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The outstanding community college president: a case study of four presidents

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The outstanding community college president: A case study of four presidents

by

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Community colleges have a unique mission in higher education and are important to the future of the United States. Other segments of higher education serve the disadvantaged, but as Brint and Karabel (1989) point out, the community college mission is unique: it is the "quintessential open-door institution" (p. 81). Drucker (1999) maintains that the ability of community colleges to educate skilled knowledge workers is the key to maintaining our competitive edge in the global economy. Jobs in the new economy require a highly skilled and productive workforce. However, in the coming decade most new entrants into the workforce will be immigrants and other people from disadvantaged backgrounds who lack the necessary basic and technical skills to cope with the new jobs (De los Santos & De los Santos, 2000). Community colleges are located in areas where the most needy students are found, and they have a history of working with under-prepared students. Because of their experience with developing the abilities of under-prepared students and their traditional willingness to undertake the task, community colleges may be the key to avoiding a national social and economic crisis (McCabe, 1999).

Given the community college's importance to the nation, especially to the disadvantaged, the study of the leadership of these institutions is important. Although there are those who believe college and university presidents have little or limited impact on the direction of their institutions (Cohen & March, 1986; Birnbaum, 1992), the community college is a more hierarchical organization than the typical four-year college or university (Vaughan, 1986), and many scholars believe that community college presidents have the potential to exert substantial influence on their institutions (Cohen &

Brawer, 1996; Fisher, Tack, & Wheeler, 1988; Kerr & Gade, 1986; Levin, 1994; Vaughan, 1986). Since effective leaders can make a significant difference at community colleges, it is important to know more about the leadership theories and practices they employ.

The need to study community college leadership is made more acute by the current wave of retirements, not only of presidents but also of the entire strata of community college executive leadership (Evelyn, 2001; Wright, 1997). Most people who become community college presidents assume the role after serving a number of years in successive administrative posts (Birnbaum & Umbach, 2001; Ross & Green, 1998; Vaughan & Weisman, 1998). This creates a pipeline effect that exacerbates the problem since the people who would be the natural replacements for the president are also retiring.

Community college leaders face serious challenges. Kerr and Gade (1986) believe that the original sense of mission championed by the early community college presidents is gone. This concern is echoed by Vaughan (1986) who maintains that the community college mission is not understood by a great many people and that the presidents' failure to articulate the community college mission is "likely to prove disastrous" (p. 118). The Commission on the Future of Community Colleges (1988) reported that community colleges "more than at any other time in their history, must now define with greater clarity and sophistication, their distinctive mission" (p. 6). Gleazer (2000) believes that subtle undercurrents in higher education threaten the traditional open-door policy of the community college. The open-door policy is the root of much of the criticism of community colleges, and creating a vision of the future that maintains open access to higher education may be one of the most critical tests of presidential leadership. Future

presidents will cope with many stresses including changes in technology and the struggle for funding, but one of the most complex tasks may be developing a vision for the future of an institution whose mission is in tension.

The Community College Mission

Community colleges have been described by former President Clinton as "America at its best" (AACC, 2000). They provide an inexpensive way for students to pursue the first two years of a bachelor's degree and offer a host of adult education activities that run the gamut from leisure time activities to licensing and testing. They encourage literacy through adult basic education and GED programs. They provide associate's degrees in technical fields that lead to lucrative careers and support economic development through customized job training and retraining. They have been called the "people's college" and "democracy's college" (Cohen & Brawer, 1996, p. 5), but they have also been accused of "cooling out" student aspirations (Clark, 1960) and called "high schools with ash trays" (Zwerling, 1976, p. 17). Ironically, community colleges are the portal to higher education for many whom would otherwise never have the opportunity to attend college but are at the same time criticized for falling short of the mark as legitimate institutions of higher education.

In 1947, the President's Commission on Higher Education used the term "community college" to describe the creation of a stratum of education whose "dominant feature is its intimate relations to the community it serves" (President's Commission on Higher Education, 1947, p. 5). The report explains that the community college has functions not covered by the existing junior college, "Such an institution is not well characterized by the name 'junior' college" (President's Commission on Higher

Education, 1947, p. 9). The community college was conceived as an entity with functions beyond those covered in the junior college, but it was also clearly identified with the thirteenth and fourteenth years of high school.

