalton (2002) explained that practical wisdom was the combination of three learning types; education accumulated professional expertise, collaboration, and mentoring with others in the profession. Each of these learning styles was explored in great detail.

Thomas (2002) explored the moral side of student affairs leadership. This article focused on the experiences of several student affairs leaders faced with ethical dilemmas. Each person interviewed explains their most memorable dilemmas and reflect on how they handled the dilemma. Thomas (2002) emphasized that student affairs leadership centered on integrity, ethical values and the courage to do the right thing. The author went on to describe that student affairs leadership was about making a commitment to the institution, the employees, the students, and other key stakeholders. Throughout the article it is demonstrated that ethical leadership is honored and respected whereas unethical leadership could have lasting negative consequences

that stretch beyond the leader. The stories told throughout the article spoke of damaged credibility, discomfort with unethical supervisors, how to handle controversial decisions, and the importance of respect, honesty, fairness, and demonstrated core values.

Kosten and Lovell (2000) conducted a study that synthesized thirty years of research that looked at successful student affairs leaders utilizing meta-analysis techniques. Their goal was to determine the successful student affairs leadership factors most often identified in the research literature. They looked at student affairs literature published since 1967. Through this analysis the authors clearly identified the characteristics of a successful student affairs administrator. The authors identified a variety of key words in order to guide their literature search and they limited their search to research conducted between 1967 and 1997. They looked at both qualitative and quantitative studies. Those studies selected had to relate to the competencies of student affairs leaders. It is important to note that the researchers did not discover any literature that looked at the skills, knowledge bases, or personality traits necessary for success as a student affairs administration at a community college or private institution. The leadership skills and traits most often identified in the research as being associated with successful student affairs leaders were human facilitation skills, knowledge of student development theory, understanding of functional areas within student affairs, integrity, and cooperation. Kosten and Lovell (2000) noted that given the evolving nature of higher education student affairs administrators may also need to possess the following professional competencies, political skills, understand public policy. In addition, they need to immerse themselves in assessment, and adapt to the changing technology (Kosten & Lovell, 2000).

In their article Principles of Good Practice for Student Affairs, Bliming and Whitt (1998) called attention to several issues and challenges facing student affair leaders given the constantly

evolving nature of higher education. Challenges discussed in the article included increasing enrollment, competition, and declining funding. Bliming and Whitt (1998) stated that during lean times student affairs leaders must be able to demonstrate their effectiveness and justify their decisions, policies and procedures. The authors focused on discussing the practices and principles leaders could utilize to navigate the changing times in order to ensure organizational success. Specific attention was given to the seven principles of good practices for student affairs leaders to apply. Bliming and Whitt (1998) also explored why each practice was proven to be effective.

Hirt, Collins, and Plummer (2005) conducted a blended study that sought to examine the professional life of student affairs professionals. The researchers conducted focus groups consisting of 176 student affairs professionals from diverse backgrounds and institution types. The majority of the participants were at the cabinet level. In addition to the focus groups the participants completed a written questionnaire and participated in additional dialog after completing the questionnaire in order for the researchers to obtain additional data. The researchers combined their findings into three themes: work environment, work pace, and productivity. The individuals participating in the study indicated that their work was more practice based and less theory based. One participant indicated that they attempt to avoid speaking student affairs theory and jargon to faculty since it would lead to a loss in credibility and would be a turn off to the faculty member. Other participants spoke of the lack of recognition from the faculty and other areas of the college. Hirt et al. (2005) noted that there was a significant belief that faculty did not understand or appreciate the work of the student affairs professional.

According to Hirt et al. (2005) participants in their study reported that they believed that there was a lack of control over their work and that they were more reactive than proactive. During their study a participant discussed the stressful and unpredictable nature of their work. There was also sentiment that given the troubling times facing higher education intuitions there has been an increased call for student affairs to justify its role and overall existence.

This research by Hirt et al. (2005) revealed that there was a great degree of teamwork and collaboration among student affairs professionals. They determined that the area was focused on servicing the needs of others. Extrinsic rewards were overwhelmingly valued among professionals in the field. Based on the findings from their study Hirt et al. (2005) determined that student affairs professional were altruistic and less focused on large staff, high salaries, and autonomy.

Doyle (2004) conducted a quantitative study of 216 student affairs leaders at colleges and universities across the United States with enrollments between 500 and 3000 students. The purpose of the study was to determine if student affairs divisions had adopted the Principles of Good Practice for Student Affairs developed by ACPA and NASPA. The results of the study indicated that the participants were most focused on developing the whole student by engaging them in active learning and building their values and ethical standards so that they are prepared to handle social situations. One significant finding of the research by Doyle (2004) was that the student affairs leaders participating revealed that they were much better at working with students than addressing their administrative responsibilities. According to the author the findings provided quantitative support to the thoughts that student affairs needs to be better managed. The author highlighted the implications of poor management by student affairs leaders

emphasizing that it could have negative impacts on resources, lead to reorganization and downsized staffing.

Doyle (2004) stressed the importance of collaboration with academic affairs and the need for sound management practices such as assessment and more efficient utilization of institutional resources. Doyle (2004) also highlighted that the study revealed that there is a lack of a shared institutional approach to learning between student affairs and other areas of the college. According to the author this could lead to the demise of the student affairs area. The author summarized the critical importance for student affairs leaders to demonstrate efficiency and effectiveness move beyond the traditional boundaries of student affairs, and partner with other areas of the institution, particularly academic affairs, to fulfill the institutions mission. The role of collaboration in bringing about organizational and student success deserve focused attention.

Collaboration and Leadership for Organizational and Student Success

Partnership, collaboration, and teamwork appear to be tied to leadership effectiveness and organizational success. Frank (1986) determined that the further away a leader was structurally separated from the president the lower the job satisfaction. Chieffo (1991) determined that based on the findings of his research presidents should foster participative decision making and create an organizational atmosphere that encourages teamwork. Malik, Napierski-Prancl, and Volkwein (1998) determined through their research that there was a positive relationship between administrative job satisfaction and teamwork.

In their article titled *Making the Most of Collaboration: Exploring the Relationship Between Partnership Synergy and Partnership Functioning*, Anderson, Lasker and Weiss (2002) examined whether there was a correlation between partnership synergy and leadership, administration, and management, partnership efficiency, nonfinancial resources, partner

involvement challenges, and community related challenge. According to the researchers, building collaborations and partnerships was often difficult, time consuming and demanding. Most collaborations and partnerships become lengthy struggles to reach intended goals. However, the authors indicate that successful partnerships and collaborations have lasting positive impacts on the organization (Anderson, Lasker & Weiss, 2002). Anderson, Lasker and Weiss (2002), in this national study on partnership functioning, hypothesized that partnership synergy is directly related to the following dimensions of partnership functioning: administration, leadership, efficiency, non-financial resources, partner involvement challenges, and community-related challenges.

Potential participating organizations were identified from a database of individuals that had participated in a similar survey and had forged collaborative partnerships, represented diverse groups and had been in existence for at least one and a half years. Seventy-seven participating organizations nationwide were selected to participate, 66 participants representing 28 states actually participated in the study. Once identified questionnaires were mailed to 1,163 individuals employed by the participating organizations. Extensive efforts were made to increase the response rates. The researchers also decided that in order for the data from a participating organization to be included in the study there needed to be at least a 65% response rate from the organizations employees. Sixty-three out of the sixty-six participants met the criteria to be included in the study. Seventy-five percent of those selected participated in the study. (Anderson, Lasker & Weiss, 2002).

Anderson, Lasker and Weiss (2002) utilized weighted least squares regression analysis to test their hypothesis that partnership synergy is directly related to the following dimensions of partnership functioning: administration, leadership, efficiency, non-financial resources, partner

involvement challenges, and community-related challenges. Their findings indicated that partnership synergy is directly related to leadership (β=.41, p<.05), administration and management (β=.19, p<.10), partnership efficiency (β =.27, p<.05), non-financial resources (β=.14, p<.10). The researchers considered p = .05 and p=.10 to have an association, p values of less than .05 were considered statistically significant.   Partner involvement challenges and community related challenge did not directly relate to partnership synergy (Anderson, Lasker & Weiss, 2002).   Although this study was conducted utilizing healthcare providers it can and should be replicated in the field of higher education in which the literature emphasizes that collaboration and partnership has become more vital.

Bierhoff and Muller (2005) conducted a quantitative research study that analyzed the influence of leadership styles and voluntary collaboration between employees. According the researchers collaboration enabled organizations to be flexible and adaptable addressing tasks and complex problems effectively. The role of the leader was described as helping the group navigate obstacles, get along with one another, overcome communication issues, encourage mutual understanding, define and clarify roles, and capitalize on the strengths of group members. In order to test their hypothesis that there was a link between mood, group atmosphere, and leadership influence behavior. One hundred and twenty-two undergraduate psychology students from diverse backgrounds were selected to participate in the study. The participants were separated into groups lead by the instructors. The results of the study demonstrated that there was a strong positive correlation between mood, cooperation, group support, overall cooperation, and collaboration. The researchers discovered that leaders that demonstrated high concern for employees, delegate tasks appropriately, and encourage task-related exchange significantly positively impact group dynamics. Bierhoff and Muller (2005) summarized that leadership was

essential in influencing the climate of the group. This study was significant since it provides a view of how leaders can impact partnership and collaborative efforts to advance the organization or even prevent organizational growth. The barriers to collaboration are equally important to explore.

Barriers and Perceptions

The literature revealed several barriers and perceptions that impede the progress of collaboration between academic affairs and student affairs. Kezar (2009a) inferred that collaboration is stifled in higher education because of its bureaucracy, silos, and hierarchical structure. According to Kezar (2009a) there was a significant divide between student affairs and academic affairs as a result of the different focus and sub-culture. Although, there have been calls for collaboration between the two areas they usually do not collaborate (Kezar, 2009a). Hardy, Love, Kuh, and MacKay (1993) conducted an in-depth study on the cultures of academic and student affairs. Hardy et al. (1993) in their research revealed that the areas of academic affairs and student affairs operated independently on many campuses. Their study highlighted that at some institutions the two areas ignored each other. In their study Hardy et al. (1993) spoke about how there was limited contact and a lack of knowledge or even disinterest between the two areas. They also noted that their study revealed frustration regarding a perception of skewed priorities when it came to the distribution of resources. One of their observations was that it seemed that the two areas were working in different worlds. The researchers attributed this disconnect between the two areas to a difference in culture (Hardy et al., 1993).

Kezar (2003; 2009) highlighted the following barriers to collaboration between academic affairs and student affairs: organizational fragmentation, silos, lack of common goals and shared values, uncommon language, different priorities, false assumptions, historic separation, cultural

differences and a lack of knowledge and misperceptions about the other area. Goldstein (2007) conducted a quantitative study that sought to determine if differences existed between the student affairs leaders self-perceived leadership effectiveness and the perceptions the chief academic leader had of the student affairs leaders' effectiveness. The researcher selected Vice Presidents of Academic Affairs and Vice President of Student Affairs employed at New Jersey colleges and universities to participate in the study. The Leadership Practice Inventory was utilized to collect the data. The researcher found that there was a difference in the view the student affairs leaders had of their effectiveness and the view the academic leader had of their effectiveness. The participants agreed that the student affairs area made efforts to collaborate with other areas of the college. They also agreed that the student affairs area must do a better job of communicating their vision and role within the institution. Moreover, this study suggests that student affairs leaders should spend more time working on budgets, strategic plans, and more effectively contributing to the institutional mission.

Reif (2007) in their study of student affairs and academic affairs indicated that there was a prevalent gap between academic affairs and student affairs. This gap according to Reif (2007) interfered with a student's ability to make important connections between curricular and extracurricular experiences. Reif (2007) hypothesized that the gap between the two areas was a result of different values and cultures with limited functional overlap. According to the study the high degree of faculty autonomy, limited resources, and the fragmented organizational structure impeded collaboration between the two areas. The author expressed concern that the faculty's focus on research and instruction stifled their interaction with students and limited the opportunity for academic discussion outside of the classroom. Reif (2007) also discussed how student affairs professionals are disconnected from the classroom and lacked the training to

support the academic pursuit of students. Based on the results of the study Reif (2007) encouraged central administration to create a more seamless partnership between the two areas that moves beyond the traditional boundaries of the two areas. The researcher called for leaders to distribute resources and develop programs that unite both areas in pursuit of a shared mission to ensure student success.

Structure and Collaboration

It is important to explore the impact organizational structure has on collaboration. Janey (2009) conducted quantitative research on the organizational context for collaboration between academic affairs and student affairs in community colleges. The purpose of the research was to gain an understanding how the organizational context can influence collaboration between the two areas. This study discussed how the literature on higher education research revealed that partnership and collaboration between the two areas has several positive benefits for the institution and the students it serves. The study indicated that the benefits include enriched learning environments, improved student retention and academic success. Janey (2009) highlighted that collaboration between academic affairs and student affairs have led to the development of learning communities, first-year experience programs and service learning. The research utilized a quantitative survey method that employed a Likert-type scale in an effort to obtain data from academic and student affairs leaders employed at community colleges and explore commonalities. Responses were received from 138 academic leaders and 161 student affairs leaders. The research explored the relationship between organizational factors and collaboration between the two areas. These organizational factors include the environment, culture, the organizational structure, human relations, power and politics (Janey, 2009).

Based on the results of the study a political organizational culture is a barrier to collaboration for academic affairs professionals. It was noted that in political environments where there is competition for resources faculty may feel the need to protect their turf, operate in silos, and refrain from moving beyond their departments, sometimes even competing with other academic departments (Janey, 2009). Janey's research indicated that based on the findings it was important for student affairs leaders to feel comfortable and confident when collaborating with academic affairs. The researcher revealed that student affairs leaders expressed feelings of being undervalued and that their work was seen as nonessential to the academic mission. It was noted that institutional resources where diverted from student affairs during times of fiscal need (Janey, 2009). Janey (2009) also discussed how student affairs leaders participating in the study believed that their expertise is often not recognized, realized, or appreciated. Participants expressed feeling devalued and unmotivated as a result. According to the study organizational structure had an impact on the student affairs leaders' ability to collaborate with faculty. Faculty governance structures often excluded student affairs and provided fewer opportunities for student affairs leaders to participate in decision making.

Janey (2009) called for decentralized decision-making. The research indicated that this type of decision-making encourages horizontal communication and collaboration between academic affairs and student affairs. According to the researcher a centralized structure may discourage collaboration and the leader may make decisions that benefit their area of interest. The researcher discussed how the findings revealed that in centralized structures in which student affairs leaders do not have access to the decision makers could lead to a lack of support and neglect of student affairs issues. Janey (2009) found that a decentralized structure encouraged interaction between student affairs and academic affairs professionals, lead to

collegiality, built trust, provided opportunities for joint planning, become familiar with one another's expertise, form alliance around shared interests, and allowed both areas to inform strategic priorities and plans.

Collaboration and teamwork have often been credited for leading to successful accomplishments (Ferren & Stanton, 2004; Kezar, 2009). Pace, Blumreich, and Merkle (2006) highlighted that collaboration between academic affairs and student affairs has become very important in higher education. They discussed how student affairs units have wrestled with its identity and place within the academic mission of the institution. They indicated that separation between the two areas is exasperated by the campus organizational structures. According to the authors, the areas compete for the same resources, operate independently, fail to collaborate on student learning initiatives, and possess different cultures making it difficult for partnerships to occur.

Hirt (2007) conducted a narrative study that revealed that there are engrained feelings that academic faculty and leaders do not value or understand the role student affairs leaders fulfill on campus. The author stated that clear inconsistencies existed between the two areas indicating that they were operating from very different perspectives. Offering a differing opinion, Kezar (2001) reviewed the results of a national study on academic and student affairs collaborations conducted by the Educational Resources Information Center Clearinghouse on Higher Education, ACPA, and NASPA. The author determined that every institution involved in the survey was engaged in some form of collaboration between the two areas. The article noted that this was a result of the two areas realizing the critical importance and benefits of working together.

Kezar (2003) conducted a quantitative study that examined institutions involved developing collaboration between academic affairs and student affairs looking specifically at factors that ensure partnership. The researcher administered surveys which were returned by 128 student affairs leaders. The results indicated that common goals, cooperation, additional resources, redefined missions, and personalities had the biggest influence over collaboration between the two areas. Leadership's ability to articulate the need for collaboration and cross-cultural communication was also a significant factor in improving collaboration. Senior administrative support was identified as the most critical factor of ensuring successful collaboration. Participants in the study were less likely to identify organizational structure as a contributor to successful collaboration.

In the article, *Merging with Academic Affairs: A Promotion or Demotion for Student Affairs*, Price (1999) discussed how partnerships between academic affairs and student affairs can enhance student learning. Price (1999) hypothesized that the areas complemented each other since faculty are skilled in teaching and student affairs leaders are skilled in working with students. The author discussed how a merger between the two areas requiring the student affairs leader to report to the academic affairs leader could potentially lead to greater collaboration. Price (1999) stressed that such a merger would be difficult due to the varying cultures and potential political challenges. He cautioned that a merger of the two areas should only be attempted if the goal is to enhance student learning and it is not done as a cost cutting measure.

Is Merging the Answer?

This review of the literature provides a detailed overview of the changes occurring in higher education and highlights the effective strategies that leaders can employ in order to navigate the changing environment. The literature emphasized that increased demands have been

placed on higher education institutions as a result of changing demographics, limited resources, and an increased call for accountability (Bischoff & Scott 2000; Doyle, 2004; Goldstein, 2007, Kezar, 2003).

The literature reviewed demonstrates that transformational leaders that exhibit trustworthiness, transparency, garners support, collaborates effectively, clearly communicates the areas vision, and effectively plans and shepherds the institutions resources will be in a good position to bring about institutional change and remain competitive (Bryman & Lilley 2009; Dalton & Gardner 2002; Korkmaz, 2007).

According to the literature the areas of academic affairs and student affairs are in an excellent position to influence student learning and carry out the institutions mission. However, differences in culture, limited communication, myths and misperceptions, historical disconnect, and the lack of a common goal has hampered their partnership.   Moreover, the literature revealed that student affairs leaders perceived a lack of self-worth and the need to justify their existence which often leads to low morale and a disconnection from the institution. The faculty expressed feeling uninformed about the role of student affairs and viewed the area as unessential to the academic mission (Bierhoff and Muller 2005; Goldstein, 2007; Hardy et al., 1993; Janey, 2009; Kezar, 2003; Rief, 2007). Ferren and Stanton (2004) suggested that in order to increase collaboration between academic affairs and student affairs some institutions have placed faculty in key student affairs positions. According to Ferren and Stanton (2004) these faculty members reported feeling demoted in the eyes of their faculty counterparts.   These items and others must be addressed in order for institutions and its students to realize the benefits of collaboration between the two areas.

Leadership was identified as the most effective factor in facilitating collaboration between the two areas (Anderson et al., 2002). Culp (1995); Price (1999); and Shay (1984) indicated that at some institutions the student affairs leader reports to the academic affairs leader giving the academic leader responsibility over both areas. It is important to explore whether this organizational structure lead to increased collaboration and bridged the gaps between the two areas. Price (1999) hypothesized about the benefits of merging the two areas. Participants in the study conducted by Kezar (2003) indicated that they did not perceive organizational structure to be a factor that contributed to successful collaborations and partnership.

Institutions that recognize the benefits of the two areas working together may feel compelled to adopt the model that consolidates the two areas under one leader. Culp (1995) acknowledged that combining the two areas under one leader may increase collaboration. However, the author cautioned that the possibility exists that the student affairs area may take a back seat to academic affairs matters. Other researchers also cautioned those institutions contemplating adopting this model. Janey (2009) conducted research that revealed that decentralized decision-making encourages horizontal communication and collaboration between academic affairs and student affairs. Price (1999) indicated that a merger should only be attempted if the focus is to facilitate student learning. Concern was raised that mergers may be challenging due to the differences in culture (Price, 1999).

Concluding Thoughts

A review of the literature revealed that there are challenging times ahead for community colleges. Many of the challenges will fall under the responsibility of the leaders of academic affairs and student affairs. These areas have significant responsibilities and will be accountable to internal and external stakeholders. Multiple leadership models, approaches, and theories have

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been explored. The literature review also highlighted studies that explored effective leadership and demonstrated the impact leadership has on an organization. As mentioned earlier some institutions have consolidated structures that merge the two areas that will bear most of the challenges ahead under one leader. Researchers provided caution for institutions that are contemplating adopting this model. Despite the overwhelming literature on effective leadership and collaboration between academic affairs and student affairs there was a gap in the research regarding the effectiveness of the merging of the two areas under one leader and the experiences, leadership, and perceptions of those that assume the combined role of community college vice president of academic and student affairs. Therefore, the merged position deserved serious attention and in-depth exploration that could further contribute to the body of knowledge.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODS

Introduction

In preparation for this study it was important to identify the approach, research methods, participant sample, data collection and data analysis that would be best suited to provide in-depth insight into the experiences, leadership, and perceptions of individuals serving in the combined role of vice president for academic and student affairs. The purpose of this study was to gain an in-depth understanding of the experiences, leadership, and perceptions of those community college leaders serving in the combined role of vice president of academic and student affairs.

This study sought to answer the following overarching research question: What are the experiences, leadership approaches, and perceptions of those community college vice presidents in the combined role of vice president of academic and student affairs? The following guiding interview questions helped to shape the interview and inform the research question.

Guiding interview questions

1. How is the combined role perceived by the individual serving in this role?

2. How does each participant describe their leadership?

3. What theoretical-base, if any, do they use in their leadership?

4. In this role, what has been the participants experience with collaboration between the units that report to them?

5. As a leader in the merged role, how has the participant advanced the institutions strategic priorities?

6. How does the participant create a culture focused on student learning and development?

7. As a vice president in the merged role what are some examples of how the participant's leadership has influenced the institution? What are some of the challenges of the position?

8. What opportunities do they believe exist as a result of the position?

9. What recommendations do the participants make regarding the position?

10. How do these institutional leaders provide a voice for those areas they supervise and represent?

The remainder of this chapter includes a review of research design and rationale, participant and site selection, data collection and analysis, limitations and assumptions, and approaches to establish as well as ensure an ethically sound and trustworthy study.

Research Design and Rationale

Given that the research problem focused on garnering an understanding of the experiences and perceptions of those community college vice presidents in the combined role of vice president of academic and student affairs, the best approach to answer the research question was qualitative research. Merriam (2002) posited that qualitative research is a powerful tool that promotes learning about our lives. Merriam (2002) indicated that qualitative research studies have a long tradition of adding to the body of research in diverse fields. This research design provides meaning that is derived by a participant's interaction within their world and how they make sense of their experiences (Creswell, 2007). Expanding on this Merriam (2002) explained that qualitative research provides understanding of situations and provides insight into what it means to be in the participant's shoes. This allows a view into the participant's world, what it means to be in a particular situation and what their lives are like. This study utilized an interpretive qualitative approach so that we could best learn how individuals in the role of vice president for academic and student affairs experience and interact with their social world (Merriam, 2002).

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The research methodology that best addressed my research question was phenomenology. Merriam (2002) highlighted that a phenomenological study is best utilized when the researcher is concentrated on the root or structure of an experience. Researchers that adopt this approach are typically interested in demonstrating how complex meaning is formed from meek elements of experience unexplored in everyday life. The researcher puts aside his /her beliefs temporarily while analyzing the experiences of different individuals in search of the essence of the phenomenon (Merriam, 2002). According to Bogdan and Biklen (2003) researchers utilizing phenomenology as a methodology are seeking to understand the experiences and meaning individuals make of particular circumstances.