The community college struggle for identity is essentially a struggle for legitimacy. It has never achieved status as a full member of the higher education community. The tension in the community college's struggle for identity affects the role the community college president plays and the person selected for the office. Those chosen to lead community colleges should have a clear understanding of this tension and a clear vision of the future. The following sections will discuss how tension in the community college mission and concern for legitimacy affects each of the community college's core functions: transfer education, career education, and community education.

Transfer education

One of the core functions of the community college is to provide transfer education—the first two years of the four-year degree. Bryant (1998) believes that the transfer function will always be the "litmus test" of community college legitimacy (p. 34). Before they were known as community colleges, two-year colleges carried the title, "junior." Many influential university leaders viewed the junior college as a buffer that would filter out weaker students and send only the most able on to senior institutions (Cohen & Brawer, 1996, p. 7). Unfortunately, this role also crystallized the image of the community college in the minds of many people as an inferior institution.

One of the harshest criticisms of community colleges has been that they fail in their role as transfer institutions. According to some critics, community colleges are systematically "cooling out" the aspirations of students who begin college with plans to

transfer to a four-year institution to obtain their bachelor's degree by tracking them into less desirable technical programs (Clark, 1960; Zwerling, 1976). Recently, Pascarella (1999) has dispelled some of the myths surrounding the issue of quality and the community college educational experience, but he acknowledges that there is statistical evidence that the students who attend community colleges may be more likely to lower their educational plans. However, he also points out that the reason that fewer students complete the bachelor's degree may be that students who enter community colleges may have less developed and clear educational aspirations than their counterparts who begin their academic career at four-year institutions. In addition, Pascarella (1999) states that there is evidence to indicate that some students who attend a community college may be able to transfer to a more prestigious institution than they would otherwise have been able to enter when they were a freshman.

Beyond providing a more accurate picture of the phenomenon of "cooling out," Pascarella (1999) also found that community colleges enhance the cognitive capabilities and orientations toward learning at about the same level as four-year schools. More significant, however, are Pascarella's (1999) comments on the state of research on the community college student. Pascarella & Terenzini (1991) reviewed more than 2600 studies on how college affects students, yet less than 5% focused on community college students. He describes this as an "empirical black hole" with respect to "the educational impact of one of the nation's most significant social institutions" (Pascarella, 1999, p. 2). There may be several reasons for this paucity of research including the difficulty of conducting research on the community college's non-traditional student population, but Pascarella (1999) states:

> One likely reason is the presence of a rather virulent status hierarchy in our national system of postsecondary education. As we have argued elsewhere (Pascarella & Terenzini, 1998), a relatively small number of research universities and elite liberal arts colleges have set the academic and public standard for what most Americans believe higher education is or should be about. . . . By the time one gets to community colleges with their open admissions policies, faculties rewarded essentially for teaching, and their disproportionate numbers of non-resident, part-time, older, non-white, and working class students, one is virtually off the radar screen. (p. 3)

Thus, the reason that more studies have not been done on community college students may simply be that some do not consider the community college a legitimate institution of higher education.

In support of Pascarella's (1999) observations, one only has to review the annual ratings of top colleges and universities published in popular magazines. In U.S. News and World Report's 1999 rankings, no category for community colleges even exists, and no mention is made of them save to point out the hazards one might encounter when attempting to transfer from a community college to a four-year institution (Graham & Morse, 1999). It is important to realize that the prestige and recognition associated with such rankings is not merely ornamental. Reputation is given greatest weight in the rankings because graduating from a distinguished school "so clearly helps graduates get good jobs or gain admission to top graduate programs" (Graham & Morse, 1999, p. 85).

Zwerling (1976) advocated the restructuring of our educational system towards a less hierarchical structure, "At the very least, this would mean the elimination of junior or

community colleges since they are the most class-serving of educational systems" (p. 251). According to Zwerling (1976) this "would not of course spell the end of higher educational opportunities for students from low socioeconomic backgrounds; they, along with everyone else would be able to enter directly into B.A.-granting schools" (p. 252). Zwerling (1976) believes that eliminating the bottom rung of the educational ladder would somehow improve the opportunities for students from low socioeconomic backgrounds, but it would more likely eliminate certain students from higher education altogether. Even if these students were admitted to four-year institutions, access is limited by price and geographic proximity. One solution to the problem would be to make the community colleges into four-year institutions, and there is evidence that some community colleges may set their course in that direction.