One phenomenological approach is interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA). According to Smith, Flowers, and Larkin (2009) and Pringle, Drummond, McLafferty, and Hendry (2011) and Willig (2001) IPA is an increasingly popular approach to qualitative research. Researchers that adopt IPA as an approach are interested in a detailed explanation of how everyday lived experiences form meaning in an individual's life (Smith, Flowers, & Larkin, 2009). This method involves exploring, describing, and interpreting the participant's experiences by analyzing their rich and detailed personal accounts (Willig, 2001). IPA is distinctly grounded in what the participants are communicating and widely utilizes direct quotes to illustrate, inform, develop themes, and support the researchers findings (Willig, 2001; Smith, Flowers, & Larkin, 2009; Pringle, Drummond, McLafferty, & Hendry, 2011). A key factor in IPA is that it focuses on personal meaning and how sense is made by individuals that share a similar experience (Smith, Flowers, & Larkin 2009). The IPA approach has theoretical underpinnings that are based on the founding principles of phenomenology resulting from the work of leading theorist such as Husserl, Heidegger, Merleau-Ponty, and Sarte. These theorists emphasized the importance of

focusing on experience and perceptions of the participants and their engagement with the world they live in (Willig, 2001; Smith, Flowers, & Larkin 2009). The other theoretical underpinning evident in IPA results from the work of hermeneutic theorist such as Schleiermacher, Heidegger, and Gadaner who focus on interpretation. Idiography also has had a theoretical influence upon IPA. This approach focuses on the particular in terms of the depth of analysis and how the experience is understood from the perspective of the participant (Smith, Flowers, & Larkin 2009).

In summary, IPA focuses on a detailed exploration of lived experience expressed in the participant's terms and perspectives as opposed to a category system that is predetermined. IPA is an interpretative process that utilizes idiography to explore participant perspectives and conduct a detailed examination of each participants experiences (Willig, 2001; Smith, Flowers, & Larkin 2009; Pringle, Drummond, McLafferty, & Hendry, 2011). IPA works well with methodology that utilizes semi-structured interviewing given that it shares similar principles and approaches (Willig, 2001). I believe that the selection of interpretative phenomenological analysis as a methodology for this study provided me with a view into the various aspects of the participant's experiences, perceptions, and leadership approaches; allowing me to best address the purpose of my study and answer my research question.

Participants

The participants I selected for this study were individuals currently serving in the role of vice president of academic and student affairs. Individuals that previously held the role were also eligible to participate in the study provided that they meet the other criteria. Each participant was required to have a minimum of one year of experience in the role. The minimum length of employment was set in order to ensure that the participant were able to draw form a sufficient

amount of experiences and provide rich data and to ensure their closeness to the research problem. The participants ranged in age and years of experience. According to Bogdan and Biklen, (2003); Creswell, (2007); and Merriam, (2002), a phenomenological study seeks to illustrate the meaning several individuals place on their experience of a phenomenon. These experiences are condensed to describe the common meaning participants place on the phenomenon. In phenomenological research it is essential to gain an understanding of the common and shared experiences of several individuals in order to obtain a deeper understanding of the phenomenon being studied (Bogdan & Biklen, 2003; Creswell, 2007; and Merriam, 2002). Seven to fifteen participants were to be selected from the pool that would be available to provide a rich and in-depth look into their experiences and leadership in the context of the joint position. Participants of this phenomenological study were informed of the anticipated benefits and importance of the study. These individuals were asked to discuss their experiences, leadership approaches, and perceptions of the combined position. Each participant was also be asked to discuss and draw from their personal and professional experiences in the role, discuss leadership approaches, provide scenarios for situations they have faced, offer detailed insight into the position, and make recommendation from their perspective. Individuals were excluded from volunteering for this study if they had served in the position of vice president of academic and student affairs for a period less than one year or if their position was not held at a community college. Also, individuals that did not have responsibility over both academic affairs and student affairs units of the college were excluded from the study. Participants were notified that they would be removed from the study if they were unable to keep scheduled telephone interview appointments or if they were deemed by the researcher at any point during the study, unable to provide a significant contribution to advancement of the research study. As required by the

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Colorado State University Internal Review Board (IRB) guidelines participants were informed of their ability to withdraw at any time, the use of pseudonyms, and other measures to keep identifying information private and secure, and that participation was voluntary. A sample consent containing this key information is available in Appendix A.

Interview Process

Interviews for this study were conducted by telephone. I decided to conduct recorded interviews by telephone after exploring the research on telephone interviews. Sturges and Hanrahan (2004) conducted a study comparing face to face interviewing with telephone interviewing and they found no significant difference in the interview data. Novick (2007) and Sturges and Hanrahan (2004) highlighted that telephone interviews may increase the participant's perception of anonymity resulting in better data. Moreover, Novick (2007) and Sturges and Hanrahan (2004) revealed that telephone interviewing may be attributed to providing the researcher access to a pool of participants they would not necessarily have access to in a face to face interview (Sturges & Hanrahan, 2004). In addition, Sturges and Hanrahan, (2004) discovered that the telephone interview method had no impact on the responses received by participants, the depth of the interview, and the length of the interview when compared to face to face interviews. Telephone interview participants in the study done by Sturges and Hanrahan, (2004) indicated that the telephone interview alleviated convenience, time commitment and privacy concerns. Chapple (1999) deduced that after utilizing telephone interviews instead of face to face interviews the data was unexpectedly rich. Auditory clues were noted during the interview process. Novick (2008) recommended that researchers utilizing telephone interviewing for data collection should listen for auditory clues that include anger, hesitation, sarcasm, curtness, pauses, disappointment, happiness and pleasure so that the researcher may maintain

verbal data. Novick (2008) suggested that there is little evidence to indicate that telephone interviewing results in data loss or compromises the quality of the findings. The researcher went on to emphasized that telephone interviews may promote openness and the disclosure of sensitive information (Novick, 2008). Novick (2008) and Sturges and Hanrahan (2004) summarized that telephone interviewing can be a useful method for qualitative research. In order to ensure that the interviews were uninterrupted and the environment was free from outside interruptions I was situated in a quiet room and participants were asked to ensure that their environment was free from outside interruptions. Participants were notified that the interview would last approximately one hour and fifteen minutes and they were asked to set aside that block of time for the interview.

Data Collection

Creswell (2007) determined that it was critical to develop a strategy for purposeful sampling. The author stated that purposeful sampling involves initially selecting a sample of participants that would provide the researcher with the best information so that the research problem can be answered. The sample was limited to individuals employed at community colleges. The community colleges ranged in enrollment size from small to large. All institutions were open access post-secondary institutions that serve a diverse student body. Each offered varying programs and services that are traditionally found at a community college.

Eligible participants were identified utilizing publicly available directory and web-site information and referrals obtained from snowball sampling. Snowball sampling involved asking initial participants to identify others people they knew fit the criteria of the study (Gliner, Morgan & Leech, 2009). In order to gather my sample I composed an email and sent it to the eligible participants explaining the research study, outlining the criteria, and explaining the

format and time commitment. Interested participants were asked to reply by email within a specified time frame. Respondents were asked to answer three questions when submitting their electronic response. The purpose of these three general questions was to ensure that all participants meet the participant criteria. The questions were as follows:

1. What is your current title and do you consider your current role as a merged / combined position?

2. If you previously served in the merged / combined role what was your title?

3. How many years have (did) you serve in the merged / combined role?

A sample of this correspondence is provided in Appendix B. This communication complied with established Colorado State University IRB guidelines and suggestions. After two weeks the prospective participants were sent an email reminder and invited to express their interest by electronic response. This correspondence provided detailed information about the study and reiterated the request for participation. Appendix C provides a sample of this correspondence. Each participant selected was contacted, provided more information about the study and a meeting schedule was established. Appendix D illustrates a sample script that served as a guide for this communication.

In order to ensure an in-depth and rich interview I spent between one hour and one hour and fifteen minutes with each participant during the recorded telephone interviews and additional time during follow up conversations and member checks. Each interview began with the following grand tour question: what are the responsibilities of your position and the overarching goals of your role? The interview was semi-structured and guiding interview questions were imbedded throughout the interview to help ensure that the research question was addressed by each participant. Throughout the process I took field notes and kept reflexive notes. The

discussions were recorded, transcribed utilizing a transcription company and then coded by myself. I conducted member checks and follow up conversations with participants to follow up on questions that remained from the participant's interview and questions that emerged from reviewing the coded transcript. All data is being kept in a secure location and recordings are backed up on my computer. All data and consent documents will be kept by the principal investigator for a minimum of three years after the conclusion of the study.

Data Analysis

Data analysis and interpretation involves reviewing and arranging interview transcripts, documentation, fieldnotes and other research data in a manner that the researcher can develop meaning in what they have discovered. Data is organized, coded, and synthesized into manageable components that allow findings that address the research question to emerge (Bogdan & Biklen, 2004; Glesne, 2006). According to Smith, Flowers, and Larkin (2009) researchers utilizing IPA place an emphasis on progressing from the particular to the shared and the descriptive to the interpretative. This involves line by line analysis of the participant's transcript, identification of themes that become evident within the participants transcript and then across all participants, and an intimate relationship between the researcher, the coded data, and the participants which results in a rich interpretative account (Willig, 2001; Smith, Flowers, & Larkin, 2009).

As I analyzed the data in this study I utilized the steps Willig, (2001); and Smith, Flowers, and Larkin (2009) outlined for researchers utilizing IPA. These steps were as follows: reading and re-reading, initial noting, developing emerging themes, searching for connections across emerging themes, moving to the next participant, and looking for patterns across participants. Reading and re-reading involves reading each transcript and listening to each

recording multiple times to ensure complete analysis. Smith, Flowers, and Larkin (2009) deemed this critical to making sure that the participant is central to the analysis. During this step in the process, as recommended by Willig (2001), I kept reflexive notes in order to capture my recollections, thoughts, ideas, reactions, and overall observations. Bogdan and Biklen (2003); Creswell (2007); Glesne (2006); Merriam (2002); and Miles and Huberman (1994) recommended that researchers utilize fieldnotes /reflective notes to record researcher observations, ideas, reflections, emerging patterns and reactions. Willig, (2001); and Smith, Flowers, and Larkin, (2009) indicated that the initial noting step is the step requiring the most detail and time. This step involves a deep analysis of the transcripts and the development of coding categories / themes. Bogdan and Biklen (2003) posited that qualitative researchers should analyze the data looking for patterns, phrases, perspectives, ways of thinking, and common topics that emerge. According to Bogdan and Biklen (2003) this information should be utilized to develop a list of coding categories. Following the approach outlined by Willig, (2001); and Smith, Flowers, and Larkin (2009) this involved exploring how participants understood specific issues while writing notes and comments on the data. The list of themes was developed into clusters that related to each other and labeled to provide structure to the analysis. The next step utilized involved the development of emerging themes into a summary table (Willig, 2001). During this step similar aspects of the transcript were separated into categories and reorganized and labeled under emerging themes indicating brief quotes and the associated transcript page and line numbers (Willig, 2001; Smith, Flowers, & Larkin, 2009). In order to identify connections across participants, emerging themes, and patterns across participants the summary tables of each participant transcription were compared to reveal how multiple themes fit together under larger

overarching themes (Willig, 2001; Smith, Flowers, & Larkin, 2009). This detailed process was followed to produce a rich study built on a thorough analysis of the data.

Trustworthiness

When conducting the research it was important to ensure that the study was trustworthy. Qualitative researchers should ensure the accuracy of transcripts, exhaustively review codes and consistent understanding of definitions, compare the data with other sources and perspectives to enable the development of themes, conduct member checks to confer about the accuracy of the findings, clarify biases, and make sure they spend a significant amount of time in the field with participants in order to deliver a rich account of the findings (Creswell, 2009; Creswell, 2007; Glesne, 2006; Merriam, 2002; Riessman, 2008).

The trustworthiness of this study was established by selecting participants from a purposeful sample. Purposeful sampling involves selecting participants based on their ability to contribute to the study and potentially inform the research problem (Bogdan & Bilken, 2003; Creswell, 2007). Bogdan and Bilken (2003); and Shenton (2004) emphasized the importance of building a rapport with the participant to promote openness, comfort and establish trust. Once the participants were selected possible researcher, participant, and participant researcher bias was addressed by establishing a rapport with each participant built on honesty and transparency. Each participant was informed about my background and the purpose of the research to further establish a rapport. Pseudonyms were utilized to conceal the identity of the participants, the institution, and the institutions geographic location. According to Creswell, 2009; 2007; Glesne, 2006; Merriam, 2002; Riessman, 2008; and Shenton, 2004 these approaches further encourage participant openness and add to the trustworthiness of their responses. The participant's

trustworthiness was further established through discussions about their roles and perceptions of existing challenges and opportunities.

Ethical issues have the potential to arise during research studies and the researcher must take steps to avoid ethical issues and should be prepared to address issues should they arise (Bogdan & Bilken 2003). Throughout the study steps were taken to protect participants from harm. This study complied with the guidelines and requirements established by the Colorado State University Institutional Review Board whose role is to ensure that human subject(s) research is conducted ethically and comply with federal policies for human subjects research (Colorado State University, 2011).

Shenton (2004) recommended frequent debriefing sessions between the researcher and the research study supervisor(s). Throughout the study the principal investigator and the co-principal investigator served as a resource to provide advice, guidance, feedback and guidance on appropriate approaches and to explore ideas and acknowledge biases.

Merriam (2002) states that member checking is a widely used strategy that enables the researcher to make sure they have captured and properly interpreted the participants perspective. Member checks were conducted with each participant after each transcript was transcribed in order to provide participants with the opportunity to provide clarification and to ensure accuracy. The purpose of these follow-up discussions were to ask clarifying questions that remained from the participant's interview and questions that emerged from reviewing the coded transcript. These member check discussions were scheduled to last between 30 minutes to one hour and were be focused on ensuring that the participant's input was accurately and completely captured.

A detailed audit trail of the research was maintained throughout the study. Shenton (2004) indicated that a detailed audit trail enhances trustworthiness since it allows the reader to

specifically follow each step of the research process utilized. Creswell, (2009); and Merriam, (2002) recommend checking transcripts for errors, thoroughly reviewing codes and definitions, conducting member checks to discuss the accuracy of the findings, clarify biases, maintaining reflexive notes, spending a significant amount of time in the field and with the data until saturation is reached, providing a rich description of the findings, and keeping a detailed audit trail. This study utilized each of these recommended approaches to enhance trustworthiness of the research project.

Moreover, Shenton (2004) highlighted that trustworthiness is further established by utilizing research methods that are proven and recognized in qualitative research. Smith, Flowers, and Larkin, 2009; and Pringle, Drummond, McLafferty, and Hendry, 2011 indicate that IPA is an increasingly popular approach utilized by qualitative researchers. According to Shenton (2004) researchers should provide a thick description of the phenomenon to provide readers with the ability understand the phenomenon. This study was supported by a detailed rich description to allow for the study and its findings to be useful for the reader and applicable to their individual circumstances. This thick description also allows the reader to determine if proper research protocols and practices were utilized (Shenton, 2004). According to Shenton (2004) providing a thick description throughout the research study would allow other researchers to conduct a similar study.

In summary, according to Merriam (2002) trustworthiness can be established through the following approaches: produce an audit trail by providing a detailed account of methods procedures and decisions made in the study; provide enough description to allow the reader to understand and apply the study to their situation allowing the findings to be transferable; devote considerable time with the data and until data collection reaches saturation; ensure reflexivity

ensuring that researcher biases, assumptions, self-reflections are evident; engage in peer review to discuss findings, gain feedback on process of the study, and to address potential researcher bias; and conduct member checks to ensure that the data and interpretations is an accurate representation of the participants comments and experiences. As evidenced by the procedures and steps established during this study each of these recommendations was implemented to ensure the trustworthiness of the study. These procedures and approaches also ensured the delivery of a sound research study that advances the body of research in this area.

CHAPTER FOUR: ANALYSIS

Introduction

This chapter focuses on analyzing the data that was gathered to address the research question that was discussed in chapter 1 of this study. The question was as follows: What are the experiences, leadership approaches, and perceptions of those community college vice presidents in the combined role of vice president of academic and student affairs?

The remainder of this chapter reviews the key findings and core themes that emerged while addressing the research question.

Participant Data

In order to ensure that the study was comprehensive and that the participant sample was diverse a total of 28 individuals with varied backgrounds were contacted to participate in the study. Participants were identified through a search of publicly available websites and snowball sampling. In order to determine interest participants were contacted by email and telephone. This allowed the researcher to explain the study, determine interest, and ensure that interested participants met the requirements for participation. A total of 14 individuals expressed interest in the participation. Two of the 14 were excluded from the study, one did not meet the required number of years in the position and the other was excluded because the researcher determined there were enough participants from their particular geographic region.

A total of 12 individuals, six men and six women, participated in the study. The participants were selected from geographic locations across the United States. The size range of the Community Colleges varied adding to the diversity of the pool. Four institutions had less than 5,000 students, three institutions had between 5,000 and 10,000 students, three institutions had between 10,001 and 20,000 students, and one institution had greater than 20,000 students.

Participants had a significant number of years of experience in higher education which ranged from 18 years to 35 years. Their years of experience in the role of Vice President for Academic and Student Affairs ranged from 1 ½ years to 16 years. Table 1 outlines specific information on each participant. The researcher conducted a recorded telephone interview with each participant. The interviews ranged from 53 minutes to 1hour and 37 minutes. On average the interviews lasted 1 hour and 12 minutes. After interviews were transcribed member check discussions were conducted to ensure that participants had the opportunity to provide clarification. These discussions also allowed the researcher to ensure accuracy, ask clarifying questions that remained from the participant's interview, and explore questions that emerged from reviewing the coded transcript. Member checks with participants lasted between 20 and 40 minutes. The average member check discussion lasted 32 minutes. As represented in Table 2, all participants had part-time or full-time teaching experience. Prior to assuming the combined role 6 came from an Academic Affairs background, one came from a student affairs background, and five had a background in both academic and student affairs.

Table 1:

Participant demographics: years of experience, current title, and geographic location

Name	Years of Experience in the combined role	Years of Experience in Higher Education	U. S. Geographic location	Current Title
Bridgestone	16	22	Southeast	VP Academic & Student Affairs
Cartwright	3 ½	17	Southwest	VP Academic & Student Affairs
Cass	12	34	Northeast	VP Academic & Student Affairs
Gabriel	5	20	Midwest	VP Academic & Student Affairs
Hamilton	6	21	Midwest	President
Hersey	2	16	Northeast	Provost & VP Academic Affairs
Kevlar	10	23	Northeast	Senior VP Academic & Student Affairs
Thomasville	13	30	West	Executive VP Academic & Student Affairs
Tillison	2 ½	18	West	VP Academic & Student Affairs
Stanley	13	30	Northeast	President
Vanburen	1 ½	29	Midwest	VP Academic & Student Affairs
Woldoff	4	35	Southeast	VP Academic & Student Affairs / Chief Academic Officer

Table 2:

Participant experience in academic affairs, student affairs, teaching and both academic and student affairs

Name	Background in Student Affairs before assuming the role	Background in Academic Affairs before assuming the role	Background in both Academic and Student Affairs before assuming the role	Teaching Experience
Bridgestone	—	—	Yes	Yes
Cartwright	—	—	Yes	Yes
Cass	No	Yes	No	Yes
Gabriel	—	—	Yes	Yes
Hamilton	—	—	Yes	Yes
Hersey	No	Yes	No	Yes
Kevlar	No	Yes	No	Yes
Thomasville	No	Yes	No	Yes
Tillison	No	Yes	No	Yes
Stanley	Yes	No	No	Yes
Vanburen	—	—	Yes	Yes
Woldoff	No	Yes	No	Yes

Data Analysis

At the conclusion of each recorded interview the interviews were transcribed verbatim, this included pauses, sighs, and laughter. Each of these transcripts were read and re-read multiple times to ensure that the researcher was close to the data and could reveal emerging themes. In

order to effectively manage and centralize the data each transcript was loaded into Dedoose software. Dedoose is a qualitative research software tool that allows researchers to manage their data. Utilizing Dedoose the researcher was able to create excerpts of data, assign codes and descriptors, and compare codes across participants. According to Lu and Shulman (2008) software tools deliver a level of efficiency, and organization to the research project. They posit that these tools strengthen the researcher's ability to identify patterns and code the data while also opening up a pathway for more rigorous analysis and inferences from the data.

Bloomberg and Volpe (2012) emphasized the importance of looking deeply into the data to reveal insights that emerge related to the phenomenon being researched. The detailed data analysis process utilized in this study allowed the researcher to identify common themes that emerged across all participants. The initial analysis of the data involved multiple detailed reviews of all participant transcripts, field notes, and reflexive notes yielded. This initial analysis resulted in 28 codes and 14 sub-codes. Additional analysis allowed the researcher to reveal 8 themes that emerged. The final analysis produced 5 key themes: evolution, communication and collaboration, leadership, faculty background, and workload. These themes are woven throughout the data and were the most frequently revealed as participants addressed the research question.

Evolution

Each participant discussed their knowledge of what prompted their institution to decide to merge the position. There were various reasons for the merger of the two leadership roles within the institution. The most common reasons perceived by participants appeared to be ineffective leadership and presidential preference. It is important to note that these reasons were also factors in separating the role into two vice presidents at institutions where the role was once merged. In

addition, participants perceived that many of these presidents were attempting to address issues such as a lack of collaboration between academic affairs and student affairs, silos, workload issues, and friction between the areas. Only a few cited financial and cost saving motives for prompting the merger of the two areas.

Addressing ineffective leadership

Ineffective leadership was referred to as one of the most common reasons that institutions moved away from the two vice presidents model to the merged model. All participants revealed that in their experience these decisions were always made by the president in an attempt to rectify leadership challenges that had impacted the institution. Dr. Thomasville was the only participant to serve in the combined role at three separate institutions. He described the evolution of the position at two of the three institutions as the result of president addressing ineffective leadership. His accounts regarding the decisions to merge the two positions at each institution were as follows:

> Our previous boss had been the Executive VP and he was over both Student Services and Instruction. The President there had not been satisfied with him and he was put out to pasture and she separated Student Services and Instruction and had two VPs. At the end of my second year there, so it would've been in the summer of 2009, the president made a decision that she wasn't satisfied with the VP for Student Services so that individual was put out to pasture and I was given both areas. The leaders of the two areas didn't get along well and that meant that the two areas had no history of collaboration and cooperation. In fact they saw one another as competitors. (Dr. Thomasville Institution #1)

> When I came to the college in 2007, they had an Executive Vice-President, an Associate Vice-President for Instruction, and an Associate Vice-President for Student Services. That was a model that had been set up by the president. The president was not happy with the executive VP so she put him out to pasture and she upgraded the two Associate VP positions to Vice Presidents. That was her decision, nobody told her to do that. I think she did it partly in response to her sense that combining them under the executive VP hadn't worked. But then she wasn't happy with that model either, so the next year, my third year, she downgraded the student service leadership position to a Dean and she had that Dean report to me. I had the Associate Vice President report to me along with all of the Deans. Again, that was not cost saving, that was not budget driven, that was – I think

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that was the president's reaction to the performance of an individual administrator. (Dr. Thomasville - Institution # 2)

Dr. Hamilton served under two presidents at the same institution one made decisions to combine the two positions and the other that made a decision to separate the two positions. Each president was responding to ineffective leadership or a lack of effectiveness within the area. Dr. Hamilton recalls the following:

> In New Mexico [pseudonym], this was a decision made by the president. They had two vice presidents for academic affairs and a vice president for student affairs. There was a retirement and the vice president for student affairs was ineffective. Therefore, the president decided to hire one person over both areas and eventually moved this ineffective vice president to a position where he could potentially find more success. So, it was really designed on some level to fix a personnel issue. (Dr. Hamilton)

According to Dr. Hamilton when a new president was hired at the same institution the new president decided to separate the role back into two vice presidents to allow more focused attention on each area and in particular to address the lack of effectiveness in the student affairs area.

Promoting Collaboration and Eliminating Silos

Another common factor that prompted the merging of the two positions was the presidents interest in addressing disconnects that existed between academic affairs and student affairs. This sentiment was expressed by the majority of participants. They often discussed the friction and disconnect that existed under the two vice presidents model. Participants expressed their perceptions that having two vice presidents that were not in alignment set up a competitive, non-collaborative environment that did not serve the institution and its students well. The quotes below from Dr. Cartwright, Dr. Vanburen, and Dr. Tillison capture the essence of what was discussed by the majority of participants.

> …there was a vice president of student affairs and she retired, I guess it was about three years ago. Maybe a little longer than 3 years ago and when she announced her retirement

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the president asked me if I would be willing to assume responsibility for student affairs also. We wanted a structure that did not have, you know, we use terminology in higher education, like sides of the house, assume the first side of the house is the academic affairs side of the house and the other side of the house is the student affairs side. That wasn't helpful, that wasn't helpful to the student experience and given my understanding of student affairs and background in student affairs and frankly appreciation for the role of student affairs, it seemed like a natural fit. Um, this was not the primary reason but a positive impact was a reduced administrative footprint basically saving quite a big chunk of money by eliminating the vice president position… We wanted to eliminate silos and silo type thinking and focus more on the whole distinct experience of the student instead of two separate distinct experiences for the students. We wanted to make sure there were no gaps in the experience of the students. (Dr. Cartwright)

… It's such a huge organization, very, very complex. There was an individual who had been hired in this position about seven years ago and she took another role. So, what ended up happening was they funneled out all of those responsibilities associated with student service and academics. What really became apparent was the two sides stopped talking to each other. It was bad because it was such a large organization, three campuses, and somehow every single campus started doing their own thing. I think, I told you, I taught for 15 years and when I first decided that I was going to go into administration, I thought well you know I'll go into the student services side and it was never my intent to be over both sides. But in my previous place of employment, they were trying to get somebody to do the instructional side and they just could not find anybody, so they ask me…I did… they said to me, well this will really help your resume, we'll make you the Vice President of Student Services and Academics. They were absolutely correct…they said we were looking for somebody that had very good relationship building skills and I think that was one of the reasons why they asked if I would apply. So the goals of my position are many, one of the primary ones that I remember when I started was to integrate and align students services and the structure. They had previously operated as two separate entities for numerous reasons one of my goals was to integrate the two parts of the college. The advantage was having one person's view of the college. I certainly agree that having one person over both areas leads to the possibility of greater integration. (Dr. Vanburen)

 In addition to the participants belief that presidents desire to address the silo atmosphere that existed between academic affairs and student affairs Dr. Tillison highlighted two additional factors that led to the combining of the two areas. One of these factors was financial. Financial motives were mentioned by some participants but it was not seen as the critical motivating factor. Some participants expressed that from their perspective financial savings are not a likely

to result of merging the positions since the saving should be put into hiring additional staff to support the vice president.

> From what I know the history suggest is that there were three factors. The first was that there was an unanticipated departure of the chief academic officer which necessitated a rapid response. The initial rapid response was the coalescing of both academic and student services. The second factor which I think um was in play was a philosophy by the president that a team based approach is better than a silo approach and that by virtue of putting a these sort of mixed alignments in place you encourage team building, as oppose to people doing their own thing and in their own silo and not even knowing what the neighbor is doing. The third factor that I alluded to was that I think that there was a growing sense at the time that there really needed to be a third vice president focused on economic development and that if they split the teaching and learning job up into academic and student services they would be left with four vice presidents. The institutional size made it difficult to justify something like that so there is cost in there, there is circumstance, and there is intent, all three. (Dr. Tillison)

In addition to merging the two areas to address fragmented relationships participants spoke of additional perceived reasons that presidents had adopted or disbanded the joint position.

Presidential Preference

All participants perceived that the merging of student and academic affairs under a single vice presidents or the separating of the combined role in their experience came about as a result of presidential preference. They perceived that presidents had various reasons for their decision and that they were not always responding to a challenge faced by the institution. In some cases the participants indicated that president did not provide any concrete reason. In other cases they perceived that the decision was adopted as a way it was to centralize leadership; in one case it was perceived as a way to reduce the number of direct reports. In Dr. Hersey's case it was to better distribute the workload. Dr. Hersey was in the combined role that was separated into two vice presidents. Upon hire she was informed by the president that they were planning on abandoning the combined model that had existed at the institution since he considered there to be enough work for two vice presidents. When discussing the separating of her role into two vice

presidents Dr. Hersey recalled the following "…I came into the position as vice president of academics and students affairs but based on my interviews with the president it was revealed that at some point we would probably separate the two. He indicated that there was more than enough work for both areas."

Several participants discussed how they believed that the position resulted from the desire of their president to centralize leadership and ensure the coordination and alignment of institutional efforts. This seemed to go beyond the desire for collaboration and seemed to be more focused on ensuring that the areas were working toward common goals. This sentiment was captured in Dr. Stanley's comments.

> Okay, well my position was one that I had the responsibility of overseeing both student affairs and a division of academic affairs; I didn't have all of academic affairs because we also had a vice president for academic affairs but the function was expanded later…
> When the role expanded I became responsible for the entire academic area. That's when I became truly a single individual managing the coordination of both academic and student affairs. That expansion came about as a result of a change in the organizational chart, where the president believe it was better to have one individual that would essentially be working with key point individuals in each of the divisional areas to make certain the coordination of the effort was being managed from one central point and then providing that information to the president. (Dr. Stanley)

Dr. Thomasville described his experience at one of the institutions were he served in the combined role. He discusses how the president resorted to the theoretical literature to make his decision on the best model for the institution. Dr. Thomasville expresses that in his opinion there is no evidence that one structure advances and promotes student success better than the other structure. Dr. Thomasville's comments are below.

> …At the college out in the pacific I think that president believed that this was the best way of promoting student success. He approached his presidency with a level of theory and abstraction. He had been a president before but he had never been a president in this environment. Therefore, he really couldn't structure based on the environment or the people because he didn't know the people. So, he pulled an organizational table out of the

textbook he had been taught was theoretically best. Everybody else I think is doing it as practical adjustment to a specific set of circumstances in the environment. I don't think anybody would do it at the cost of student success, I think presidents would tell you that they're doing this to advance student success, but I don't have any evidence. I have never seen a president sit down and prove that the structure one way or the other did a better job at promoting student success. (Dr. Thomasville Institution # 3)

Communication and Collaboration

All participants discussed the importance of communication within the institution and in particular the significance of communication between the academic and student affairs units of the college. Participants discussed the nature of communication between the academic and student affairs units of their institution, strategies they utilize, providing a voice for both areas they supervise, and the impact that they perceive their position had on communication. The majority of the participants spoke about communication and collaboration interchangeably. The participants reveal that they perceive communication as a key component of collaboration. Several expressed that an important aspect of their job responsibilities were to bridge the gaps or disconnect that existed between student affairs and academic affairs. As participants spoke about collaboration and communication they emphasized and provided several examples of their efforts to provide a voice for each area, dispel myths, increase institutional knowledge and understanding of the value of each area, and develop a team atmosphere between the two areas. The actions of these participants led to a variety of successes which they discussed. Each participant articulated the benefits of their communication efforts and how communication was strengthened as a result of their efforts and the merging of the two areas under a single vice president. Some participants expressed that communication was a challenge but was necessary to ensure their success.

Communication Challenges

All participants expressed that communication was critical to their success, the success of the combined model, and the institutions growth and success. Many participants noted the challenges associated with communication and explained the impacts of the lack of communication. A key sentiment felt was the overwhelming amount of communication an individual in the combine role received, needed to digest, translate, and communicate to their staff, the college community, and key stakeholders. Dr. Stanley's comments effectively sum up the sentiments expressed by the majority of participants regarding the massive amount of communication they receive in their dual role.

> So communication becomes very important and that becomes a daunting task in itself. When you think about the volume of email that one receives in this position and then you think about the number of direct report that you have when you consolidate two areas into one it becomes overwhelming in terms of the volume of emails that you receive on a regular bases. Finding effective ways to manage that is a challenge in itself. I don't know if I have a good recommendation on that. I think that I have a reasonably good handle on that but I think there is still room for improvement. What has become interesting is that there is so much information that comes to you from NEST [pseudonym] that is critical for both side of the house. That is an incredible load in itself not taking into consideration all of the internal emails that you are going to receive and then to add to that constitute groups that are functioning and dealing with the college, groups outside the college, and correspondence that you get from other areas you interact with. You find yourself constantly attached to your computer, your phone, and your iPad. The other challenge is finding a way to separate yourself so that you can renew your spirit and remain effective. (Dr. Stanley)

Some participants expressed that a failure to communicate with the faculty and staff in both areas on key decisions would be detrimental to their effectiveness. These individuals highlighted that there is a great expectation that those in their area be kept in the loop and participate in the decision making process. The majority of participants spoke about their efforts to be inclusive and get feedback from everyone. Dr. Vanburen on the other hand discussed her challenges with being too inclusive and the strain it places on the institutions resources. She describes the art of

being inclusive as a balancing act and offers insight into how she addresses communication and being inclusive.

> ...and everybody has something to say, everybody needs to be heard, and so now I am saying wait a minute you don't need a representative of every single campus group…, you know I only need one… Then you need to go back to functional group and report out to those functional groups about what we are doing. Because people have not had the option to be heard and they want to be heard…that's really the balancing act right now. We don't want to make them feel as if they are not welcome but office leaders are complaining and saying that every time a new steering committee or standing committee is formed it takes away from their people and their people are not getting their stuff done because they are pulled off to do this other committee work. We have to do this because we need to take care of things and I can't do that by myself in vacuum…we have to have everybody's input… (Dr. Vanburen)

Despite Dr. Vanburen's concerns with being too inclusive she learned firsthand of the importance of communication and inclusion. Her comments describe the reaction she encountered when they failed to be inclusive when forming a committee to evaluate faculty. Dr. Vanburen's description was as follows: "oh my God it was ugly… all faculty came together in mid-August and they were ready to run me out, like totally, because they said this faculty evaluation committee was one that nobody asked for our input you just did this is all on your own."

Breaking Down Barriers

It seemed important for many participants to describe how they utilized communication to break down the barriers between academic affairs and student affairs. Many had vivid descriptions of the lack of communication between the two areas that existed prior to their arrival at the institution. Dr. Thomasville and Dr. Vanburen recalled their experience upon arriving at the institution and the disconnect that existed between the academic affairs and student affairs.

> When I first started this job and I had the dean's and director's meetings, the student services people would sit on one side of the conference table, the instructions people would sit on the other side, and there was tension in the room. There were people who

were afraid to speak for fear that they would be put in their place. There was no real dialogue. (Dr. Thomasville)

I came and I was like whoa, the left hand doesn't not even know what the right hand is doing… Right now I'm explaining stuff to faculty because everyone wants to make decisions and do things. I had to tell them you can't do that and here's why, here's how it affects the students from their financial aid, here's what happens to your program…and so now they are coming back and they say oh we didn't know that, nobody has told us. By going around and doing a lot of workshops to try and inform people…you know here's the implication, here what you can do, and if you chose to do this then this is the consequence for students so do we really want to go into that. The faculty don't mean any harm it's just that nobody told or explained it to them. (Dr. Vanburen)

Dr. Thomasville and Dr. Kevlar express the transformation and the benefits realized by breaking down silos between the two areas, opening the lines of communication, and getting them to work together. They both describe this as a slow, continuous, ongoing process that produces real opportunities to address the institutions challenges, increase trust, and promote togetherness, integration and increased collaboration.

Now, a year and a half later when we have the dean's and director's meeting everybody's sitting next to each other in whatever seat happens to be vacant when they come in. Everyone's laughing, everyone's joking, everyone's dialoging. There's no tension and the group is working together harmoniously. That's important and it's very positive. Now that means if we have an initiative for example, that says we have to increase our retention rate or we got an initiative that says we have to increase our graduation rate, I can now get both sides of the house talking together freely and unselfconsciously about ways in which we might do that. The ways are not exclusively on either side of the house, it really belongs to both. That's the real opportunity…We're not going to solve that problem unless we work together. So having the support folks and the instructional folks trusting each other and being able to talk freely is going to facilitate tackling these problems...Remember, I've just been here slightly less than a year and a half. It took some time to break down the walls. What I'm seeing now is communication. (Dr. Thomasville)

…we actually are an integrated, I think we are a fairly well integrated now and you know I think it just takes time for that to happen. In the beginning, I would say, maybe this isn't such a great idea. But now after ten years I think it is sort of gelled together and we just think automatically. Whenever we have meetings or make decisions the student affairs people are there. We are not separate at all. I think that's the one good thing, separate divisions tend to make decisions separately and we are really together. I always say to them, you know this is a decision we need to make and we are all in this together. So I think that it's sort of gelling now, it takes a while but it sort of gels…We like to have as

much collaboration as possible with the faculty. For example, you know in everything that we do, we have both areas involved. I just came back from a search for a faculty member and there is a student affairs person on the search. We do try to integrate student affairs as much as possible. So you know whatever kind of committees we have going on we always have representatives from Student Affairs. We have meetings and we include everyone. We have a retreat at the end of every spring semester and the student affairs people, the department chairs, and the deans are there. We talk about what we got done and where we are going in the future. So we spent a lot of time on that trying to get consensus…We don't make decisions unless everybody is involved and a lot of the decision making and the ideas that come up at department chair meetings where there are student affairs people present. I think we are doing real good with that, most every meeting as I said, not just the searches, but the planning committees and the assessment committees we have student affairs people involved. So everyone is really collaborating I think. (Dr. Kevlar)

Dr. Cartwitght, Dr. Woldoff, Dr. Tillison, Dr. Kevlar, Dr. Cass, and Dr. Hersey expressed

sentiments similar to Dr. Vanburen and Dr. Thomasville. Each spoke of various strategies they

utilized to increase communication between the two areas in an effort to break down barriers and

increase understanding and respect. Each spoke about joint meetings they hold that are attended

by the leaders that represent each area, some send email updates to all staff in each area to keep

them in the loop on decisions and the direction of the institution. Some strategies included

retreats between the two areas, regularly occurring meetings, constant email updates, newsletters,

public faculty and staff recognition, solicitation of feedback and ideas from each area, shared

problem solving discussions. Each of these participants seemed excited about the advances they

have made bringing the two areas together and why it is important for the individual in a role

such as theirs to promote inclusiveness and communication. Dr. Wolford's and Dr. Cartwright's

comments are representative of the intended outcomes expressed and attained by many other

participants. In Dr. Wolford's case open cross communication is practiced to ensure that their

voice is representative of the entire area they supervise allowing them to better advocate and

prioritize as they lead. Dr. Cartwright described how the combined role provides him with the

opportunity to bring the two areas together and have them function as a team.

I am the person who is going to speak for our area but that is only after I have heard inputs from each of the areas. I speak for the areas after we have met as a group and discussed what each area wants and needs so that there is a common understanding among the group in terms of what I am going to go ahead and ask for as a priority. (Dr. Woldoff)

On Monday mornings I meet with my deans. …I'm meeting with two student affairs deans and a dean of instruction and we as a team work out things. So just the fact that we are sitting in the same meeting, working on things, my dean of student affairs attend the division chair meeting and the dean of instruction attends the student affairs managers meeting. With that interaction we are trying to tear down those barriers, those silos, and create a single team that serves our students. Now it is not perfect but we are so much further along than we were three years ago. (Dr. Cartwright)

Dr. Cartwright also described how this model has allowed him to look at both sides when making decisions and resolving conflicts. As expressed by several participants Dr. Cartwright explained that their perceived central focus needed to be placed on the student. The participant further believed that it was important to find a way to ensure that an individual in the combined role was listening to the needs and desires of both areas of supervision and to find a way to focus on addressing those needs without taking sides if it can be avoided. When describing this some participants made it a point to keep the needs of the students central to the end result of their decisions. Moreover, like Dr. Cartwright several participants expressed that the existence of two vice presidents over each area had the potential to result in competition, and a struggle to get their individual needs met resulting in limited collaboration. Dr. Cartwright's comments were as follows:

...You know it's a day to day process but I think it is remarkably better now than it was three years ago. Let me give you just a real brief example about how I approach this. My director of advising came to me and we have a faculty advising model, where about half of our advisers are faculty who get some release time to work in the advising center. The director of advising came to me and he said, I would really like to do away with faculty advisers so I can hire more full time advisers since they are just easier to schedule, they have more availability, and faculty are tough to work with. I said, well okay, tell me what your interest is and he said well, I need more advisers in the summer time when we are real busy and the faculty are gone and I need more advisers in the evening and faculty don't want to advise in those hours, and they have limited time only at that time available.

So in my approach I move people away from stating a position. The position is, I want that faculty gone and I want full time advisers. But the interest is, I have an interest in having more advisers in the summer and in the evening. The faculty senate said we want a faculty to be advisers. So they both had staked out their positions. I moved them away from those positions and towards what their interest was; and clearly indicated that the interest of the students needed to prevail. So we and I'm sure it is not different at your institution, we have a large demand for advisers in August before the classes start and faculty are not under contract. So we established collaboratively new parameters for faculty that wished to be advisers; meaning, they needed to be available the three weeks before classes started in August and they needed to be available at least one evening a week. That met the interest of both parties. The faculty continued to be advisers if they chose and my director of advising had his interest of having advisers available in the summer and in the evening addressed. Previously, my experience had been, two vice presidents would come in and the vice president for the academic affairs would say my faculty need to be advisers and the vice president of the student affairs would say well they are not there when we need them. They would be advocating for their side but bumping heads against each other. Even if I do rule, I can't have a winner and a loser. My ruling is with the student and I needed to find a solution that was a winner for the students. While we got it worked out, both sides think they have won, they are happy, and most importantly Paul, the needs of the students prevailed. (Dr. Cartwright)

Unified Approach

A common sentiment weaved through the majority of the participants comments was unity. The participants expressed value in a unified approach toward addressing the institutions mission, strategic priorities and overall goals. Organizational structure did not seem to impact the importance placed on ensuring that there is a unified approach between the two areas. However, several participants believed that the combined model stood a better chance at obtaining unified collaborative results. Those that believed they had successfully obtained a unified collaborative working atmosphere between the two areas provided concrete examples of how this approach had led to increased retention rates, aspen award recognition, graduation rates that had doubled, and a better working relationship between the two areas. It was common for these individuals to avoid identifying with one area and ensure that the needs of the students were central. When we spoke Dr. Cartwright coined the phrase "pulling on the rope in the same direction." This referred to ensuring that the two sides were working together and not against each other. Dr. Hamilton

was adamant in stating the importance of the two areas collaborating to advance the college and address the needs of the students. The participant commented "we can't just focus on the brain, we get a whole student." According to Dr. Hamilton you need to address the entire needs of the student to ensure their success. Dr. Hamilton believed that only focusing on the brain or the academic side would have limited result and that it required academic affairs and student affairs to collaborate and focus on the needs of the whole student. Like most participants Dr. Cartwright, Dr. Cass, and Dr. Hersey viewed ensuring a unified approach as one of their critical responsibilities. Their comments are below.

> …it all goes with that sense that your role is not for one side of the student experience but the entire student experience. So just by having a unified approach to identifying the strategic directions of the college. So in the strategic plan steering committee my role is to take a look at the needs of the student and that incorporates both the academic and student affairs. So our success and it has to do with a lot of factors, not just our organizational structure but we were named finalists for the Aspen awards, this past year, which is based on student success outcomes. We have doubled the number of students earning degrees and certificates in this institution in the last five years. So, we are doing some really remarkable and really innovative things in terms of developmental and the whole revamped approach to that. There is just a spirit of energy on this campus that I think is partly due to the fact that we are all pulling on the rope in the same direction…I think institutions are wise to bring the two functions together because it forces the discussion between the academic side of the house and the student affairs side of the house... (Dr. Cartwright)

> So, I think it [the combined role] sets it up a collaborative environment from the very beginning, from a structural standpoint in the organizational chart and in terms of a staff meeting. That's how you approach things and when you're talking about things, you get the input from academic affairs as well as student affairs. (Dr. Cass)

It is important to note that Dr. Hersey was employed at one of the institutions that had the combined position and decided to separate it into two vice presidents. Dr. Hersey helped present the case for separation to the board of trustees. Although Dr. Hersey believed the position should be separated into two vice presidents the participant saw the importance of a close working

relationship between the two areas. Dr. Hersey's comments further demonstrate the value of

collaboration and a unified approach as emphasized by the participants.

> …We have an academic and student affairs council. When we split [split the joint position into two vice presidents] I said Bob [pseudonym] we are going to continue this but I think you and I should both chair [the academic and student affairs council], which he agreed. The idea is to keep this group together and keep them talking, keep them abreast of what each other is doing and how they can support each other. Like I said, it advances the priorities in that you have both people in the room or both parts representative of the stakeholders of both of those areas in the room… Well, so I think if you can get people to collaborate, you have a very specific advantage over other institutions, over other competitors or whatever it is. Because there is this energy that comes out of that and that translates into helping students as well. (Dr. Hersey)

Similar to other participant Dr. Stanley believed that the unified approach made them more

effective as an institution.

> I think that we have been much more effective in the advancement of more priorities within a shorter time frame, because there is an opportunity to build consensus around priorities …and we have seen and have realized some very good accomplishment and even more important we have seen the accomplishment of a willingness to work together over the identification of where to go next and once that's decided how we are going to do it collaboratively. (Dr. Stanley)

Two VP's and Collaboration

When speaking about collaboration participants made comments about either their

experience with having two separate vice presidents over each area or their perceptions of what it

would be like. There was overwhelming consensus that the two vice presidents needed to be on

the same page for collaboration and progress to occur. The participants shared stories of what the

atmosphere was like with two separate vice presidents and expressed that the two areas could

suffer if the two vice presidents did not get along. Stories of disconnect where revealed. One

participant Dr. Thomasville referred to their experience prior to the roles being merged as the

cold war. Others described the atmosphere as selfish and silo focused.

> There's talk at this college of going back to two VPs and people are asking me all the time, how would you feel about that? From the personal standpoint, if somebody want to

take away 40% of my job and continue to pay me the same amount, I'll say, God bless you, I'm pleased. You know, I could do just as much good if I had a VP of Student Services who was collaborative and on the same page and the same wave length as I am. If I had a vice president over Student Services who was not on the same page and not collaborative, then we would not be able to accomplish anything. So the answer to your question is it would really depend who was over Student Services. I could imagine that we'd be able to solve the same problems exactly the same way. I could imagine that we would continue to meet together and continue to interface the same way we are now. Or I could imagine that something would blow up and personalities will get in the way and we go back to an era of the Cold War. (Dr. Thomasville)

Dr. Thomasville explained that when assuming the joint position the Deans and Director of both areas did not interact well and there was a lot of tension between these individuals. After a year and a half the participant states that the areas are working together and the tension that existed upon his arrival has ceased. Dr. Thomasville commented as follows:

… There was tension in the room. Now, a year and a half later…everyone's laughing, everyone's joking, everyone's dialoguing. There's no tension and the group is working together harmoniously. That's important and it's very positive. Now it means if we have an initiative for example that says we have to increase our retention rate or we got an initiative that says we have to increase our graduation rate, I can now get both sides of the house talking together freely and unselfconsciously about ways in which we might do that. And the ways are not exclusively on either side of the house, it really belongs to both. That's the real opportunity. The real crisis with community college is what are we going to do with students who come totally unprepared for college level work, how are we going to make them real college students, how are we going to get them through an academic program when they come to us barely able to read and totally unable to do equations. And we're not going to solve that problem unless we work together. So having the support folks and the instructional folks trusting each other and being able to talk freely is going to facilitate tackling these problems…if they had a student services leader who's was not cooperative we would end up having more difficulty having the two areas working collaboratively with each other. That would add another area of frustration and my job actually would become worse than it is now. (Dr. Thomasville)

It is important to note Dr. Thomasville's concern that if the areas were separate and an uncooperative vice president was hired it would make the job more challenging and may impact collaboration between the two areas. Along those same line Dr. Gabriel described the differences discovered working under both models. The experience of Dr. Gabriel was similar to

the fears and experience of other participants. According to Dr. Gabriel silos existed under the

two vice presidents model while under the merged model constant collaboration occurred.

> You know it is amazing, it has been great, it has actually been very, very good. Being together, you know like staff meetings and different governing body's forces us to think about the implications of whatever we do in other areas. And I think that is the differences between where I had been before and here. The truth is that, before, the student affairs area in my institution was under a separate vice president. It actually brought more of the silo mentality. I do not see those here, in terms of the two areas; you can see constantly the academic deans collaborating with the dean of student's affair because they all need to make something happen. They do know how much they rely on each other. (Dr. Gabriel)

Although Dr. Tillison did not totally disagree with the other participants Dr. Tillison offered a

different perspective. Dr. Tillison tied collaboration closer to creating a culture focused on

collaboration rather than the structure that was in place. According to Dr. Tillison you could

have the merged structure in place and not obtain collaboration and on the other hand you could

have the two vice presidents structure in place and still achieve collaboration. Dr. Tillison tied

collaborative success to the leader building a culture that embraces collaboration and working

together.

> …well as I said I think that the potential is there because the structure of the reporting line sort of demands it. I will say however that it did not appear to me that there was a lot of collaboration going on between the areas when I arrived so even though the reporting lines were in place the sense of safety, the idea that people could provide critique of each other's areas without it being a criticism of their leadership or criticism of their people is something we had to continue cultivate. So from a perspective of getting to the highest functioning collaboration I think it's a two part process you have to have the structure in place but then you also have to create a culture where collaboration is expected…you certainly could have the structure without the culture but it does not work very well and I think you could have the culture without the structure and it can work but it just requires a different kind of intentionality. I have worked in places where there is an academic vice president and a student services vice president and they collaborate and by virtue of their collaborating and creating activities that allow their staff to collaborate you get collaboration. I think the more organic your structure the more likely you are to be successful without the reporting lines dictating it. If you're a hierarchical organization or there is not a culture that people can feel they can cross reporting lines and you almost have to have something like a joint position that provides permission for people to consider collaborations across the two areas…With the right leadership a merge role will

cultivate degrees of collaboration that can be channeled to a particular kind of intention. If you take completion as an example there is an opportunity for us to really focus on completion rather than focusing on students or faculty we are focusing on completion it's a joint responsibility so that I think opportunity exist with the right leadership. I think the challenges as I have alluded are such that if you have the wrong leadership it simply gets out of hand. (Dr. Tillison)

Combine or Separate

When speaking with participants it was important to gather their perspective on the organizational structure and their opinions on the combined position of vice president of academic and student affairs versus separate vice presidents for both areas. Participants had varying opinions on whether there should be either one vice president over both areas or a dedicated vice president for each area. Some participants agreed that the joint position helped to ensure conversations between the two areas. As described by Dr. Cartwright, these conversations are credited with dispelling myths and creating an understanding between the two areas.

> I think institutions are wise to bring the two functions together because it forces the discussion between the academic side of the house and the student affair side of the house. We get more understanding of what the registrar does and what he has to do for example. (Dr. Cartwright)

Dr. Stanley commented that the joint position created "an opportunity to really look at the institution through in a single lens for both academic and student affairs." The majority of participant had a similar opinion providing examples of how this singular view had improved their institution. Dr. Stanley's comments captured the essence of what was mentioned by other participants.

> … So it was an opportunity to really look at the institution through in a single lens for both academic and student affairs because they impact each other so much. How you can coordinate the day to day activities in such a way and begin to develop the policies and procedures in way that would complement one another as opposed to unintentionally being in conflict with one another. So my duties where to work with the associate vice president responsible for each areas and the directors of those areas. Bring them together to look at what we are doing institutionally and then to decide how we can make that happen in a complementary way as opposed to operating individually… From an

operational perspective, from the impulse of the beat of what's happening in each of the units and you are able to look at that from both the student services side and the academic affair side. It is incredible what you could do having access to both of those views, that you may not see clearly at all only having access to one. (Dr. Stanley)

Participants saw the merged model as beneficial to the institution regardless of their background. Dr. Stanley who came from a student affairs background believed that if there were two vice presidents instead of a single vice president the potential for a disconnected relationship between the two areas may arise. When asked what the institution would be like if there were two vice presidents instead of a single vice president Dr. Stanley had the following response.

> I think there would have been two separate committees that maybe at some point members of both groups may have been brought together to deal with a particular situation. But for the group to be together on an ongoing basis with the purposes of looking at the entire institution and how things impact various aspects of the institution may not ever come together. (Dr. Stanley)

A Single Voice Versus a Collaborative Approach

The benefits of a single voice were highlighted by several members. These individuals expressed the value of one person providing a single voice for each of these two key areas of the college. Many of the participants that spoke of the importance of a single voice saw a clear connection between the two areas, expressing that the areas needed to be on the same page and should not operate as silos. Many participants believed that two vice president model raised the potential for silos to form, increased competition for resources, and opened up a greater potential for conflict between the two areas. Dr. Woldoff and Dr. Vanburen like many other participants saw value in the single voice that results from merging the two vice presidents into one.

> …I am the face of the teaching and learning at the college and if you have multiple people doing that at the senior level then it might be more difficult and might be more confusing or contradictory. Opportunities exist because I was familiar with both area of the college. If I am meeting with someone from the community or a board member I am more informed. So I can't measure it, but I think the single voice is helpful… If there was not one vice president I think the challenge would have been even be hard because then it would have been two VP's trying to work across the two areas. The two leaders trying to

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work across the two areas would need to partner so that would have made it harder and slower. If the two people had built a strong working relationship, had a conversation and both worked together, then I think that can be done fairly easily but the competition between the two areas can be very real. (Dr. Wolford)

Dr. Vanburen expressed the belief that one vice president is better than two while sharing a reaction to a push for two vice presidents. The participant's comments also echoed other participants concerns about the potential for the two vice presidents not working together hence the preference for one vice president over the two areas.

…And I thought whatever. You know, but these people just don't understand that if you got two individuals, and if you got a Vice President of Student Services, and if you got a Vice President of Academics, and if the two do not work well together, the college is at a disadvantage because you are not running it under the same guidelines… When you run into that competition where resources are slim and you got two people that are opposing each other it could be very difficult and could be detrimental to that in the institution, I've seen that before. (Dr. Vanburen)

Along the same lines Dr. Hamilton commented that "when you have the majority of the representatives of all of the work of a college in one room, you reduce the opportunities for blaming and negative things that affect the culture negatively." Dr. Hamilton's comment demonstrated the participant's belief that not having a single voice and unified approach has the potential to negatively influence the culture. However, when the participant shared their experience it revealed that Dr. Hamilton has not experienced the benefits of the joint position described by other participants. Dr. Hamilton stated "…That's been my experience. I think the notion is that when you have that person in charge of both of those areas, relying on one person you get a greater consistency of direction and vision and enhance the collaborative opportunities that are there." Dr. Hamilton goes on to state "In reality that just hasn't worked to me." The participant's description is revealing. Dr. Hamilton goes on to explain that she believes that the joint position is only effective in institutions with limited challenges to work through. Dr.

Hamilton was employed by two institutions in which she served in a joint role that was eventually split into two vice presidents. In one of those instances the participant explained that the student affairs area had several challenges and required focused leadership. Dr. Hersey who was also in a joint position that was split into two vice presidents pushed for the two areas to be split as a result of the workload and the need for student affairs to have focused leadership. Dr. Hersey believed that a single voice from a single leader was not critical but a unified and collaborative approach was essential. In describing a conversation with the new vice president of student affairs about a joint leadership group that existed, the participant stated "when we split I said Johnny [pseudonym] we are going to continue this but I think you and I should both co-chair... The idea is to keep this group together and keep them talking, keep them abreast of what each other is doing and how they can support each other." Dr. Hersey believes that the success of the two vice president model is dependent upon the personalities and interpersonal relationship between the two individuals.

> So I think if you set up the mechanisms or structures you can make this work. But you know, it gets down to more than anything else, it really is about personalities. It is about those interpersonal relationships which are key in making this work. You get the wrong person in this the position and it is going to blow apart. So...I felt that a lot of this has to do with the structures that will be put in place to make sure that these two areas are aligned. The critical piece is the relationship between the two people (Dr. Hersey).

Dr. Tillison appeared to echo the opinions of Dr. Hersey and Dr. Hamilton commenting "... I don't know that I think it's essential to have a joint role." Dr. Tillison's explanation placed a focus on the importance of respect and understanding of one another while emphasizing the significance of concentrating on the needs of the students. In no way was Dr. Tillison opposed to the joint role. In fact, the participant stated that the joint role had advantages such as providing a mechanism for collaboration. The participant believed that if two vice presidents deliberately interacted across both areas the same results found in the joint position could be realized.

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I do think it's essential that the academic side and the student services side of the institution have a deep understanding and respect for one another. I think you have to have collaboration and I think that what the joint role provides is a mechanism for that collaboration to occur when all the areas report to the same vice president. What that means is that you're getting deans in a room having discussions about what is good for students, such as affordability, support, tutoring, and engagement. At the same time you have deans having discussion about what faculty are saying in their classroom so there is an advantage to the joint role but I do not know that I think it's essential. It can be replaced by meaningful intentional regular engagement across the two areas. If it's done informally or if it's done through some kind of joint meeting I think that could supplant the need for a joint position. But what I'm finding in my institution is that the joint position fills that in as opposed to somebody having to create it. (Dr. Tillison)

Exercise Caution

Although the majority of participants supported the merged model some participant shared cautions. These individuals commented that the model does not work for everyone, expressed that it was important to ensure that the individual in the joint leadership role did not favor one area over the other, and shared that it would be important for institutions that assumed this organizational structure to do so with the institutional culture and challenges in mind. Dr. Cartwright expressed strongly that the individual in the joint role could not be biased.

…I think the greatest danger is someone who would view themselves as in one role or the other. If someone views themselves as an advocate for faculty, or view themselves as an advocate for student affairs, that would be trouble. You need someone in this role who is an advocate for the students and what is best for the student. If you just keep centering yourself on that then I think it all works itself out. But if someone came into the joint position as, hey I'm a vice president of academic affairs, I've got to support my faculty folks will quickly see if you have a biased towards one side or another and the policy of their thinking. (Dr. Cartwright)

Some participants indicated that the merged model may not be a good model for all institutions. These individuals expressed that the institution must take into consideration cultural and institutional personalities. Dr. Gabriel and Dr. Hersey had strong beliefs that the culture of the institution needed to be considered when considering a move to the joint position. Dr.

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Stanley stressed the importance of inclusion when contemplating a move to the merged model. This participant commented, "The recommendation that I would make is that if an institution is considering the joint position it should review the consideration of adopting the joint position by incorporating as many people that would be impacted by the adoption of the position."

> … You know I do not think this would work for everybody. I think the institution needs to assess their culture, their history and where they want to go. I do not think this would work for every institution. I do not think there is a formula for this. So would I say that everybody should be going into this? No, I would not say that. I think institutions need to be aware of their differences and that not everything that works for us would work for them. (Dr. Gabriel)

In addition to considering institutional culture Dr. Bridgestone spoke about the impact the "artificial divide" has on adopting the merged model. Dr. Bridgestone's comments reflected some of the challenges participant spoke about when they assumed the joint role and faced resistance.

> …But getting to the appropriate configuration for a dual devotional oversight of academic affairs and student affairs is one that requires a lot of thought and a lot of planning. And it can fluctuate from one institution to another based on the institutional culture. So if you have the culture that is used to the traditional model and if that model has been reasonably effective, I think there is going to be a considerable amount of resistance, probably on both sides of that house; when you begin to introduce both areas being overseen by one, because there is still this artificial divide between what student affairs is responsible for and what academic affair is responsible for. And many institutions still handles two areas as if they are independent operations. (Dr. Bridgestone)

These comments from Dr. Stanley, Dr. Gabriel and Dr. Bridgestone highlight the influence the culture has on the institutions ability to effectively implement the joint role and pave the way for the success of the leader that assumes the joint role. Some participants agreed that if the culture is resistant and not ready to embrace the merged model the institution should be cautious about adopting the model.

Leadership

In our discussions the participants spoke about leadership and the positive and/or negative impacts of leadership. The impact of the merged leader seemed to stem from their leadership effectiveness. The stories of ineffective interactions between the two areas were often attributed to the leader or leaders where there were two vice presidents. Since there was an emphasis placed on leadership by the participants it is important to explore their leadership styles and ascertain if they utilized any specific leadership theories and / or approaches. The majority of participants claimed that they did not follow any specific leadership theory or style. However, most seemed to describe specific leadership styles and approaches they practiced in order to achieve their intended outcomes. The majority of participants described practicing servant leadership and team leadership. Also, change management and emotional intelligence was a recurring focus for almost all of the participants. When Dr. Stanley was asked if any particular theories were utilized to assist with the role and goal attainment, the response was similar to that of several other participants. Dr. Stanley and other participants explained that they were far removed from their theoretical studies but unconsciously pulled from a variety of theories.

> No, you know I think there are a lot of theoretical constructs and physiological paradigms and educational theories that ultimately influence what I do. But I am at a point in my career where there is not a straight line between the joint role connected to theoretical constructs. It has now just become how do I look at this challenge and I think on unconscious level principals and aspects of this whole theoretical constructs and paradigms come to play without me even being consciously aware of what it is. (Dr. Stanley)

Dr. Thomasville was the only participant that was clear about not puling from or utilizing any leadership theories while leading. His comments are in the minority.

> I will say, in all honesty, and it appalled my President here when she learned this, I never went to leadership school. I never went to Dean School. I never went to VP school. I trained by practical experience. I had no theoretical background in this stuff at all. I just

learned over the years to keep doing things that seem natural to me and I got good results from. (Dr. Thomasville)

Dr. Cartwright also believed that he did not necessarily pull from any specific leadership theories but did believe he most often practiced servant leadership. Servant leadership was the most frequently mentioned leadership theory. This is captured by comments from Dr. Cartwright, Dr. Gabriel, and Dr. Tillison.

> … I think if I am doing any kind of overarching theme it would be servant leadership. I focus on making sure that I'm facilitating the success of those that I am leading. But beyond that, I just have a great love for the folks I work with and positivity focus on what we are trying to accomplish. I go under the assumption that folks will do what is right for students. I do not distrust them that they are not going to do what is right for students. And that has served me well, not universally, but for the most part. (Dr. Cartwright)

> I think I practice servant leadership. I do feel that it is mostly what I need to do. I believe that I'm only going to be here for so many years and then I have to move on. I believe no leader should be in a place for too long, I'm pretty sure some theories have talked about it but I would not be able to quote them for you. I can't say I follow such and such whoever because I do not. (Dr. Gabriel)

Dr. Tillison was the participant that was most familiar with the leadership practices utilized to enhance their leadership. Dr. Tillison pulled from servant leadership but also spoke about transformational leadership theory and Bolman and Deals four frames which were also discussed by one other participant Dr. Bridgestone. Similar to Dr. Stanley and some other participant Dr. Tillison described pulling from various theories while leading.

> Well by virtue of having been a research faculty member at one point and having gone through my career there are various theories I apply. I think the servant leadership, transformational leadership models are helpful models. Bolman and Deals four frames are helpful models that I apply at various times when thinking about whether we've given sufficient consideration to whether it's the political, symbolic nature of something. From an organizational theory perspective I vacillate back and forth between business focus models like continuous improvements and then the more interesting theories to me which have to do with loosely coupled systems. I also like chaos theory related to leadership and the Margret Wheatly stuff is probably something I try to practice but ultimately I think

that in administration particularly community colleges you get a little bit of a gut feeling on how to approach things. I don't know if I would lead exactly the way I would lead here if I were in a different institution. I might be much more of a technocrat if I were in a different place than I am here so I think situational leadership is one thing I expect I would exercise as a leader consistently regardless of what institution I am in. I really think that what is most effective is goanna be connected to what kind of staff you have. (Dr. Tillison)

Dr. Hamilton pulled from a change model and discussed situational and adaptive leadership. These leadership practices and theories were evident in the majority of participant comments. These participants described adapting to the situations they are faced with or adapting to the styles of those that report to them. Moreover, change management was mentioned as an essential focus of many of the participants as they try to move their organizations forward and bring about change.

> I'm further away from my theoretical business. I think that I usually refer to; I think it's a Heifetz model about change. … He uses kind of that analogy in which you have a pot of water and you apply enough heat to keep things moving in there, but not such much heat that it boils over. Yeah, I think its Heifetz; he writes a book called Leadership without Easy Answers. I always come back to that and you can only change as much as the people will allow… If the change is going to require a behavioral change of the people, he would characterize that as an adaptive challenge. So, you really have to take a lot more time with it, you have to have a lot of people around the table. I try in my head to look at situations, opportunities and changes from that perspective. (Dr. Hamilton)

Dr. Wolford also spoke about change from the standpoint of transformational leadership and the importance of lasting change.

> …I try to make change that is long lasting so I aim for transformational leadership. We could easily put band aids on things. Like for instance we are having a struggle with customer service and how we are delivering that and it is easy for me to ignore it but instead I like to change the whole structure and the way they operate. So I am for transformational leadership. So for me leadership requires long term thinking. I am always trying to look at that and trying to make sure that if the college makes a change it needs to be long lasting change as opposed to a temporary one…I like building ownership of the change or ownership for the change. (Dr. Wolford)

Dr. Gabriel's comments mirrored the sentiments expressed by other participants who believed a significant part of their responsibilities was managing change.

> I'd like to think that I exercise the legislative type of leadership instead of the executive one. Where I'm actually constantly searching and again advocating for the well-being for the different things in the different forms, trying to continually gather enough support to move things along. I would like to say it is, actually what I need to manage is change and that is what I spend most of my time on. I spend time on making everybody aware of the importance of change and how do we make it this seamless as possible. (Dr. Gabriel)

As the discussions went deeper into leadership the responses became more passionate. It appeared that several participants placed a huge emphasis ensuring that everyone was on the same page and moving in the same direction. Strong emphasis was placed on listening to the staff, supporting their needs, practicing participatory leadership and not practicing a dictatorial leadership style. Participants focused on the importance of communication, garnering a shared vision, collaboration, and transparent leadership. There appeared to be a common sense that these practices were essential for individuals in the combined role. Regarding getting people on the same page Dr. Kevlar made the following comments, "so basically I would say this…I spend a lot of time getting people together on the direction that we are going." Dr. Cartwright like other participants utilized communication and a commitment to collaboration to help obtain a shared vision. Dr. Woldoff had equally strong comments about the importance and close connection between collaboration, consensus building, and leadership.

> …I guess I am committed to collaboration and committed to communication. My role as the vice president is to lay out a compelling vision for student success and to get folks to buy into that vision. I'm at my best when I can get folks together and get them to buy into a shared vision. (Dr. Cartwright)

> One of the characteristics that immediately come to mind is collaborative. I think that is extremely important in the college environment. So even though I'm leading I want to lead a lot by consensus. We also have an institution that values that, so leadership for me is building consensus, working with others to understand and entertain multiple points of view before taking an action. I don't make arbitrary or dictatorial type decisions. I like to

understand multiple points of view for when a decision is made I have no trouble at all making it. (Dr. Woldoff)

Dr. Hamilton's comments expand on this introducing the concept of team leadership which is also observed in comments from other participants such as Dr. Hersey.

> So, my leadership style… just the mention of collaboration I think is really important…and that is the kind of environment that I thrive in. I enjoy being a part of [collaboration] because it is not about me as much as it is about the people I work with. So I'm a big promoter of people talents and skills and so if there is any way that I can light those collaborative fires and get people to work as a real team I do…(Dr. Hamilton)

> Like the team concept that we think of. One person may come up with an idea but the other person makes it even better and then the third person who has this talent with graphics and with web skills can say yes, well we can do such and such, I'm line with this, you know. That is the kind of… environments that I have tried to create and I think I have been successful at. (Dr. Hersey)

> Good listening skills were also mentioned as a key characteristic necessary in this role.

Almost all of the participants at some point during the interview described the importance of listening. They spoke about listening to their staff, listening to students, listening to their President, listening to the community, and listening to other stakeholder. Dr. Stanley's comments seem to summarize the comments expressed by these participants.

> I would say that I am a very definitive, decisive and a democratic leader with and open ear. I believe that my leadership style is one that is consultative in that I reach out to as many different constituencies as I can to get consensus of what is going to be in the best interest of the institution. I listen to and try to incorporate all of those perspective in a way that's allows me to make a decision that is in the best interest of the institution and one that reflects the concern and the insight of those that I am working with...(Dr. Stanley)

According to Dr. Stanley this approach has had a positive impact on the institution and his success as a joint leader. Dr. Stanley emphasized that his leadership approach has helped to build

trust and openness that has led to concrete examples of success. It's important to share Dr.

Stanley's thoughts on how this approach has advanced the institution.

> Okay, I would say that my leadership has influenced the institution positively. I have a high relational style as part of my leadership and the ability to build personal relationship has created openness for people to address institutional concern with a lower level of defensiveness. That's probably the greatest asset that I have brought to the college, being able to break down some defensive barriers based on relationships that have been cultivated over time. Which by extension has resulted in people just saying okay let's look at this, let's look at this without baggage, lets now just look at it from a purely empirical perspective and what does that information provide us and what does that mean about what it is. We have seen and have realized some very good accomplishments and even more importantly the accomplishment of a wiliness to work together over the identification of where to go next and once that's decided how we are going to do it collaboratively. (Dr. Stanley)

Dr. Thomasville also touts the importance of listening and being interested in people's ideas. Dr.

Thomasville like other participants found that it was important to be transparent. Below is Dr.

Thomasville's description of how listening, being inclusive and transparent has created buy-in

among the staff.

> I like to be transparent and inclusive. I like consensus. I like involving everybody who's connected to an issue and getting ideas from them. I'm an academic so I love to talk about things and disagree and debate in an amiable sort of way and try to come up with something that will satisfy everyone. That's a bit of a struggle because I've got a president who is more directive and expect things to be done very quickly and my processes are not always that quick. On the other hand, I get good results; I get buy-in because of the way that I do things…The simple fact that I listen, that I am genuinely interested in what they have to say and I want their input before we make decisions. I treated them with respect and I had clear reasons for why we were doing what we were doing. In my experience that's all most people really want. (Dr. Thomasville)

Participant behaviors and beliefs viewed through an ethical lens

Participants did not outwardly speak about providing ethical leadership, ethical decision

making, or their own ethical identity. However, the participant's descriptions of their lived

experiences with addressing adversity, making decisions, and how they perceived their role

provided some insight into their thoughts and practices viewed through an ethical lens. Participants appeared to evaluate their beliefs and values unselfishly tying it back to their role and responsibilities. Commonly, participants described working to ensure fairness across each area when making decision making, advocating for resources, and addressing conflict within the two areas. Moreover, participants perceived that it was important to understand and respect the culture and contributions of both areas.

Participants appeared to place a focus on ensuring fairness between academic and student affairs. This becomes evident in their actions and decisions. Dr. Cass and Dr. Thomasville's comments provide an example of the sentiments expressed by participants.

> … I ask myself on daily bases am I balancing my work with both groups. You know am I providing enough emphasis to bring together and support both groups in a similar way… When I came to this college the first thing I said to the president is, you are understaffed in this area [student affairs]… I said to her at the time look we need to make sure that we are also bring in new faculty. I mean you got to balance this because you know it's my experience Paul is the other way around, that you know the academic side of the house gets all the money and support and student affairs doesn't get enough, it gets the crumbs…I really try to work to balance that … (Dr. Cass)

> …and in that environment I could advocate very successfully for both areas when issues came up and you know I never really even thought to distinguish between the two areas. I can very easily conceptualize the two areas being flipped sides of the same coin rather than being really distinct and independent things. (Dr. Thomasville)

Moreover, participants placed an emphasis on ensuring that the areas of academic and student affairs understood and maintained respect and trust among one another. Dr. Tillison commented, "I do think it's essential that the academic side and the student affairs side of the institution have a deep understanding and respect for one another." This is further reflected in comments from Dr. Wolford, Dr. Hamilton, and Dr. Thomasville who in addition to respect placed a focus on addressing assumptions and promoting trust between the two areas.

So this territorial compartmentalized idea is one that had to be addressed…it began first with the leadership. To me that was what I could do first. I had to call people on comments that they made about each other and I had to insist that when we had meetings…the students support and student services groups were invited to attend. …So breaking down those walls and doing it with respect was major…First of all, the first thing I had to do was to build respect for both areas of the college. There was a culture that unfortunately had been built up here in which the student services area and the student support area felt that they did not have the respect of the faculty and the academic deans, and so one of the first things was to help both sides understand the role that they played. (Dr. Wolford)

…faculty tend to think of their roles as far more important and academic affairs tend to think of their roles as being a notch above what student affairs people do. The merged model kind of allowed me to be able to nip that assumption in the bud… (Dr. Hamilton)

There's no tension and the group is working together harmoniously. That's important and it's very positive... And we're not going to solve problems unless we work together. So having the support folks and the instructional folks trusting each other and being able to talk freely is going to facilitate tackling problems. (Dr. Thomasville)

When discussing the leadership and the value placed on employees Dr Cartwright commented, "…I empower them." While discussing the same topic Dr. Hersey described encouraging input and empowering employees as an important aspect of leadership. Dr. Hersey commented, "…I was trying to give them some leadership skills as well as to put them in the control seat. While also allowing others to offer input regarding an idea …So I guess empowering them…"

 As further revealed by comments Dr. Tillison, Dr. Bridgestone, Dr. Woldoff, participants valued the opinions and contributions of their employees. In addition, participants expressed the importance of empowering and motivating their employees while also celebrating their achievements.

I try to use internal communications to highlight people and I'm very intentional. I try to make sure that I don't only highlight faculty or only student services. So I think that the faculty and staff here would say…that they know that I appreciate them and have concern for all the areas…when you're looking at areas that contain academic and student services that elevates the importance of the vice president really being very intentional

and consistent in spreading the recognition around so that no one feels like they have been ignored, underappreciated or under recognized. (Dr. Tillison)

… I am open to whatever it is that they want to do and I am helpful in that way... You have to tap into what motivates them and if you are not tapping into their motivation and helping them [achieve] what they are really motivated to do and celebrating them then you are not providing any kind of leadership. (Dr. Bridgestone)

… I am the person who is going to speak for our area but that is only after I have heard inputs from each of the areas and we have met as a group, and discussed what each area wants and needs so that there is a common understanding among the group in terms of what I am going to go ahead and ask for as a priority. (Dr. Woldoff)

Comments from Dr. Cartwright and Dr. Thomasville serve as an example of the importance participants placed on transparency and addressing the interest of their employees. Dr. Cartwright commented, "…folks always want to know that their vice president has their best interest at heart and I just need to prove that to them each day, everyday." Dr. Thomasville's comments demonstrate the emphasis the participant placed on transparency and its perceived importance to the employees.

…And I found that they really appreciated being told what was up even if they didn't always like it. And I deliberately solicited input from the rank-and-file before we made any major changes. And as much as I could, I incorporated that input in to the policy decisions that were made. (Dr. Thomasville)

Participants also demonstrated self reflection and unselfish leadership that focused on what was best for the institution. When reflecting of their experience with the joint position Dr. Hamilton did not believe that the joint position was effective. Dr. Hamilton commented, "I liked the notion of it, but the reality of it, I did not think worked very well." Dr. Hersey spoke about separating the joint role they held so that each area could have its own leader since they did not believe that they could effectively focus on both areas. Dr. Hersey commented "…I think this allows… student affairs faculty to see that they have a champion who is also pushing for them as

much as the academic side of the house…There is no way that I could have met with all these people, I just couldn't. It was physically impossible." Dr. Bridgestone and Dr. Thomasville were also realistic and self-reflective about the limitations of the position and the impact growth had on effectiveness. Dr. Bridgestone commented "…as we expanded it just become too difficult to provide the supervision and quality of the interaction that the directors needed to take care." Dr. Thomasville commented, "…Now, with the downside, they don't see as much as me as they'd like to and nobody does because of the inordinate demands of the position. I spend entirely too much time in my office.

Viewing participants described actions and leadership approaches through an ethical lens revealed that participants were self reflective, appeared to place a value on employee growth and development, focused on addressing institutional needs, and emphasized transparency.

Participant's Perceived Responsibilities, Opportunities, and Challenges

Participants expressed what they perceived to be their core responsibilities and the opportunities presented as a result of the joint position. Participants commonly expressed utilizing their position to focus attention on the needs of students, gain consensus, bring staff together to focus on shared initiatives, to create a singular vision across the two areas, dispel myths and misperceptions about each area, and enhance communication and information distribution. Moreover, participants shared professional opportunities that they perceived resulted from serving in the joint position.

Students are Central

Participants when discussing how they advanced the institutions strategic priorities and promoted student learning and development commonly expressed that the key for them was to keep students central. Keeping the students central was utilized by the participants to get the two

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areas to unite around a common goal, open the lines of communication, and build consensus. Dr. Stanley succinctly described how the position has helped to advance the institutions strategic priorities stating, "I think that we have been much more effective in the advancement of more priorities within a shorter time frame because there is an opportunity to build consensus." Dr. Cartwright indicated that the focus on students helped to drive the need to streamline communication and remove silos. Dr. Cartwright commented:

> …what I have touched on a little bit is an unwavering focus on our students by structuring ourselves in a way that places the focus solely on the success of that student by creating more streamlined lines of communication, tearing down silos organizationally, reducing the administrative foot print, and creating a singular vision for the success of our students. I think all of those have been opportunities that we are doing our very best to maximize here at the community college. (Dr. Cartwright)

Participants often commented that students were the reason that the institution existed and that energy should be focused on addressing their needs. Others explained that in order to create a spark for change and collaboration they would identify an issue that impacted students. Creating a culture focused on student learning and success was seen by the participants as their responsibility. Like Dr. Cartwright, several participants indicated that their focus on students drove the need for change or provides a common focal point for both areas. Dr. Gabriel expressed excitement when explaining that the focus on students was enhanced by the combined position. In her comments Dr. Gabriel stated, "I think the biggest opportunity is the opportunity to kind of see the students as a whole. So having a holistic approach to all of the interventions, strategies, activities, that we do I think that is the nice opportunity that we have always." Following that theme Dr. Hamilton stated that "The opportunities really are around having one voice related to the student, the whole student, and not just a part…" Dr. Cass also saw the joint role as one that had the primary responsibility of serving students holistically and having a positive impact the student's educational experience.

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I had a lot of experience with supervising both academic affairs and student affairs, so the first overarching goal is that, we are here to serve students. All of us have a very important role to play in serving students. Whether that role is teaching, whether it is advising, whether it is testing, whether it is registering, whether it is financial aid, whatever it happens to be we have to look at the student holistically. We must ensure that all the pieces have to fit together in order for that student to have an appropriate education experience at the college. (Dr. Cass)

Spring boarding from this it appeared that other participants with a similar philosophy of focusing on the students used this approach to drive change, promote collaboration, and advocate for each area. Individuals such as Dr. Gabriel, Dr. Thomasville, and Dr. Cartwright were clear that the focus on students had defined the structure or should define and inform the structure and strategic goals of their office. Each of these participants explained the correlation that they perceived should exist between the focus on students and the organizational structure.

The purpose of this office is to improve the overall operations of the academic and student affairs divisions, creating the conditions to ensure that we meet the academic mission of the college. I do like to call myself the back of the house operation, the equivalent of what happens in the back of the house in any restaurant. You are just setting up structures to make sure that students get what they need when they need it, in order for them to meet their goals. (Dr. Gabriel)

Rather than coming up with a structure that fits what's happening now, I think it would make more sense to try to figure out a way to analyze and document what the advantages would be to students. The president was talking about [something] in a meeting I had today. We can't afford to do anything at this institution that we can't point to student success and say because we do this our students are going to be X percent more successful…(Dr. Thomasville)

Similar to other participants Dr. Cartwright drew a connection between advocating for students and ensuring that the needs of academic and student affairs were met. Similar to others this participant revealed that they perceived the primary role of the individuals in the joint position was to focus on the entire student experience. Dr. Cartwright's institution under this joint leadership model has received awards for retention and student success and very prominent national attention. Interestingly, as evidenced by the comments, Dr. Cartwright was very clear

that organizational structure was not the sole factor responsible for those successes, a unified

approach and the focus on the whole student seemed to be thought of as contributing factors.

>…it all goes with that sense that your role is not for one side of the student experience but the entire student experience... My role is to take a look at the needs of the student and that incorporates both the academic and student affairs. So our success has to do with a lot of factors, not just our organizational structure… The student experiences are front and center in terms of staffing, budgeting, etc. That is my number one job, it is to advocate for the students and by advocating for students I'm advocating for student affairs and academic affairs areas. (Dr. Cartwright)

Addressing Myths, Silos, and Misperceptions

As participants spoke about their experience and relationship with either the academic

affairs area or the student affairs area they were clear about the myths, silos and misperceptions

that existed between the two areas. Many of these participants saw themselves in a position to

address those myths and misperceptions as a result of the joint role. Dr. Thomasville was not

well received by the student affairs staff given the participants academic background and the bad

blood between academic affairs and student affairs at the institution. Dr. Thomasville explained

that effort had to be made to gain their support which was the end result.

>So there, I was even more tightly perceived as the instructional person by the Student Service people because they had known me from the previous two years as somebody who is an academic officer who had no connection to Student Services. They were appalled, afraid, and resistant when I was named over them because there had been a history of bad blood between the two areas and they thought that I was going to be difficult, oppressive, and unsympathetic. I did the same thing with the group here [participant explained working closely with staff and being open and transparent]. Within less than a semester they became really supportive and easy to work with. We have a very productive relationship. (Dr. Thomasville)

Like other participants Dr. Hamilton and Dr. Wolford explained how the areas were

compartmentalized and possessed unsubstantiated opinions about one another. Dr. Hamilton

spoke about the perception of the faculty that they were superior to the student affairs area. The

participant utilized the merged role to change this perception commenting that "faculty tend to

think of their roles as far more important or academic affairs tend to think of their roles as being a notch above what student affairs people do. The merge model kind of allowed me to be able to and allowed other people to be able to nip that assumption in the bud." Dr. Wolford's experience demonstrated the importance for those in the joint role to work hard to dispel those myths and eliminate silos. It also serves to highlight why other participants worked hard on communication, dispelling myths and removing silos.

> So this territorial compartmentalized idea is one that had to be addressed and I think we have gotten better with that. And how did that happen? It began first with the leadership to me that is what I could do first. I had to call people on comments that they made about each other, I had to insist that when we had meetings like for instance faculty meetings that the student support and students services group were invited to attend… So breaking down those walls and doing it with respect was a major piece then the other piece was helping people to understand that what happens in one area has to be aligned with what is happening in the other. When you move one of the chess pieces there is going to be an impact somewhere else and that is a constant struggle. Again it is because of that silo thinking and I have changed this because this is how I want my department to run… So whenever we are going to make substantial changes, we communicate even before we consult so that the two areas can work together. (Dr. Woldoff)

The silos that participants experienced under the joint model seemed to shape their opinion about the importance of the two areas working under the same leader. Many pulled from negative experiences and challenges that resulted from the joint model. Dr. Gabriel worked under both models and was clear about the benefits and opportunities that resulted from a single point of leadership for academic and student affairs. When the participant was asked to discuss their experience under the split model Dr. Gabriel spoke about the silos that existed and provided a comparison with working under the merged model. Like with other participants the merged model was viewed as beneficial in creating collaboration and tearing down silos.

> The truth is that before student affairs at my institution was under a separate vice president. It actually brought more of the silo mentality. And I do not see those here, in terms of all the two areas; you can see constantly the academic deans collaborating with the dean of student's affairs because they all need to make something happen. They do

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know how much they rely on each other… In the previous institutions that opportunity was never there. I would have my request and argue for my request. There was never an understanding of why the different requests were important. There was never time to have that conversation, and here it happens because all the things that we do are actually intertwined in a way. And you know, now that I'm doing this, I'm am pretty sure if I were to go back to an institution where that that is not happening, I know I have a responsibility to make that happen even if student affairs is not responding to me. (Dr. Gabriel)

Professional Opportunities

In addition to providing opportunities for the institution and the areas of academic and student affairs participants revealed the professional benefits that resulted from the position. All participants believed that the joint position had lasting professional benefits for them as individuals. Some participant indicated that they assumed the role because of the positive impact it would potentially have on their career goal attainment. Others credited the position for their career advancement. Overwhelmingly, participants clearly indicated that the role prepared them to assume the role of president. These participants believed that given that their role was responsible for oversight over the majority of the institution they were learning more about the institution in the joint position than any other position would provide. This was considered to make them very competitive as a presidential candidate. Those participants not interested in pursuing a presidency indicated that the position has prepared them to assume roles such as consulting and curriculum development. Dr. Hamilton and Dr. Stanley both are presidents that previously served in the joint role. When speaking about this Dr. Hamilton stated, "…I think when you look at the pipeline to presidency, it is really useful to have had experience in both of those areas." Dr. Stanley discussed why he decided assumed the joint position stating the following, "I felt if I could manage and master this then there is nothing else in the academy for me to have to master… I would have touched base on virtually every major aspect of the academy and thought that was going to be critical for me in terms of my seeking a presidency."

Dr. Bridgestone like most other participant believed that the position provided a competitive advantage when seeking a presidency. Dr. Bridgestone explains that this advantage is a result of the large institutional span of control resulting from merging of the two areas under one leader.

> …For me personally I guess the idea that the [joint position] makes me pretty competitive as a president if I wanted to be one. …I have a good shot to become a president and it is probably because of the sense of that most of the college reports to me. Beside that is just that the whole picture that I have of the operation, where we are going and where we need to go would help me a little professionally. So I think if you reach for presidency in a number of different ways and I think its strength to have both academic and student affairs experience. (Dr. Bridgestone)

Dr. Woldoff and Dr. Gabriel also believed that the position prepared individuals for a presidency but also expressed that the position created other opportunities as well. Dr. Wolford stated, "…[If] the VP for the combined area does not want to go on to a presidency, then there are other opportunities. There might be consulting work if they are going to retire and want to do that we have a wealth of experience." Dr. Gabriel stated, "I think there are opportunities for helping people in curriculum development, helping people in teaching strategies, helping people in assessment and accountability…" Neither of these participants had aspirations to become a president but both were very clear that the position created endless professional opportunities. The same sentiments were shared by the other participants.

Faculty Background is Essential

Participants overwhelmingly expressed that an individual assuming the combined role needed to have had experience as a faculty member. This was revisited during the member check with participants and these sentiments were just as strong if not stronger. All participants including those with a student affairs background discussed the importance of having at least some teaching experience. When asked if a student affairs background was necessary only a few thought it was essential. Participants believed that credibility with the faculty was very important

and that an individual that shared and understood their experiences was in the best position to be viewed as credible. Many participants believed that an individual with a student affairs background or a background outside of academic affairs would face difficulty when attempting to create buy-in and advance their goals and the strategic priorities of the institution. Even when looking at those staff below them some individuals that had an academic dean and a student affairs dean viewed the academic dean as more powerful since the faculty report to that individual and the faculty possess a significant amount of power. Dr. Kevlar made the strongest statement to support this notion.

> …my feeling is that your academic dean is going to have more power than your student affairs dean. It's just the nature of who reports to that person. So you know and frequently you hear from the administrators, well the faculty get this, the faculty get that. You know the fact of the matter is and there is no easy way around that, you chose the wrong role, right. It's the truth. I speak the truth, you have chosen the wrong direction, get a faculty position. Look, let's not deny it. They have a lot of power on campus. And regardless of what the Presidents say, I say Presidents, plural. They do not want to be on the wrong side of the faculty and the one-third of the faculty fighters don't stay in their roles that long. So you want to be a faculty fighter, you are going to get sick or you will be in another school because they have a lot of power. (Dr. Kevlar)

When asked whether an individual with a student affairs background could assume the role Dr. Kevlar shared that the individual would have trouble with faculty buy-in and support. Dr. Kevlar stated, "…if you were strong in student affairs and you wanted to be a VP of academic and student affairs, I think you might have a problem. And that problem would stem from support or buy in from the faculty. That's going to be your biggest problem." Dr. Kevlar goes on to recommend that the individual in the combined role have an academic affairs foundation but did not feel strongly that the individual needed several years of teaching experience. Dr. Kevlar's comments were echoed by the overwhelming majority of participants. Dr. Kevlar however was in the minority when asked about resource allocation between the two areas the combined VP supports. Her comments were as follows: "Well I would get money for faculty first." The

majority of the participants attempted to focus resource allocation on the institutions priorities and student needs. Although some did say if it came down to a tough decision with ample justification they would lean towards the faculty explaining that the role of faculty is at the heart of the institutions mission.

Respect for Student Affairs

Dr. Cass agreed with Dr. Kevlar but seemed to address it from a cultural perspective while also alluding that the dual role could be carried out by a student affairs professional but believes that the faculty might not be supportive of the individual. According to Dr. Cass the individual in the dual role must understand and embrace the faculty cultural which may be different from the student affairs culture. Dr. Cass demonstrated a great deal of respect for the work of student affairs professionals and commented that the individual in the combined role needed to have a keen appreciation for the role of student affairs, indicating that they are a critical piece of the puzzle. These sentiments were revealed in the comments of several other participants who also acknowledged that the contribution made by student affairs should not be ignored and respect for student affairs was important but not as essential as connecting with the faculty. Unlike many participants Dr. Cass mentions that it may be unfair to assume that a student affairs professional could not assume the combined role but notes that it is reality since faculty would more than likely reject an individual without a faculty background. Dr. Cass's comments are captured in the following passage and paint a clear picture of the comments expressed by other participants.

> …but the skill set for this position would necessarily have to include the ability to work with faculty. I'm not particularly articulate as to describing what the skill set is but I know it is a learned skill. The faculty culturally is different, they are the heart of any institution but you have to have an understanding of, and an appreciation for faculty. You have to be able to support and celebrate the faculty while holding them accountable and prodding them along. That may be done differently than it is with support staff or student affairs

professionals, it is just done differently. The leader in the joint role needs experience in providing leadership to faculty in this position. And then beyond that you have to have the keen appreciation for the role of student affairs. They get students into those classrooms, they support students while they are in the classrooms and they facilitate their success in dozens, if not hundreds of ways. You have to have a full understanding of that piece of the puzzle… That upsets some of my colleagues and they have a point. You know, they would say a vice president of academic affairs could assume responsibly for students affairs but would a student affairs vice president ever be given authority for academic affairs, would that ever happen, that was their question to me. I'm not sure it would and I think that has to do more with the faculty would be upset. And is it unfair to assume, the student affairs professionals, many of them could handle this dual role; but I think the greatest barrier to that happening would be faculty reaction. I think it is a reality that faculty would react negatively to someone who did not have teaching experience. So I think it is important and maybe it would be unfairly important. (Dr. Cass)

There seemed to be an awareness of the inequality between academic affairs and student affairs. When talking about his experience Dr. Cass explained his perceptions of the inequity "it's my experience…that the academic side of the house gets all the money and support and student affairs doesn't get enough, it gets the crumbs." Dr. Cass goes on to explain the importance of advocating equally for both areas but cautions that the individual should never lose sight of the needs of the faculty. While Dr. Hamilton agreed with Dr. Cass indicating that "because of the importance and the prominence of the academic affairs side of the house, the student affairs can get short stripped sometimes, because the focus is always going to be on the academic side and so the vice president has to spend a lot of time on academic affairs." Dr. Hamilton elaborated on this point more than the other participants and had a slightly different view than most other participants. According to Dr. Hamilton both sides need to be viewed equally since each makes a significant contribution to the institution and student success. Dr. Hamilton uses the following analogy to stress this point, "…I would always just use the analogy that we have a whole student coming in not just the brain. That's one thing that we really did well in Hawaii Community College [pseudonym] was to reinforced the notion that none of us is better than any of the rest of us." As expressed in her comments according to Dr. Hamilton the

belief that a faculty background was essential stemmed more from a lack of knowledge about the student affairs profession.

> I think the challenge on some level is that our public tends to be more educated around what a faculty member does or what the academic affairs side does. So you really have to do some education with your stakeholders. …A lot of the student affairs work is behind the scenes. When I think about how important our admissions and advising roles are those are the roles that people are less familiar with… (Dr. Hamilton)

However, when asked how the faculty would react if a student affairs person was selected to fill the combined position Dr. Hamilton made the following comment "I don't think they would like it a bit." When asked how the student affairs staff would react to the selection of an individual that only had academic affairs experience Dr. Hamilton believed the student affairs staff would raise a concern about someone that was not familiar with student affairs. Dr. Hamilton's comments described the thinking expressed by almost every participant "… you want your leader to have credibility of having lived in the place that they're leading on some level." Although Dr. Hamilton's statement applied to both academic and student affairs staff the comment helps to articulate what each participant was attempting to make clear about their perception that faculty prefer that an individual in the combined role have faculty experience. Dr. Wolford lent credibility to the statements of Dr. Hamilton indicating that when hired the student affairs staff expressed concerns about the lack of student affairs experience the participant possessed and the lack of student affairs knowledge demonstrated during the interview process. Dr. Wolford describes her reception recalling the following, "… so the faculty were fine with the fact that I was a faculty member but I did get and I did hear some resistance from the part of the student services people who were questioning the fact that I had never worked in the student services."

Inequality

Many participants appeared to attempt to divide their time to ensure that they would

provide support to both areas. These individuals were also clear about the importance of the

work done in student affairs. Although most emphasized the importance of being attuned to the

needs of the faculty a few did express explicitly that the needs of the faculty were their primary

priority. Dr. Thomasville described this while also explaining the he makes it a point to teach in

order to maintain credibility with the faculty. Dr. Thomasville like the overwhelming majority

of participants insisted that the leader of the combined role must have an academic background

in order to realize success.

> "On the other hand, I have never seen a combined position that was held by a student
> service person that didn't have an academic background, have you?... Ultimately, what an
> educational institution does is educate… I mean, the reason we are here has to do with
> what goes on between the student and instructor in the classroom… I'm seeing the world
> through the lens of a faculty member which is how I spent my first 17 years in higher
> education but every faculty member would agree with me. And for a faculty member to
> have a chief academic officer who had never taught, it would be extraordinarily difficult
> for the faculty member to accept leadership from someone like that. I actually make it a
> point to teach every semester even though I'm packed the responsibilities of my job. I
> find a way to teach class every Tuesday night because that gives me credibility with the
> faculty, it gives me a measure of respect from the faculty and they can't say you don't
> know what you're talking about because you're not in the frontlines with us because I
> am. (Dr. Thomasville)

Dr. Hersey was adamant that student come to college for an education and not for the

services provided. Interestingly, Dr. Hersey expressed these sentiments during the interview

process when being hired for the combined position held by Dr. Hersey. The position was

ultimately split into two vice president; vice president of student affairs and a provost and vice

president of academic affairs. According to Dr. Hersey, even when splitting the role the

academic affairs community on campus was insistent that the vice president of academic affairs

position be seen as the most senior, "they felt strongly that my title will be provost. …The

faculty were adamant, they said, we will go along with this, we will be happy with it but your title has to indicate that the academic side of the house is prominent." With the splitting of the role Dr. Hersey's comments highlighted the importance placed on academic affairs and were similar to the rational other participants used when discussing the priority they placed on addressing faculty needs.

> …it really puts the student affairs side of the house at a disadvantage because the person's time, no matter how good he or she may be their time is divided. You just have so many hours in a week and when you have got faculty issues and you know it is a priority for all of us, and I said this all along even when I was not a vice president. The most important thing here that is the priority is not about the services…The most important thing and the reason we are here is because of the students and the faculty. So my philosophy is very different from others because I have always overseen what people would label as traditionally student affairs kind of offices. And I understand the importance of their support and collaboration. But make no mistake; we are here because we are a teaching institution…So a lot of times people get upset because they think they don't understand how important student affairs is. It is extremely important but I think that they also get upset when the faculty always gets the priority or they are always the most important focus. But they will always be the most important focus. But that doesn't mean that what we do on the student affairs side of the house isn't significantly important. It is intricate to everything. I'm very upfront and I talked about that when I interviewed. I said that the priority for me will always be the faculty... I really believe that I can walk the talk and make faculty understand how important the student's affairs side of the house is. But in the long run, if my time is limited, I have to devote that and at least and until everything is where it needs to be on the academic side. (Dr. Hersey)

Dr. Stanley who comes from a student affairs background was the only participant to indicate that a faculty background was beneficial but it was not essential. Dr. Stanley believed the following "I think to have teaching experience gives you a certain level of insights that is crucial in working with faculty, academic chairs, and deans. So I think it's definitely a value added component. I don't know if it is necessarily a requirement for this job." Dr. Stanley's perspective was in the minority.

Workload

The most common some of the challenge that participant discussed facing was their
workload. This is one of the few instances where each of the participants agreed. They believed
that the joint position was overwhelming due to its high demand, their span of control, and the
number of direct reports. The size of the participant's institution, years of experience, and
background did not appear to have any influence over the participant's workload concerns as
each discussed being overwhelmed and torn in several directions. However, there seemed to be a
connection between the number of direct reports and how overwhelmed the participant appeared
to be. A handful of participants attempted to address their workload concerns by increasing the
number of Deans or Associate Vice Presidents (AVP) under them. Although these individuals
shared their workloads with their Deans or AVP's they still expressed concerns about their
workloads primarily indicating that they their appointment calendars are always full. Dr.
Cartwright mentioned:

> …I rely on my deans, I have to. There are a lot of details. …It is impossible for me to
> know all that I probably should know. There are times where I can't get to every meeting,
> I probably should be at. So it is just the mere scope of the position, it can be
> overwhelming. (Dr. Cartwright)

When speaking about this Dr. Bridgestone blamed being overwhelmed on the number of direct
reports stating, "I had too many direct reports through that I had about 15 direct reports and it
was kind of hard…" In an attempt to address this challenge Dr. Bridgestone hired Deans to
oversee each area. He expressed that this had a positive impact but he was beginning to see the
two areas drift apart so it would be important that he work to ensure that the two areas stayed
connected. Dr. Bridgestone spoke about this drawback.

> …we were organized into the structure that includes three deans and that has separated
> the two functions a little more. When I had a staff meeting before we had all the

academic giants and the student affairs directors together and that does not occur anymore, that is missing. (Dr. Bridgestone)

Dr. Gabriel unlike other participants seemed enthusiastic despite the massive workload. Instead of expressing frustration the participant looked for the bright side and made light of the workload indicating that boredom was not a component of the position.

> Oh my God, I have like twenty nine academic departments divided into different course, work force development and our transfer services. There is anything from manufacturing, applied technology, culinary arts, business, automotive, credit and non-credit staff, nursing, rad-tech, to the more traditional arts and sciences, math, English …music, physical sciences and that is in terms of the academic schools. In terms of student affairs I have financial aid, student records, academic support mainly tutoring, the library, counseling, enrollment, a couple of trio programs, upward bound, and student support services that are also under this area. In addition to that I do have the entire student success and retention services which are different support services for our Developmental and adult education students. I also oversee the grants office of the institution that has been added to my responsibilities about three months ago. I oversee academic advising, our regional centers or off site operations. Then we offer classes in a number of high schools; I oversee all that and I oversee institutional research and planning. Yeah I know, it's fun I mean, I'm not bored… (Dr. Gabriel)

Expressed Concerns

Some participant expressed that the workload was one that has been discussed either by them or their president. In two institutions it led to the roles being split into two vice presidents and in two others it is being discussed. Dr. Thomasville explained that their institution is contemplating splitting the role into two vice presidents when talking about this the participant said "I think they think that I'm spread pretty thin… I think they might say if it was split apart I would have more time to focus on them [my responsibilities]." Dr. Hamilton was at an institution that split the role and the participant commented that "The workload is very heavy…There were lots of organizational issues that needed strengthening and it was very difficult to pay attention to the strong needs of both sides of the house. It was difficult for one person to be setting the

direction and also having to follow through on lots of the minutiae related to change and I think it's a difficult position to be in." Another participant, Dr. Hersey was instrumental in getting the institution to split the combined role into two vice presidents believing that there was more than enough work for two vice presidents let alone one vice president in a combined role. Dr. Hersey described the first two weeks of employment which is similar to the experience described by other participants.

> The first two weeks I was here, it was constant back to back meetings; it was insanity. And so after two weeks I asked my assistant, I said I can't do this anymore, you are going to have to cancel the rest of these meetings. I need to process this stuff, I need to be able to respond to these other people who are contacting me, and all I'm doing is individual meetings. It was just too much, it was too much, and there wasn't enough time in the day. (Dr. Hersey)

Dr. Stanley believed that the large workload was a result of the size of the institution. The participant questioned whether the combined role was effective for a large institution indicating that it the model may be more appropriate for a small or medium sized community college. Dr. Stanley expressed that the combined role was very taxing. Dr. Stanley commented "I said jokingly about the graying of one's hair but it is very taxing, you know on one hand I think that the consolidation of two areas maybe operationally more viable for a medium to a small size institution but for large institution it becomes increasingly taxing." Dr. Stanley was the only participant that correlated the workload challenges with the size of the institution.

When discussing the position as it related to workload participants provided descriptions using words such as spread too thin, overwhelming, too much for one person, difficult, and exhausting. Dr. Woldoff clearly articulates the challenges expressed by the participants while also being very descriptive about the workload.

> It is exhausting overwhelming at times. Well to give you a sense of the scope I think it is about two thirds of the colleges budget falls in this area, so it is a huge area of resources that I have to keep in mind. Within the student support area there is a long list of services

that we provide …so everywhere there is a big list. What is hard is balancing the administrative role and that has a lot to do with things such as making sure the curriculum is up to date, making sure that the curriculum committee is functioning well or making sure that we have all of our faculty are qualified because that is our accreditation expectation. Balancing that piece with the leadership piece is difficult. To be a leader to me the most important thing is to inspire others to understand the mission and to do their part well. I often have the struggle with time for management by walking around where I can go and chat with people informally, in an unstructured way. That has been my biggest challenge and I have a calendar that is always full. It is always full because I am either in a meeting with the dean, one on one, or I am meeting with them as a group or I'm meeting with a larger group of integrated leaders in both the academic area and student services area or I'm meeting individually with faculty members on a project or I may be meeting individually with a committee. So my calendar is full, and at the same time I still have students who come to see me because they want to take class for the fourth time and the buck stops with me, or it might be a grievance, it might be hiring a new faculty and making sure that that faculty are competitively paid and that we have the ads out on time and we following through that process. So there are a lot of administrative things, papers on my desk everywhere, new programs, and new projects. And yet at the same time being able to inspire people to work with smaller resources and achieve greater things. That is quite a challenge that has been the hard piece for me, managing the time and attention related to management and leadership. (Dr. Woolford)

Limited Staffing

Staffing seemed to be an area of concern for the majority of participants. These individuals attributed the workload issues they faced to the lack of staffing. Dr. Hamilton, Dr. Vanburen and Dr. Gabriel speak about their staffing concerns and their frustrations. When speaking with participants about workload and staffing issues I noted a change in their tone that demonstrated their frustration with not being able to manage their time effectively due to the lack of staffing and resulting workload issues. The participants emphasized that it was important have a competent team to support their efforts. Evidence of this was revealed when speaking with Dr. Hamilton who stated "I think the challenges really were around balancing what needed to happen and I think in both of those roles it was about making sure that you had the right people, working on the right path, at the right time…" Dr. Vanburen like other participants demonstrated their passion for the combined role. According to Dr. Vanburen she loves the job but is aware of the

shortcomings, indicating "I really, I love what I am doing. I enjoy it very much. It's just that there are not enough people and I don't think that we have enough led management." According to Dr. Vanburen the president recognized that staffing was an issue as she recalled the president's comments.

> Actually even the President stated you know I'm not getting from you the higher levels strategic planning… What I am getting from you throughout the week is taking care of stuff, and I realized it's because you are very understaffed. I need you to get up to that level where you are doing innovative and wonderful things on an academic side and you know what I feel like we are just putting the fires… (Dr. Vanburen)

Dr. Vanburen expressed responding to the president's concerns indicating "I'm trying to ramp up and hire more people it's disheartening." The hiring of more staff is also an approach that other participants also took.

Despite the overwhelming concerns about workload overall participants liked serving in the joint role. Many expressed that their role allowed them to make a difference, advance the institutions strategic priorities, and leave a lasting impact on the college. While speaking about the position Dr. Cartwright commented that "this is where the action is. I love my job… I'm in the game; this is where the game is played, with faculty, with students, with front line personnel. So I think this is the best job in the higher education and that is just a very personal reaction to the role that they had." Even Dr. Hamilton and Dr. Hersey spoke positively about the benefits of the merged role despite advocating for the separation of their merged role due to the overwhelming workload and specific attention required for each individual area that reported to them.

Summary

This chapter provided a review of the findings that resulted from the five themes that emerged: evolution, communication and collaboration, leadership, faculty background, and

workload. The findings in this chapter revealed that position of vice president for academic and student services is a complex role that was perceived by participants to have a significant impact on the institution. The findings are discussed in following chapter.

CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION

Introduction

The purpose of this phenomenological study was to explore the experiences, leadership approaches, and perceptions of those community college leaders serving in the combined role of vice president of academic and student affairs. Discussions with twelve participants from across the United States with a minimum of one year of experience in the joint position has informed the research question utilizing interpretative phenomenological analysis. Utilizing this approach provided detailed insight into the everyday experiences of the participants and the meaning they gleaned from those experiences through the analysis of their rich and detailed personal accounts yielding key themes (Smith, Flowers, & Larkin, 2009; Pringle, Drummond, McLafferty, & Hendry, 2011; Willig, 2001). The analysis of the data yielded 5 key themes: evolution, communication and collaboration, leadership, faculty background, and workload. These themes capture the essence of the phenomena that emerged as a result of the study and provide insight for the reader through the lens of the participants. The participant's perceptions pertaining to these major themes were explored in the previous chapter of this study. Responses to the research question are addressed throughout this discussion section. The in-depth semi-structured open ended conversations served to inform the research question which sought to explore the experiences, leadership approaches, and perceptions of those community college vice presidents in the combined role of vice president of academic and student affairs.

According to Bloomberg and Volpe (2012) inductive reasoning involves building an argument and developing explanations based on the data. Utilizing inductive reasoning this chapter will provide an interpretation of the findings, discuss the themes that emerged, address

the research question, and offer recommendations. Moreover, implications for practice and suggestions for further research will be provided.

<div align="center">**Findings and Interpretations**</div>

In this section the findings and interpretation of this study are discussed and reviewed in light of existing literature. This review includes discussions involving the evolution of the joint position, collaboration and communication under the merged model, leadership approaches and perceived effectiveness, and the perceived importance of having a faculty background. The section concludes with a review of the participants recommendations.

Evolution of the Position

The evolution of the position theme addressees provided information on the participants perceptions of the opportunities and challenges that existed as a result of the position. According to the participants the position of vice president for academic and student affairs either evolved or was disbanded to address challenges or to create institutional opportunities. In the participants experience evolution of the joint position at the various institutions resulted from either ineffective leadership or a desire to create a stronger bond between the academic and student affairs units of the college.

The decision to adjust the organizational structure was typically decided by the president. These findings support the literature in which Shay (1984) surmised that defining an ideal reporting structure was hard and that the reporting structure was often based on presidential preference. Cameron and Ester (2012) ascertained that restructuring usually came about because a new boss was hired, failure in the organization or department was evident, or to address an ineffective employee or department. Providing further support for the research conducted by Shay (1984) and Cameron and Ester (2012) participants that experienced the combining or

separation of the joint role attributed it to the president determining that a different organizational structure would be more effective in carrying out the presidents desired outcomes. A careful look at the data reveals that participants believed leadership was usually at the core of these decisions.

Based on feedback from the participants it appears that the presidents that changed the organizational structure either to adopt the joint model or disband the model, believed that adjustments in leadership were instrumental in carrying out their objectives. When combining the position the objectives seemed to be to address ineffective leadership, remove silos, increase collaboration, promote communication between academic affairs and student affairs, and to address any acrimony that may have existed between the two areas. Participants appeared to tie organizational success to leadership effectiveness which supported research conducted by Gilley et al. (2009); Lipman-Blumen (2005); and Hughey and Smith (2006). These researchers found that leadership was a critical ingredient in the success or failure of the organization. Lipman-Blumen, (2005) further indicated that ineffective leadership could have a lasting effect on the organization. The participants revealed that a perceived reason for the establishment or separation of the joint role was the presidents desire to address leadership that was deemed to be ineffective. In analyzing the participant's perceptions these presidents adjusted the organizational structure to deal with a personnel issue or because the president believed the model that existed would not or did not fulfill their desired outcomes. Participants appeared to agree with the decision of these presidents to change the organizational structure. Some even encouraged the change to occur in an effort to advance the organization. Participants spoke of assuming the joint role after the president removed a leader that was deemed ineffective. A few participants spoke about the lasting impact of ineffective leaders that preceded them. These individuals spoke

of their efforts to undo the damage done by these ineffective leaders, the culture of mistrust, silo thinking, and unhealthy competition that were left behind. The findings of this study provide further evidence to support the findings of Gilley et al. (2009); Lipman-Blumen, (2005); and Hughey and Smith, (2006).

Moreover, participant statements provided insight that the existence of organizational challenges may influence the adoption or separation of the joint model. In the instances described by the participants it appears that the presidents believed leadership could effectively influence the direction of the organization. Research by Davies and Stoeckel (2007) drew a correlation between organizational leadership and success or failure within the organization. Participant's statements provided examples that reveal how changes in leadership through the adoption of the joint role led to institutional successes such as increased collaboration, higher retention rates, and greater student success. Therefore, the findings of Davies and Stoeckel (2007) that drew the correlation between leadership and success are further supported.

Communication and Collaboration

Participant's perceptions regarding collaboration and communication as it related to the joint position yielded information that provided insight into the participants experience with collaboration between the units that report to them and their perceived leadership influence over the institution, and the opportunities and challenges of the position.

A key finding was the participant's perspective that the joint position had a direct impact on their ability to increase collaboration and communication between academic affairs and student affairs. Participants provided several examples of how they perceived that they positively influenced communication and collaboration between the two units. These perceptions were supported by participants' descriptions of the lack of collaboration and communication that

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existed between the two areas prior to the adoption of the joint model. Participants spoke about how they made an effort to bring the two areas together, ensured that they were on the same page, and developed an understanding and respect for the role each area played in the institution. Participants credited their focus on communication for promoting increased teamwork, breaking down of silos, and creating renewed understanding, respect, support, and teamwork between the academic and student affairs units. Furthermore, participants also expressed that communication was critical to their success, the success of the combined model, and the institutions growth and success. Empirical research conducted by Doolen and Hacker (2007); Smith and Wolverton (2010); Waters, Marzano, and McNulty (2003); and Gilley et al. (2009) found that an essential ingredient for leadership success was a keen focus on communicating and promoting communication and collaboration. The participant's descriptions reveal that the joint leaders that emphasized placing a focus on communication and collaboration perceived that their organizational advances were linked to their focus on open and transparent communication with and between the areas they oversee while also stressing collaboration between the two areas. Participant's description of their lived experiences and perceived success resulting from utilizing communication to create a better understanding between the academic and student affairs units of the college support the researcher's findings.

Communication Challenges

Despite touting the benefits of communication the participants also revealed that there were challenges associated with communication. A key sentiment expressed was the overwhelming amount of communication an individual in the combined role received, needed to digest, translate, communicate to their staff, the college community, and key stakeholders. Dr. Stanley's comments that communication is very important but is a very "daunting task"

effectively sum up the sentiments expressed by the majority of participants regarding the massive amount of communication they received in their dual role. Some participants expressed that a failure to communicate with the faculty and staff in both areas on key decisions would be detrimental to their effectiveness. These individuals highlighted that there is a great expectation that those in their area be kept in the loop and participate in the decision making process.

The majority of participants spoke about their efforts to be inclusive and get feedback from everyone. Dr. Vanburen on the other hand discussed her challenges with being too inclusive and the strain it placed on the institutions resources. Despite Dr. Vanburen's concerns with being too inclusive she learned firsthand of the importance of communication and inclusion. Her comments describe the reaction she encountered when they failed to be inclusive when forming a committee to evaluate faculty. Dr. Vanburen's description was as follows: "oh my God it was ugly… all faculty came together in mid-August and they were ready to run me out, like totally, because they said this faculty evaluation committee was one that nobody asked for our input you just did this is all on your own." The experience described by Dr. Vanburen echoes the research findings of Bryman and Lilley (2009) that researched higher education leadership effectiveness and found that an aspect of ineffective leadership was the leader's failure to consult with others. In their research study researchers Gilley et al. (2008) and Gilley et al. (2009) revealed that it was important to involve others in order to effectively implement change. Learning from the failure to consult others Dr. Vanburen described the art of being inclusive as a necessary balancing act that required listening, soliciting feedback, being open to suggestions and not operating in a vacuum.

Participant's feedback supports common elements of effective leadership found in research conducted by Bryan and Lilley (2009). Bryan and Lilley (2009) stressed that

components of effective leadership included collegiality and transparency. Moreover, the importance of communication expressed by participants was further supported by research conducted by Klein and Takeda-Tinker, (2009). Klein and Takeda-Tinker, (2009) conducted research on job satisfaction and leadership effectiveness and found that there was a strong correlation between leadership communication and faculty job satisfaction. Participants described communication as a factor critical for their success but expressed facing challenges managing the volume of communication. The volume of information received was described as overwhelming. However, participants were clear that it was important to find ways to manage the volume of communication, share information, and provide opportunities for shared dialog.

Addressing Strategic Priorities and Student Learning

Participant's responses revealed that they often associated the joint role and their focus on enhanced communication and collaboration with their perceived advancements in achieving the institutions strategic priorities and creating a culture focused on student learning and development. Participants described that increased communication and understanding between the two areas facilitated by the participant encouraged the two areas to unite around a common theme, provided education about each areas role, addressed negative or incorrect comments about the areas to dispel myths. Moreover, participants perceived that their focus on communication served to eliminate barriers that previously impeded communication and collaboration. The participant's perceptions were supported by the research of Waters et al. (2003). Waters et al. (2003) conducted a meta-analysis that revealed a correlation between leadership and student achievement. The findings yielded 21 leadership practices that demonstrated a positive correlation with student achievement. These practices included fostering shared beliefs, establishing strong communication lines, and being willing to challenge the status

quo. The qualitative study conducted by Kezar (2003) further support the perceptions of the participants. Kezar (2003) conducted a quantitative study that examined institutions involved developing collaboration between academic affairs and student affairs looking specifically at factors that ensure partnership. The results indicated that common goals, cooperation, cross-cultural communication were found to be significant factors in improving collaboration. Each of these practices was described by leaders in the joint position.

Participants appeared to be crediting their focus on promoting strong communication and collaboration between the academic and student affairs areas with advancing the institutions strategic priorities and promoting a focus on student learning and success. Participants credited their focus on enhancing communication between the two areas for increasing retention and graduation rates, the creation of new programs, and the development of partnerships between the two areas. It is important to note that participants perceived that their focus on communication had resulted in the existence of a sense on campus that two areas were intertwined and needed to work together to address the institutions strategic priorities as well as increase student learning and success. However, participants perceived that the institutional advances resulting from communication could be reversed without a continuous emphasis on communication. The critical importance of engaging in ongoing communication was emphasized by Kezar (2001a). Kezar (2001a) who stressed that organization learning and the ability to foster collaboration occurred as a result of developing a common language and continuous communication.

Participants perceived that they were successful in bringing about lasting change as a result of their focus on communication and collaboration. The participants described practices support research findings from Gilley et al. (2009) which revealed that communication and teambuilding was closely associated with implementing impactful change. Components of

emotional intelligence are evident in the practices of the participants in the joint position. Research by Vandervoort (2006) and Hannum et al. (2001) revealed that critical emotional intelligence qualities associated with effective leadership include communication, commit, participative management, and efforts to garner buy-in on initiatives.

Participants provided evidence of their perceived positive connection between student and institutional success and enhanced communication and collaboration between academic and student affairs. Discussions with participants revealed that they perceived that placing an emphasis on communication and collaboration strengthened the connection between academic and student affairs units and helped to bridge the divide between the two areas. Participants discussed how they perceived that their focus on creating opportunities for shared communication and encouraging openness and honesty appeared to positively influence collaboration between the two areas. These findings lend credibility to the findings of Cawthon and Havice (2003) who recommended that academic affairs and student affairs faculty and staff need to work together and form partnerships across administrative lines to address the needs of students.

Influence of the joint position

When discussing the role the joint position played in increasing collaboration participants provided a variety of examples. Participants credited the merging of the position under one leader for helping the two areas to get on the same page. Participants discussed the occurrence of increased collaboration under the joint model. In addition, participants credited their efforts for getting academic and student affairs members to value the importance of working together to enhance student learning and strategically advance the college.

Given the descriptions of the participants it appears that leaders in the joint position were focused on creating a transformative learning experience for members of the two areas. Mezirow and Taylor (2009) expressed that transformational learning enabled individuals to develop more accurate perceptions by seeking informed information on meaning and justification and then forming judgments based on this informed information. According to Mezirow and Taylor (2009) transformational learning involves openness to new insights and the knowledge that more than one perspective may exist. Mezirow and Taylor (2009) expressed that transformational learning changed beliefs, opinions, and promoted inclusiveness. Transformational learning was exhibited as the participants described the various approaches they undertook to dispel myths and create accurate perspectives and understanding between the two areas. Participants appeared to utilize the newfound connection between the two areas to promote and enhance collaboration. Mezirow and Taylor (2009) further indicated that there was a connection between collaborative inquiry and transformational learning. According to Mezirow and Taylor (2009) collaborative inquiry is a process designed to challenge assumptions and perceptions resulting in the members forming new meaning as a result of dialog and reflection. Participants described focus on bringing academic and student affairs members together to converse, dispel myths, create new understanding of each areas influence, and foster bonds around common goals exhibits the tie between transformational learning and collaborative inquiry.

Kezar (2003) conducted research which concluded that participants in the study were less likely to identify organizational structure as a contributor to successful collaboration. Participants of this study expressed similar sentiments. However, although there was no guarantee that the joint model would lead to increased communication and collaboration participants exhibited less confidence that the two vice presidents model would lead to increased

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collaboration and communication. Some participants with experience under the two vice presidents model described an atmosphere of strained communication and a lack of collaboration between the two areas. Dr. Vanburen's comments accurately capture participant's sentiments. "I came and I was like whoa, the left hand doesn't not even know what the right hand is doing…" Participants described the disconnects and how they utilized their position to provided awareness and understanding between academic and student affairs. The participants explained that as a result of their efforts the two areas had a better understanding of the impact their decisions had on the other area and the students.

The detrimental effects of the two vice presidents not working well together or competing with one another was widely discussed by participants. Research conducted by Bierhoff and Muller (2005); Goldstein (2007); Hardy et al. (1993); Janey (2009); Kezar (2003); and Rief (2007) highlighted that the differences in culture, a lack of communication between the areas, a lack of understanding and misperceptions, historical disconnects, and the absence of a shared vision has impeded collaboration between academic and student affairs. Participants provided similar reasons for the lack of collaboration and communication they observed occurring in the two vice president models they deemed ineffective. Research by Doolen and Hacker (2007) supports the notion by participants that a lack of alignment between the two vice presidents in the two vice president model could have negative impacts on the institution. Findings by Doolen and Hacker (2007) revealed that a lack of alignment between leaders resulted in dysfunction, confusion, a lack of clarity, and stifled productivity. Participants perceived that based on their experience in the two vice president model communication and collaboration between academic and student affairs was influenced by the willingness of the two leaders to work together and promote communication and collaboration between the two areas.

Ferren and Stanton (2004); Pace et al. (2009); Janey (2009); and Kezar (2009) each conducted research that revealed that collaboration between academic affairs and student affairs was critical for institutions of higher education. These studies revealed that such collaboration had far reaching positive benefits. This was further validated by the findings of this study that demonstrated that collaboration between the two areas had a positive impact on the institution. The introduction of collaboration between the two areas stemmed from the leaders willingness and initiative to get the two areas together and focused on working as partners. The findings further supported the quantitative research study conducted Bierhoff and Muller (2005) in which the researchers found that leadership was essential in influencing collaboration, partnerships and the advancement of the organization. Some of the roles of the leaders described by the researchers included helping to conquer communication struggles, promote respect for one another, define and clarify roles, and ensuring that individuals within the organization were getting along. The participants in the joint role described similar roles as their responsibility and attributed it to their success in achieving collaboration and communication between the two areas.

The findings of this study do not support the research conducted by Janey (2009) which called for decentralized decision-making indicating that a centralized structure may discourage collaboration. Participants provided detailed accounts of increased collaboration under the joint model that they perceived did not exist under the two vice president model. Janey (2009) inferred that a decentralized structure encouraged interaction between student affairs and academic affairs professionals, lead to collegiality, built trust, provided opportunities for joint planning, opportunities to become familiar with one another's expertise, form alliance around shared interests, and allowed both areas to inform strategic priorities and plans. The findings of

Janey (2009) are not supported by the findings of this study. As evidenced by the participants descriptions of the relationship that existed between academic and student affairs upon assuming leadership over both areas.

Leadership

Exploring the leadership theme provided some interesting insights regarding leadership and leadership theory as it relates to the joint position. Research conducted by Bryman and Lilley (2009) suggested that there were no significant common styles or approaches associated with higher education leadership. Contrary to the findings of Bryman and Lilley (2009) the findings of this study revealed that leaders in the joint role described practices and approaches associated with servant leadership, team leadership, and emotional intelligence. Overall the participants did not perceive that they pulled from any specific leadership theory. However, it became evident through the examination of their accounts that participants practiced components of servant leadership, team leadership, and emotional intelligence. Some participants specifically indicated that they deliberately practiced servant and team leadership. Participant's leadership practices, ethical approaches, and styles were most often revealed through their described behavior, examples, actions, approaches, and decisions.

Overwhelmingly leaders in the joint role spoke about the importance of developing a shared vision and brining the two areas together. Some built on this opinion emphasizing that it was critical to keep the student as the central focus. The meta-analysis conducted by Waters et al. (2003) on the impact of school leadership on student success discovered a positive correlation between student success and fostering shared beliefs, establishing clear goals, establishing strong communication lines, and being willing to challenge the status quo. The findings of Waters et al. (2003) support the perceptions of those participants that emphasized the importance of keeping

students the central focus stating that keeping students central provided the two areas with a common interest that could help curtail silo thinking. Dr. Hess and others believed that this type of leadership practice helped to change the culture and forced these two areas of the institution to see things differently. Dr. Hess elaborated on this during the member check indicating that she perceived that the combined model moves institutions toward a holistic model.

Participants described a team approach to their leadership. According to Northouse (2010) team leadership has become an area of leadership theory and research that has grown increasingly popular. When researching team leadership as it pertained to this study the description by Northouse (2010) shed light on the practices of many of the participants. Northouse (2010) described teams as independent members that share a common goal and focus on coordinating their activities to achieve those goals. Participants overwhelmingly described getting the areas of academic and student affairs to focus on common goals and coordinate their activities to achieve those goals. These participants credited this practice for leading to increased collaboration, dispelling myths and perceptions about each area, and contributing to both areas working towards a common goal to advance the colleges goals. Components of team leadership theory involve leadership taking responsibility for facilitating decisions, focusing the team on goals, providing training, coaching, collaborating, managing conflicts, building commitments, advocating, networking, providing support, and sharing information (Northouse, 2010). Again these components were all attributes found during my discussions with the participants. The participants appeared to be proud of these attributes and credited them with their successful accomplishments of the organizations goals, strategic priorities, and ability influence change. The perceptions of these participants is supported by research conducted by Gilley et al.(2009)

which found that motivating, coaching, team building and communicating was most closely associated with a leaders ability to effectively bring about change.

A number of participants perceived that their role was to transform the institution and influence lasting change. In looking at the literature on change management Cameron and Ester (2012) described the change process as gaining new knowledge, making adjustments, and at times unlearning things previously learned or thought. The researchers also indicated that effective teams seemed to possess a strong sense of purpose, communicate regularly, understand and trust the role everyone plays, and rally around a common cause (Cameron & Ester, 2012). These practices are evident in the participant's reflection and description of their lived experiences and approaches.

Participants in the joint role exhibited evidence of emotional intelligence. Participant's descriptions of their leadership included encouraging participation in decisions, meetings, and joint activities between academic and student affairs. Participants explained that they were focused on creating buy-in and understanding. Participants perceived that the success they experienced was a direct result of their participatory leadership style and efforts to obtain faculty and staff buy-in. As mentioned earlier components of emotional intelligence were evident throughout participant's descriptions of their practices while serving in the joint position. Research by Vandervoort (2006) and Hannum, Leslie, Ruderman, and Steed (2001), revealed that a high level of emotional intelligence was associated with leaders that practiced participative management and sought buy-in. Participants described practicing what Vandervoort (2006) defined as emotional intelligence. They described exhibiting interpersonal and intrapersonal intelligence such as self-awareness, self-management, and social awareness, the ability to manage emotions, relationship management, empathy, and altruism. This is revealed through

participant's acknowledgments of their strengths and weakness, understanding of group dynamics, efforts to maintain solid relationships, manages conflict, inspire others, work as part of a team, communicate effectively, and promote human to human connections. This may be responsible for helping participants in the joint role navigate the different cultures found within the two areas and navigate the political waters. According to Vandervoort (2006) emotional intelligence can help leaders become better political navigators and can prove useful when leaders are faced with difficult decisions.

Hannum et al. (2001) credited leaders that exhibited high emotional intelligence with the ability to effectively facilitate change, and building and mending relationships. In Mazeh's (2011) qualitative study of community college leaders and the utilization of emotional intelligence the researcher finds that emotional intelligence was utilized to obtain a better understanding of others, address and resolve conflict, motivate employees, and stimulate collaboration. Mazeh (2011) emphasized that the utilization of emotional intelligence can help leaders promote collaboration, build positive relationships and a healthy atmosphere, increase productivity, improve performance, and strengthen decisions making. Each of these attributes was found in the participants descriptions. The utilization of emotional intelligence as described by participants in the joint role may be attributed to the described advances in bringing about positive change.

Demonstrated ethical leadership

Participants failed to specifically tie their leadership approaches and behavior to their ethical identity and values. This would support research by Gilley et al. (2008) whose research revealed that many professionals have not taken an inward look at their own ethical identity. Despite this participants were found to value student success, teamwork, collaboration, and

fairness. Participant in the joint role appeared to demonstrate ethical leadership traits, values, and perspectives found in what empirical research classified as ethical leadership. Researchers Eberhart and Valente (2007) expressed that leaders were responsible for exhibiting integrity, loyalty to others, and loyalty to the institution. Participants were cautious not to harm others or the institutions by their decisions. Throughout the discussions with participants their loyalty to the staff and the institution was revealed. Participants expressed the importance of empowering the staff, valuing their opinions and feedback, enhancing their professional growth, and celebrating their accomplishments of staff. Participants were not found to tie their practices, beliefs, and decisions to any form of personal gain. As encouraged by ethical leadership research conducted by Eberhart and Valente (2007) discussions with participants revealed that there was a great concern for others and efforts to protect the staff from harm was a perceived area of importance.

Moreover, based on the participants described experiences and actions it appears that moral sensitivity was evident. Anderson et al. (2006) described moral sensitivity as the individual evaluating the impact of the decisions they are preparing to make will have on others. Participants in the joint role discussed evaluating the impact of their decisions would have on others and the institution prior to making introducing change. Participants also described going to great lengths to involve others in the decision making process to avoid negative impacts on the staff, ensure that their decisions did not unfairly favor one area over the other or present a negative outcome for the other area or the institution, and to gain support for their decisions.

The ethical approaches and theories of utilitarianism, justice as fairness, communitarianism, and Taoist leadership were evident in participants described lived experiences and their expressed values. Johnson (2005 pp.129-130) described utilitarianism as an

approach frequently utilized to deliver the maximum benefit to the greatest number of individuals. Individuals practicing utilitarianism anticipate the impact of their decisions and make a deliberate effort to weight the costs and benefits of their decisions. The justice as fairness approach is built on the principles that everyone has the same rights and when inequalities occur attention is given to the underprivileged group (p.137). Justice as fairness was another leadership approach found among participants. This was particularly evident as participants described their efforts to ensure and practice fairness and the delivery of equal treatment between academic affairs and student affairs. Participants consistently spoke about ensuring that the needs of their staff were met and that they were fostering collaboration and communication. These practices are often tied to the approach of communitarianism and Taoist leadership. Johnson (2005 p. 144) emphasized that leaders practicing communitarianism exhibited unselfish leadership and promoted open dialog and collaboration. Moreover, according to Johnson (2005) components of Taoist leadership involve the leader believing in the importance of and placing a focus on teamwork, collaboration, and the empowerment of others. Given the description Taoist leadership provided by Johnson (2005) and the participants describe emphasis placed on the importance of teamwork, collaboration, and empowerment demonstrate evidence of leaders in the joint role providing Taoist leadership is provided.

Described Primary Responsibilities

Participants in the joint role perceived that two of their core responsibilities were to dispel myths and promote student learning and development. Participants expressed and provided examples of the misperceptions and disconnects that existed between the two areas. These participants articulated that it was their responsibility to clarify these misperceptions and expressed that it was an opportunity that existed as a result of the joint role. The participants

described myths, misperceptions, and disconnects between academic and student affairs is echoed in empirical research. Several research studies, Kezar (2001); Bierhoff and Muller (2005); Kezar (2003); Doyle (2004); Price (1999); McClellan (2004); Janey (2009); Hirt (2007); Reif (2007); and Kezar (2009a) highlighted that barriers such as, disconnected priorities, cultural differences, and long standing perceptions and myths have served to impede collaboration between academic affairs and student affairs.

Research by McClellan (2004); Hirt (2007); Kramer (2007) expressed that there are usually silos between the two areas that impeded progress. Kramer (2007) and Kezar and Lester (2009) highlighted that these silos usually stemmed from organizational structures that did not encourage cross-divisional collaboration as well as lacked understanding and awareness of the important role each area played in impacting student success. Research conducted by Kellogg (1999); Hirt (2007); Reif (2007); and Kezar (2003) indicated that there has traditionally been a divide between academic and student affairs with each area having very distinct roles and perceived boundaries usually divided between in the classroom and out of the classroom activities. Moreover, Kezar (2003) highlighted that academic affairs and student affairs professionals often do not understand the others' role and make assumptions and buy into myths and misperceptions. As experienced by participants Kellogg (1999) expressed that these disconnects between the two areas only serve to impede the institutions ability to create a seamless learning environment.

Another perceived responsibility expressed by participants was to place a centralized focus on the student. This focus was utilized by participants to bridge the divide and create a shared vision between academic and student affairs. Participants clearly expressed that their mission was to create a culture focused on student learning and development. The participants

perceived that the joint role enhanced this opportunity and credited their position for uniting the two areas resulting in institutional advancements in promoting student learning and development. Participants described promoting a strong connection between the two areas and ensuring the adoption of a shared vision focused on student learning and development and respect for each other's contribution towards meeting the institutions intended outcomes. Reif (2007); Goldstein (2007); and Kezar (2009a) emphasized that the two areas must work closer together focused on moving beyond traditional boundaries that separate the two areas. These researchers noted the various disconnects between the two areas and how the failure to work to together limited the institutions overall impact on student learning and success and impedes progress in fulfilling institutional missions. Participants in the joint role appeared to be focused on ensuring that members of academic and student affairs work across perceived traditional boundaries which were often attributed to their perceived success in advancing student and organizational successes.

Faculty Background

The faculty background theme captured a major recommendation made by participants when discussing recommendations they had regarding the position. Participants overwhelmingly expressed that it was important for an individual in the joint role have a faculty background. They explained that it was mainly to ensure buy-in from the faculty. Participant's comments revealed that the faculty were perceived as having power and influence. A few participants expressed that they made sure that needs of faculty were met above all others when carrying out their job duties. One participant described faculty as a tough crowd that the leaders in the joint role must gain legitimacy with. Others spoke about it being essential to gain the support and respect of the faculty. Even participants that came from a student affairs background stressed the

importance of being able to have the faculty identify with them. In their effort to gain faculty respect and support these individuals often taught so that they could relate to what it meant to be in the classroom.

The ability to identify with the faculty and garner their respect, support and buy-in appeared to be the single most important thing the participants expressed would ensure their effectiveness. The size and power of the faculty commanded the attention of each participant. Participants readily spoke of not wanting to be on the wrong side of the faculty. This clearly demonstrated the power of the faculty and how leaders in the joint role were influenced by this power. Participants expressed that as leaders they could be subjected to faculty votes of no confidence, public criticism from the largest body of the institution, or even the questioning of their abilities and qualifications. The concern of encountering these types of actions was evident during conversations with the participants. Participants were clearly attuned to the needs of faculty to avoid such actions.

The importance participants placed on student affairs was not as strong as the focus placed on addressing the needs of the faculty. Despite working to ensure that the work of student affairs was valued participants such as Dr. Kevlar, Dr. Vanburen, and Dr. Woldoff each expressed that teaching was at the core of the mission and that student affairs was there to support the work of the faculty. Although the participants acknowledged the importance of the student affairs area they overwhelmingly believed that it was critical to place a particular focus on the faculty and their needs. Feedback from the participants did not provide the impression that the influence of student affairs was as powerful as the influence of the faculty.

Participants did express a focus on getting the faculty to understand and value the work of student affairs. This is an indication that the participants saw value in the role of student

affairs and found it important to ensure that faculty understood the role of student affairs.

However, the size and power of the faculty commanded the attention of each participant. It

appears that despite having oversight over both areas leaders in the joint role do not view the two

areas as equal. Leaders in the joint position appear to view the faculty as the dominate culture

within the institution and the student affairs area as the sub-culture. This would support the

research of Locke and Guglielmino (2006) which reveals that organizational culture consists of a

dominate culture and a sub-culture. Research conducted by Locke and Guglielmino (2006) and

Anderson et al. (2009) recommended that institutional leaders value the contribution of both the

dominate culture and the sub-culture and understand that both are needed to promote and ensure

sustainable change. In particular these researchers emphasized the values of the sub-culture and

the role they play within the institution must be respected. This was a common practice among

the some but not all participants. Those participants that emphasized the value of the sub-culture

spoke about ensuring that each area understood and respected the role of the other area by

focusing on education and dispelling myths. Participants that practiced this approach highlighted

it as one of the factors of their success.

Dr. Cartwright cautioned those in the joint position from favoring one area over the other.

Dr. Cartwright expressed that it was a great danger not to have someone that would advocate for

both areas equally with the interest of students in the forefront. The beliefs articulated by Dr.

Cartwright are supported by the research recommendations of Locke and Guglielmino (2006)

and Anderson et al. (2009) who recommended that the contributions and importance of each area

be understood, valued, and respected. Not all participants placed a focus on addressing the needs

evident across both areas. Some participants indicated that they place the needs of the faculty

above all others. Research conducted by Hirt et al. (2005) and Brown (1997) may shed light on

why some participants that place the needs of faculty above all others described being initially rejected by the student affairs staff or experienced calls from student affairs members for their own vice president. Hirt et al. (2005) whose research revealed engrained perceptions that there was lack of recognition from the faculty and other areas of the college regarding the importance placed on student affairs. Also supported by participant comments were the findings of Hirt et al. (2005) that highlighted that there was a significant belief that faculty did not understand or appreciate the work of the student affairs professional. Research by Hirt (2007) revealed engrained perceptions by members of student affairs that academic faculty and leaders did not value the role student affairs leaders fulfill on campus. Moreover, Brown (1997) highlighted that unlike academic affairs professionals student affairs professionals were constantly seeking institutional respect.

The perception of participants demonstrated what Culp (1995) was referring to in the research findings of their study. Culp (1995) in studying organizational models for community college student affairs units revealed that the structure that merges academic affairs and student affairs under one leader offers opportunities for collaboration but could establish the area of student affairs as second to the academic area. This appears to be how some participants in the joint role viewed the student affairs units they supervised. It is important to note that the needs of student affairs were not totally ignored. Participants in the joint role expressed the value of student affairs and often described articulating the value of student affairs to faculty in order to get the two areas to see each other's value.

Participant overwhelmingly expressed that those hired to assume the joint position should have a faculty background.   During the initial interviews and the member check conversations Dr. Cass and other participants placed great emphasis on stressing that they perceived leaders in

the joint role had to come from a faculty background. These participants emphasized that it was important to have credibility in the eyes of the faculty. Dr. Thomasville, Dr. Hamilton, Dr. Cass and other participants expressed that they perceived that a student affairs professional would have difficulty assuming the joint role because they would not receive the support of the faculty. Dr. Stanley was the only participant to state that having a faculty background was useful but not essential. Although, Dr. Stanley places less emphasis on having a faculty background the participant describes initially being rejected by the faculty. In order to address being rejected Dr. Stanley made it a point to teach and obtain the faculty perspective to increase credibility, support, and buy-in. The described actions and comments from participants support the perception that leaders in the joint role would significantly benefit from having a faculty / teaching background. Credibility with the faculty appeared to be important to leaders in the joint position. The emphasis participants place on credibility was also an important finding revealed Gilley et al. (2001) who emphasized the importance of having credibility and stated that a lack of perceived credibility presented the potential for long-term negative effects and hamper the leader's ability to introduce change. Moreover, Participants were concerned about not meeting the expectations of the faculty and articulated the power and influence of the faculty should not be ignored. This supports the recommendations of Smith and Wolverton (2010) who emphasized the importance of leaders balancing their authority and desires with the powerful voice and desires of the faculty.

Workload

The workload theme arose when participants were discussing how the combined role was perceived by the individual serving in the combined role and the challenges perceived by those in the position. Workload challenges evolved as the major challenge perceived by those in the

combined role. Participants described the joint role as overwhelming, stressful, demanding, and complex. Participant's descriptions of being overwhelmed by meetings, consumed with addressing faculty and staff demands, dealing with volumes of paperwork and being stretched by the demands of external stakeholders is also found in the research literature. Wild, Ebbers, Shelley, and Gmelch (2003) researched the stress factors found in community college Deans. The researcher's findings revealed that the top ten stress factors found in the community college leaders studied included; attending too many meetings, supervising many people, managing human relations, volumes of paperwork, meeting deadline demands, external pressures, and a lack of balance between work and personal life.

In most cases participants admitted that the overwhelming workload impacted their effectiveness as a leader. Participants spoke about 13 hour work days, working until 3am, difficulty staying on track, and being spread too thin. Participants provided example after example of the negative impacts of the overwhelming workload of the joint role position. Some believed they were rendered ineffective, others believed their ability to introduce change and innovation was stifled, and most believed that they were pulled in too many different directions and forced to be reactionary, limiting their ability to focus on advancing the institution. The literature revealed the toll that workload issues could have on the organization as well as the individual. Gmelch and Gates (1998) conducted research that revealed that work related burnout in educational administrators was associated with ambiguity and task based stress which produced emotional exhaustion. In a study conducted by Gill, Flaschner, and Shachar (2006) the researchers ascertained that stress and burnout caused by work led to health issues, impacted productivity and performance. This was evident in some of the frustration levels expressed by participants that spoke of being overwhelmed by the vast workload.

Those participants that perceived that they had effectively addressed their workload issues commonly spoke of delegating work to others within the organization, and /or creating additional positions such as associate vice presidents. Interestingly, although these individuals believed that they addressed their workload issue many expressed that this approach has made them more distant from the two areas. One participant believed that the increased delegation and addition of assistant vice presidents over each separate area was fostering the development of silos and renewed disconnects between the two areas. Participant concerns regarding overwhelming workloads rendering them less effective and disconnected resulting from hiring additional staff provided increased understanding of the findings of Price (1999) who cautioned against adopting the merged model as a cost saving measure. Supporting the recommendations of Price (1999) participants cautioned against adopting the joint position as a cost saving measure citing that their institution had to spend money on the creation of additional positions to support and balance their workload so that they could remain effective.

Participant's Reflections

Participants reflected on the joint position and provided several sentiments that were common among participants. These reflections centered on professional opportunities resulting from serving in the joint role, institutional advancement achieved as a result of the position, and cautions for institutions considering adopting the joint position. These reflections further address the research question and deserve attention.

Professional Opportunities

Participants expressed they perceived that the joint position provided them with professional opportunities and enhanced the breadth of their experience. Participants described the benefits of the position indicating that they perceived that the joint role prepared them to

assume roles such as president or consultant. The participants expressed that the joint role made them more competitive given that they had oversight over the majority of the institution. Those participants that had already ascended to the presidency credited the joint role for helping to pave the way indicating that the joint position proved them with the necessary experience, and offered them a competitive advantage over other applicants. The opportunities perceived by participants extended beyond the role of president. Those participants that were not interested in a presidency expressed that the opportunities were endless as a result of the wealth of experience they obtained while serving in the joint position. Looking at the roles separately according to Ferren and Stanton (2004) individuals leading the faculty had a significant list of responsibilities that included enhancing the curriculum, creating assessment measures, creating professional development opportunities for faculty, increasing student satisfaction and retention, providing academic programs that are cost-effective, encouraging diversity, supporting collegiality, streamlining operations, and fostering trust and open communication. Ferren and Stanton (2004) also expressed that the chief academic leader held the most difficult position on campus and had to be politically savvy and able to build confidence in others. Kuk and Banning (2009) posited that the area of student affairs had become more complex and vital to the institution as a result of the increased demands for a variety of programs and services. Therefore, the joint leader having oversight over these two major areas of the college lend support to their perceived large span of control and the resulting vast experience.

According to the participants the joint position has many professional benefits. These individuals considered the joint position as one that provided them with a large span of control. This span of control provided them with oversight over the majority of the institutions budget, experience in two key areas of the institution, and exposure, responsibility for administering, and

influence over policies, procedures and institutional priorities. A few of the participants had assumed the role of president and others expressed that they are prepared to assume the role of president. Overwhelmingly, the participants believed that the joint position prepared them to assume roles such as college president or to serve as a consultant.

Based on information from the participants individuals in the joint position were responsible for two major areas of the institution, manage the majority of the colleges budget, they must come to understand faculty and student affairs related issues and policies, they spend time addressing community needs and programming, they are responsible for carrying out a large portion of the institutions mission and strategic priorities, and are often involved in fund raising activities. Weisman and Vaughan (2007) and Duree (2007) in their research reviewed the responsibilities of community college presidents and concluded that these individuals faced the challenges of enrollment, student retention, legislative advocacy, faculty affairs, workforce growth and development, and fundraising. The research conducted by Weisman and Vaughan (2007) indicated that the two most common positions previously held by college president are Vice President for Academic Affairs followed by Vice President for Student Affairs. Based on this research it can be concluded that individuals in the joint role have experience in both areas that typically ascend to the presidency. The joint position may present a competitive edge for those individuals seeking a future presidency and may provide an ideal training ground for the presidency. This supports the participants' belief that as a result of the joint position they are well prepared to ascend to a presidency.

Institutional Advancements

Participants credited the joint position for several institutional advancements. These participants perceived that the advances they experienced would not have occurred under the

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split model. It appears that participants were concerned that potential silos and a lack of collaboration would impede progress. Looking at the research conducted by McClellan (2004); Hirt (2007); Kramer (2007); Kezar and Lester (2009); Kezar (2003); and Kellog (2009) there are typically silos, boundaries, misperceptions, and a lack of understanding that exist between the two areas which may valid the participants concerns. Researchers Dole (2004); Hirt (2007); Kinzie and Kuh (2004); Pace et al. (2006); and Reif (2007) each revealed that leadership was the key factor in overcoming the disconnects between the two areas. Dr. Stanley's comment regarding the joint position captures comments that were common among participants. "…it was an opportunity to look at the institution through a single lens…" (Dr. Stanley). The joint position was viewed by participants as establishing a single voice, reducing competition, and creating consistency in vision and direction. Not all participants believed that the joint position was essential. Dr. Hersey, Dr. Tillison, and Dr. Hamilton did not believe that the joint position was essential. These participants perceived that it was essential to ensure that academic affairs and student affairs were working together to ensure a unified and collaborative approach. According to these participants the separate model could be just as effective as long as the two vice presidents worked together as a unified team. Although other participants agreed they expressed that successful collaboration under the separate model was dependent on the personality and relationship between the two vice presidents.

The participants tied effectiveness closer to leadership than organizational structure. This supported the findings of Casey et al. (2001) and Hughey and Smith (2006). Casey et al. (2001) highlighted that the leader has the ability to influence the group and set the tone and model for the organization. Hughey and Smith (2006) emphasized that leadership most critical factor linked to the success or failure of the organization. Regardless of the organizational structure

leaders in the joint position tied success to leadership effectiveness. However, sentiments did exist that the joint position increased the opportunities for collaboration and unity between academic and student affairs resulting in enhanced student learning and institutional advancement.

Cautions

The majority of participants supported the adoption of the joint position by institutions. However, some participants expressed sentiments against the joint position. These participants raised concerns about the workload and effectiveness of the individual in the joint position. Dr. Hamilton recognized the intended and perceived benefits of the joint position when discussing her experience she commented that "it just didn't work for me." Dr. Hersey spoke of the workload challenges that ultimately led to the splitting of the joint position. When the position was split Dr. Hersey stated that the president of her institution commented that there was more than enough work for two vice presidents. It seems that the adoption or separation of the joint position was based on what was considered best for the institution at the time. Kuk and Banning, (2009) expressed that redesigning organizational structure should be the result of a desire to align strategies and resources to achieve institutional goals. Kuk and Banning (2009) recommended that the adopted organizational design best fit the needs and fulfill the strategic priorities of the institution.

Participants also perceived that the culture of the institution needed to be considered and its members consulted when contemplating the joint model. These individuals cited that institutional resistance to the joint role can pose challenges for the leader in the joint position and impede progress. Studies by Tierney (1988); Locke and Guglielmino (2006); Ferren and Stanton (2004); and Matheny and Conrad (2012) supported the importance of developing an

understanding the institutions culture positing that it provided leaders with the tools to identify discomfort, manage change, and have more of an impact when communicating the need for change and improving performance.

Price (1999) cautioned against merging for financial savings. The participants described experience reveal that additional positions often were created to support the work of those in the joint position, there by negating any potential savings. The majority of participants expressed that they did not perceive that adoption of the joint position as a cost saving measure. The participants that perceived the adoption of the joint position as a cost saving measure did not articulate it as a major benefit from adopting the joint position.

Overall the participants were mixed regarding the adoption of the joint position. The participants perceived that the joint position was a factor in advancing the institutions strategic priorities and developing a stronger bond between academic and student affairs. However, challenges such as the inability to provide focused leadership for each area and the significant workload of leaders in the joint position has prompted the position to be disbanded at some institutions. Participants cautioned that that adoption of the joint position should not be taken lightly and should not been adopted solely as a costs saving measure. The participants suggest that the culture of the institution and the amount of work that needs to be accomplished in each area need to be factored into the decision to adopt the merged model. This review of the findings in the context of the literature has served to inform the research question. The next section of this study focuses on the limitations associated with this study.

Limitations of the Study

This study had some limitations that warrant mentioning. This study focused on the perceptions of the twelve participants. Although, these participants provided rich information

that informed the research question the effectiveness of the position was only being viewed and assessed through their lens. Moreover, conducting the interviews and member checks by telephone was very effective and allowed the participant pool to span across the United States. However, this approach prevented the visual observation of participant's expressions and reactions. The reactions and emotions of the participants were solely gleaned from their tone, vocal inflections, laughter, sighs, pauses, and other utterances.

Implications for Practice

This study sought to explore the experiences of individuals serving in the combined role of vice president for academic and student affairs. The interviews conducted have provided rich and thick information, insight, and recommendations that could prove useful in practice.

As institutions explore the various organizational structures this study can help guide their decision on the adoption or abandonment of the merged model. Institutions exploring the adoption or abandonment of the joint position may benefit from reviewing the challenges faced by the participants and how obstacles such as overwhelming workloads, the initial potential lack of acceptance and institutional buy in, and insufficient staffing influenced the success of the model and how these challenges were overcome. Learning form this study it is important to understand that anyone of these challenges can cripple the success of the joint leader and negatively impact student and institutional success. As revealed in the literature and participants in the joint position the overwhelming nature of the job could impact the leader's effectiveness and overall health. Although, workload issues could be addressed by increasing staffing levels institutions must be aware that the addition of staff could have an inverse impact on collaboration and the progress of the joint leader. Moreover, the added cost of additional staff may erase any saving realized from appointing one leader over both areas.

In adopting the joint position it appears from the findings that leaders may benefit from placing a focus on garnering buy-in and acceptance. Placing an emphasis on garnering buy-in and acceptance was a common practice found throughout the discussions with participants. This study provided evidence that the lack of buy-in could lead to rejection and failure of the leader. On the other hand, buy-in could lead to support, collaboration, and significant advances in student learning and institutional success. These findings might enable leaders and organizations to anticipate, avoid, understand, and plan for potential challenges.

Furthermore, the findings of this study support the idea of a relationship between leadership approaches and the leader's perceived successes. Strategies such as promoting open and ongoing communication, establishing a shared vision, and ensuring a unified approach were effective strategies utilized by participants to bringing about institutional change. In addition, it appeared from the findings that that participants in the joint role utilized transformational learning, collaborative inquiry, emotional intelligence, team leadership, aspects of servant leadership, and approaches found and supported by empirical research on ethical leadership to influence change and remove barriers to success. These findings contribute to the understanding of the joint position and may prove useful for leaders serving in the joint role.

Institutions might utilize this study to explore the benefits that result from adopting the joint model. Institutions looking to increase collaboration, dispel myths, address ineffective leadership, and create a singular focus between the two areas may consider this model for their institution or utilize the strategies to bring about institutional change. Along the same line institutions that currently have the joint model may glean insight from the recommendations of participants that were in joint positions that separated into two vice presidents. Individuals exploring the possibility of accepting or seeking the position of vice president for academic and

student affairs might explore the demands of the position and the future opportunities that may result from assuming a combined role. Furthermore, those individuals currently serving in the joint position might learn from the various approaches and leadership strategies that helped participants overcome obstacles, achieve success, and advance the mission of the institution.

The findings of this study suggest that the merged model does not appear to be a cookie cutter organizational structure that will guarantee success in every organization. Regardless of the organization's structure this study highlighted the perceived importance for leaders to work together, communicate, and align their efforts for the good of the organization. The joint model appeared from most perceptions to promote collaboration between academic and student affairs and the advancement of student learning and institutional priorities. This organizational approach was credited by many participants for major institutional advancements. These findings might enable organizations to make a more informed decision prior to adopting or abandoning the joint model. Finally, this study might be utilized to explore strategies and practices that have influenced a leader's failures and successes and organizational stagnation or growth.

Recommendations for Future Research

As a result of the findings of this study I would recommend future research that explores the experiences and perception of faculty and staff employed under the joint model. This study provided research from the perspective of the leader in the joint role. It would be helpful to see if the perspectives of the participants are the same or differ from leaders in the merged role. Coupling this research with research from those working under the merged model would provide a holistic view into this organizational structure and its impact on the institution.

Moreover, the findings of this study revealed that organizational culture had some influence over the models success, acceptance, or rejection. Additional research should be

conducted to explore the impact culture has over this organizational structure and institutional success. Presidential preference was the reason that the majority of participants noted for institutions adopting or abandoning this organizational structure. Presidential perspectives regarding the joint positional leader model should be explored. Workload challenges and opportunities that exist for leaders serving in the merged role is another area that should be researched further. It was evident that workload issues were common among the participants and they were clearly impacted by this issue. Research that looks deeply into this phenomenon as it pertains to burnout, stress, effectiveness, and turnover world be useful. Additional research on each of these topics would further advance the body of research in this area and serve to further build on the research contained in this study.

Concluding Thoughts

In closing, this study provided a wealth of insight into the world of the leader in the merged position of vice president of academic and student affairs. This research exposed the opportunities and challenges faced by individuals in this role. This study highlights the impact a strong bond between academic affairs and student affairs has on success. Participants perceived that nurturing the relationship between these two areas to promote role understanding, unification, and a centralized focus on student learning and success proved effective.

This study contributes to the understanding of the joint position. Leaders in the joint position perceived that their efforts to bring people together, communicate, create and promote seamless partnerships, get the areas to rally around a common cause, and see their value within the institution was critical in achieving success. The joint leader's application of team leadership, servant leadership and emotional intelligence demonstrate the leadership approaches described as

successful in advancing the organization and ensuring a common focus designed to unite areas and move the institution forward in unison rather than in fragmented silos.

On a final note, the findings of this study support the idea that institutions should adopt an organizational structure that meets the needs of the institution and fits the organizational culture. Moreover, this study might enable institutions that adopt or currently employ this model to be mindful and monitor the leader in the joint role for signs of burnout, stress, frustration, and reduced commitment and effectiveness.

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APPENDICES

Consent to Participate in a Research Study
Colorado State University

TITLE OF STUDY: An exploration of the experiences and perceptions of community college leaders in the combined role of vice president for academic and student

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR: Linda Kuk, PhD, School of Education, 204 Education Building, Colorado State University Fort Collins, CO 80523-1588, (XXX) XXX-XXXX
Email: linda.kuk@xxxxxxxxx.xxx

CO-PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR: Jeffery Foley, PhD, School of Education, 225 Education Building, Colorado State University Fort Collins, CO 80523-1588, (XXX) XXX-XXXX. Email: jeffrey.foley@xxxxxxxxx.xxx

CO-PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR: Paul Broadie II, PhD student, Address, (XXX) XXX-XXXX, Email: paulbroadie@xxxxxxxxxx.xxx

WHY AM I BEING INVITED TO TAKE PART IN THIS RESEARCH? We would like you to serve as a participant in this study given that your background and experience fit the criteria set for participants in the study. We are seeking participants that are currently serving or previously served in the role of vice president of academic and student affairs for a minimum of one year. Participants of this phenomenological study will be asked to discuss their experiences, leadership approaches, and perceptions of the combined position. Each participant will also be asked to discuss and draw from their personal and professional experiences in the role, discuss leadership approaches, provide scenario situations they have faced, offer detailed insight into the position, and make recommendation from their perspective. We believe that you are and ideal candidate for this study and will provide useful information that will contribute to a robust study.

WHO IS DOING THE STUDY? My name is Paul Broadie II and I am currently the vice president of student services at Orange County Community College in New York. I am currently a student attending Colorado State University pursing a PhD in college and university leadership. I am conducting this research under the guidance of faculty members of The School of Education, Dr. Linda Kuk, Principle Investigator for the study and Dr. Jeffery Foley, one of the Co-Principle Investigators for the study.

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THIS STUDY? The purpose of the research study is to gain an in-depth understanding of the experiences, leadership approaches, and perceptions of those community college leaders serving in the combined role of vice president of academic and student affairs. There is a great deal of research on the independent roles of vice president of academic affairs and vice president of student affairs. However, there is limited research on the combined role. This study will provide insight into the role and add to the body of research in this area.

Page **1** of **4** Participant's initials _____ Date _____

WHERE IS THE STUDY GOING TO TAKE PLACE AND HOW LONG WILL IT LAST?
Recorded telephone interviews will be conducted. Participants will be asked to ensure they are in a location that is free from interruptions and distractions. The interviews will last approximately one hour and fifteen minutes.

WHAT WILL I BE ASKED TO DO? Participants of this phenomenological study will be asked to discuss their experiences, leadership approaches, and perceptions of the combined position. Each participant will also be asked to discuss and draw from their personal and professional experiences in the role, discuss leadership approaches, provide scenario situations they have faced, offer detailed insight into the position, and make recommendation from their perspective. Participants will be asked to ensure they are in a location that is free from interruptions and distractions to ensure uninterrupted recorded telephone interviews. Participants are notified that the interview will last approximately one hour and fifteen minutes and therefore you will be asked to set aside that amount of time for the interview.

ARE THERE REASONS WHY I SHOULD NOT TAKE PART IN THIS STUDY? You will be excluded from volunteering in this study if you have served in the position of vice president of academic and student affairs for a period less than one year. If this position was not held at a community college you will be excluded. You are also excluded from participation if you do not have responsibility over both academic affairs and student affairs units of the college.

WHAT ARE THE POSSIBLE RISKS AND DISCOMFORTS? Although, pseudonyms will be assigned throughout the study and strict confidentiality will be maintained throughout the study and all recordings and interview materials will be kept secure. It is important to note that these precautions cannot guarantee 100 % anonymity free from risk and discomfort. It is not possible to identify all potential risks in research procedures, but the researcher has taken reasonable safeguards to minimize any known and potential, but unknown, risks.

ARE THERE ANY BENEFITS FROM TAKING PART IN THIS STUDY? Although there are no direct benefits to you, we hope to gain more knowledge on the effectiveness of the merged position and help inform decisions to adopt or abandon such a position. This research is important since we anticipate that the findings will provide information and a better understanding of the role, the experiences and thoughts of those in the role, and the overall perceived impact on the institution through the eyes of those serving in that capacity. In addition to adding to the body of literature, the overall objective of the research is to provide institutional leaders with additional knowledge that can help inform their decisions as they attempt to address organizational challenges, institutional change, adopt new organizational structures, and create seamless learning environments.

DO I HAVE TO TAKE PART IN THE STUDY? Your participation in this research is voluntary. If you decide to participate in the study, you may withdraw your consent and stop participating at any time without penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled.

Page **2** of **4** Participant's initials _____ Date _____

WHO WILL SEE THE INFORMATION THAT I GIVE? We will keep private all research records that identify you, to the extent allowed by law. Your information will be combined with information from other people taking part in the study. When we write about the study to share it with other researchers, we will write about the combined information we have gathered. You will not be identified in these written materials. We may publish the results of this study; however, we will keep your name and other identifying information private. Strict measures will be taken to maintain your confidentiality. This will be achieved by utilizing pseudonyms to conceal your identity, as well as the identity of the institution, and the institutions geographic location. Moreover, all data will be kept in a secure location. Only the Principle Investigator and the Co-Principle Investigators will have access to the data. We will make every effort to prevent anyone who is not on the research team from knowing that you gave us information, or what that information is. For example, your name will be kept separate from your research records and these two things will be stored in different places under lock and key.

CAN MY TAKING PART IN THE STUDY END EARLY? If you are unable to keep scheduled interview appointments you may be removed from this study. Also, if you are deemed by the researcher at any point during the study as unable to provide a significant contribution to advancement of this research you may be removed from participation.

WILL I RECEIVE ANY COMPENSATION FOR TAKING PART IN THIS STUDY? You will not receive any compensation for taking part in this study.

WHAT IF I HAVE QUESTIONS? Before you decide whether to accept this invitation to take part in the study, please ask any questions that might come to mind now. Later, if you have questions about the study, you can contact the investigator, Paul Broadie, II at (XXX) XXX-XXXX. If you have any questions about your rights as a volunteer in this research, contact Janell Barker, Human Research Administrator at (XXX)-XXX-XXXX. We will give you a copy of this consent form for your records. This consent form was approved by the CSU Institutional Review Board for the protection of human subjects in research on October 8, 2012.

WHAT ELSE DO I NEED TO KNOW? Seven to fifteen participants will be selected to take part in this study. Each interview will began with the same grand tour question but will be semi-structured. This will allow themes to emerge naturally limiting researcher bias and influence. Throughout the process I will take field notes and keep reflexive notes. The discussions will be recorded, transcript and coded. I plan having follow-up discussions to ask clarifying questions that will begin with follow-up questions that remained from the participant's interview and questions that emerged from reviewing the coded transcript. All data will be kept in a secure location and recordings will be kept secure and backed up on my computer. Data collected, field notes and reflexive notes from all participants will be thoroughly reviewed and categorized into broad themes that will be re-coded into smaller categories. Emerging themes that are common across all participants will be identified and the data will be compared and contrasted and the findings will be discussed in the study.

Page **3** of **4** Participant's initials _____ Date _____

Your signature acknowledges that you have read the information stated and willingly sign this consent form. Your signature also acknowledges that you have received, on the date signed, a copy of this document containing 4 pages.

_____   _____
Signature of person agreeing to take part in the study   Date

_____
Printed name of person agreeing to take part in the study

_____   _____
Name of person providing information to participant   Date

_____
Signature of Research Staff

Page **4** of **4** Participant's initials _____ Date _____

Appendix B

Sample Email to Eligible Participants

Date

Dear Potential participants name,

My name is Paul Broadie II and I am currently the vice president of student services at Orange County Community College in New York. I am currently a student attending Colorado State University pursing a PhD in college and university leadership. You are receiving this email because you have been identified as fitting the criteria to serve as a participant in our research study. I am conducting research under the guidance of faculty members of The School of Education, Dr. Linda Kuk, Principle Investigator for the study and Dr. Jeffery Foley, one of the Co-Principle Investigators for the study. The purpose of the research study is to gain an in-depth understanding of the experiences and perceptions of those community college leaders serving in the combined role of vice president of academic and student affairs. There is a great deal of research on the independent roles of vice president of academic affairs and vice president of student affairs. However, there is limited research on the combined role. This study will provide insight into the role and add to the body of research in this area. The title of our project is Academic Affairs and Student Affairs merged under a single leader: An exploration of the experiences, leadership approaches, and perceptions of community college leaders in the combined role of vice president for academic and student affairs. The Principal Investigator is Dr. Linda Kuk from the School of Education and the Co-Principal Investigators are Dr. Jeffery Foley from the School of Education and Paul Broadie II, School of Education PhD student.

We would like you to serve as a participant in this study given that your background and experience fit the criteria set for participants in the study. We are seeking participants that are currently serving or previously served in the role of vice president of academic and student affairs for a minimum of two years. Participants of this phenomenological study will be asked to discuss their experiences, leadership approaches, and perceptions of the combined position. Each participant will also be asked to discuss and draw from their personal and professional journey, provide detailed insight into the position, and make recommendation from their perspective. Recorded telephone interviews lasting approximately one hour and fifteen minutes will be conducted. Participants are asked to devote one hour and fifteen minutes of uninterrupted time for the interview process. Your participation in this research study is voluntary. If you decide to participate in the study, you may withdraw your consent and stop participation at any time without any penalties.

Strict measures will be taken to maintain your confidentiality. This will be achieved by utilizing pseudonyms to conceal your identity, as well as the identity of the institution, and the institutions geographic location. Moreover, all data will be kept in a secure location. Only the Principle Investigator and the Co-Principle Investigators will have access to the data.

Although there are no direct benefits to you, we hope to gain more knowledge on the effectiveness of the merged position and help inform decisions to adopt or abandon such a position. This research is important since we anticipate that the findings will provide information and a better understanding of the role, the

experiences and thoughts of those in the role, and the overall perceived impact on the institution through the eyes of those serving in that capacity. In addition to adding to the body of literature, the overall objective of the research is to provide institutional leaders with additional knowledge that can help inform their decisions as they attempt to address organizational challenges, institutional change, adopt new organizational structures, and create seamless learning environments.

It is not possible to identify all potential risks in research procedures, but the researcher has taken reasonable safeguards to minimize any known and potential, but unknown, risks.

If you have any questions, please contact Paul Broadie II at (XXX)-XXX-XXXX. If you have any questions about your rights as a volunteer in this research, contact Janell Barker, Human Research Administrator, at (XXX)-XXX-XXXX.

If you are willing to participate in this study please acknowledge your desire to participate by replying to this email (paulbroadie@xxxxxxxxxx.xxx) by (indicated response deadline). In your response please answer the following questions and provide your contact information.

1. What is your current title and do you consider your current role as a merged / combined position?
2. If you previously served in the merged / combined role what was your title?
3. How many years have (did) you serve in the merged / combined role?

Once I receive your response I will contact you to further discuss the details of the study.
Sincerely,

Paul Broadie II
PhD Student
Co-Principle Investigator

cc: Linda Kuk, PhD
    Associate Professor
    Chair – CUL / CCL
    Principle Investigator

    Jeffery Foley, PhD
    Assistant Professor
    Co-Principle Investigator

Appendix C

Sample follow up email to participants that have not responded to participation request

Date:

Dear Potential participants name:

I recently sent you an email requesting your participation in a research study I am conducting as part of my graduate PhD studies at Colorado State University. The study is titled: An exploration of the experiences and perceptions of community college leaders in the combined role of vice president for academic and student.

The purpose of the research study is to gain an in-depth understanding of the experiences and perceptions of those community college leaders serving in the combined role of vice president of academic and student affairs. There is a great deal of research on the independent roles of vice president of academic affairs and vice president of student affairs. However, there is limited research on the combined role. This study will provide insight into the role and add to the body of research in this area.

We would like you to serve as a participant in this study given that your background and experience fit the criteria set for participants in the study. We are confident that your participation will help advance research in this area. You were identified to participate because you are currently serving or previously served in the role of vice president of academic and student affairs for a minimum of two years. As a participant in this narrative study you will be asked to discuss your experiences and perceptions of the combined position. Based on your experience we believe that you can discuss and draw from your personal and professional journey, provide detailed insight into the position, and make recommendations from your perspective. We believe that you are and ideal candidate for this study and will provide useful information that will contribute to a robust study.

The commitment will consist of a recorded telephone interview and follow up conversations in an environment free from interruption and distraction. Each interview will last approximately one hour and fifteen minutes. Specific steps will be taken to protect your confidentiality such as the utilization of pseudonyms to disguise your identity as well as the identity of your institution and its location.

Although there are no direct benefits to you, we hope to gain more knowledge on the effectiveness of the merged position and help inform decisions to adopt or abandon such a position. This research is important since we anticipate that the findings will provide information and a better understanding of the role, the experiences and thoughts of those in the role, and the overall perceived impact on the institution through the eyes of those serving in that capacity. In addition to adding to the body of literature, the overall objective of the research is to provide institutional leaders with additional knowledge that can help inform their decisions as they attempt to address organizational challenges, institutional change, adopt new organizational structures, and create seamless learning environments.
If you are willing to participate in this important study please reply to this email (paulbroadie@xxxxxxxxxx.xxx) by (Response Deadline) to indicate your interest in participating. In your reply please answer the following questions:

1. What is your current title and do you consider your current role as a merged / combined position?
2. If you previously served in the merged / combined role what was your title?

3. How many years have (did) you serve in the merged / combined role?

Once I receive your response I will contact you to further discuss the details of the study. I look forward to hearing from you. If you have any questions or would like additional information feel free to contact me at (XXX) XXX-XXXX.

Sincerely,

Paul Broadie, II
Co-Principle Investigator
Student

cc: Linda Kuk, PhD
    Associate Professor
    Chair – CUL / CCL
    Principle Investigator

    Jeffery Foley, PhD
    Assistant Professor
    Co-Principle Investigator

Appendix D

Selection Notification Script Guidelines

Date:_____

Potential participants name:_____

Email:_____

Telephone:_____

Thank you for your interest in participating in this study. The purpose of this conversation is to familiarize you with the study, answer any questions that you may have, and set up a meeting schedule.

Expressed Appreciation

➢ I am happy that you have agreed to participate in the study.
   Your participation in the study will assist us in fulfilling our goal of obtaining a better understanding of the role, the experiences and thoughts of those in the role of vice president for academic and student affairs, and the overall perceived impact on the institution through the eyes of those serving in that capacity. In addition to adding to the body of literature, your participation in the study will aid in the overall objective providing institutional leaders with additional knowledge that can help inform their decisions as they attempt to address organizational challenges, institutional change, adopt new organizational structures, and create seamless learning environments.

Ability to Withdraw

➢ I would like to reiterate that you may with draw from this study at any point in time without penalty.

Confidentiality

➢ All interviews will be recorded and transcribed. This data will be kept highly secure. Pseudonyms will be utilized to conceal your identity, the identity of your institution and its location.

Informed Consent

➢ You will be provided with a consent form that will need to be signed and returned to me. You will receive copies of the signed document. We will go over this form prior to our first meeting. This consent form specifically outlines your ability to withdraw from the study at any time, the purpose of the study, the procedures of the study, the type's data that will be collected, confidentiality, the use of pseudonyms, and the benefits and risks associated with the research.

   Time, Location, # of Participants

   ↓ We will need to set up a time to have a recorded telephone interview. The meeting will last one hour and fifteen minutes and should be conducted in a location free from

interruptions and distractions. For your convenience, you will be able to select the meeting date and time

- Seven to fifteen individuals will be participating in this study.

Institutional Review Board

- This study has been approved by the Colorado State University Institutional Review Board and follows guidelines established by the board. I need to review them with you and will email to you for you to sign and either fax or scan and send back to me.

Set up meeting

- I would like to schedule the first telephone meeting. When are you available?

Closing the call

- Do you have any additional questions?
- Please feel free to contact me at (XXX) XXX-XXXX if you ever have any questions.
- Once again, thank you for your willingness to participate in this study.