Campbell and Leverty (1999) document the confusion over the community college mission that surfaced at the Community College Futures Assembly. The Assembly, sponsored by the American Association of Community Colleges and the Association of Community College Trustees, provides a national forum on community college futures and adopted the goal of recommending an updated set of core values for the next millennium. Among the key questions under consideration was "whether or not colleges should assign limited resources to preserving community colleges' open-door philosophy or support efforts to expand to the baccalaureate" (Campbell & Leverty, 1999, p. 21).

Aldersley (1995) cites the phenomenon of "upward drift"—the tendency for institutions to strive for higher-level programs—as evidence that "traditional indices of institutional prestige are still potent drivers of institutional decision-making" (p. 51). Like

their four-year counterparts, community colleges are not immune to the allure of prestige. The fact that the question of developing the bachelor's degree for community colleges is even being debated may reflect the general societal pressures that encourage community colleges to engage in their own form of upward drift.

If status and prestige were the only issues in doubt, the stakes in this debate would not be so high, but American higher education is not merely a means of identifying and developing human potential, it also has the role of "distributing or allocating places in the occupational and social structure" (Brubacher & Rudy, 1997, p. 261). For many in our society, the community college is the only opportunity for social and economic mobility, but this purpose is in constant tension with elitist forces in society that resist the extension of educational benefits to the disadvantaged. Future presidents may well be forced to choose between access for the many and raising the status of their institutions.

Career education

Community colleges are an important force in the nation's economy. Peter Drucker, a respected management expert, believes that community colleges are critical to the economic future of the nation and credits them with the current productivity advantage of the American economy (Drucker, 1999). According to Drucker (1999), America can no longer compete with poorer nations for jobs that require unskilled labor--labor is simply more plentiful and cheaper in other nations. We are also unable to maintain a monopoly on the highly educated professions. The number of highly educated people needed in a modern economy is relatively small, and other nations are quite capable of educating at this level in small numbers. However, the United States is unique in its commitment to educating large segments of the population at the post-secondary

level, and Drucker (1999) cites the community college system as the major factor in producing and maintaining the large number of knowledge workers required to support our standard of living: "The United States is the only country that has actually developed this advantage—through its so far unique nationwide systems of community colleges" (p. 151). In spite of its apparent success in technical education, this is one of the functions of the community college that draws the most fire from critics.

Bryant (1998) states that as the economic value of a two-year technical degree increases, the status of this type of education will likely improve. In support of this assertion, Bryant (1998) cites the change that took place in the higher education curriculum from the classical trivium (grammar, rhetoric, and logic) to one that included more practical subjects. Bryant (1998) points to the large number of people with bachelor's degrees who are returning to the community colleges for technical training because "a university education will not put food on the table" (p. 35). At the very least, the bachelor's degree is not necessarily a guarantee of financial security. Yet critics believe that technical education focuses too narrowly on specialized skill development and deprives students of more general abilities that they will need to survive in a rapidly changing world.

Carnevale, Desrochers, and Rose (1998) cite a bifurcation in education resulting in part from "an elitist fear of too much democracy" (p. 29). They maintain that the industrial era created a hierarchy that resulted in an "educational pecking order that tracked non-college students into a limited number of jobs and prepared four-year college students for a broad range of managerial and professional roles" (Carnevale, Desrochers, & Rose, 1998, p. 29). At the same time, however, Carnevale, Desrochers, and Rose

(1998) recognize that there are those in society whose immediate needs are best served by learning specific skills to get a job. The new high-skill economy has intensified the demand for skills so that one must possess skills just to hold any job. Without the support of community college technical programs, dislocated workers, welfare recipients, and others at a disadvantage in our society may never obtain the skills necessary for to provide for themselves independently.

In an ideal world every person would have the opportunity to participate in the society and economy to the fullest extent of her or his abilities. Clearly, an education that is narrow and specialized limits one's ability to move up. But there are those in our society whose immediate needs are best served by helping them obtain a job that provides for their basic needs. For those whose daily life is consumed with the struggle to survive on the income from a minimum wage job, the opportunity to earn a better living is precious. Those who develop a vision of the future of the community college will have to strike a complex balance that provides for the immediate needs of constituents while not losing sight of the larger purposes of full development of their human potential.

Community education

The first use of the term "community college" occurred in the report of the President's Commission on Higher Education in 1947 (President's Commission on Higher Education, 1947). According to the commission the name "community college" is to be applied to the institution designed to serve "chiefly local community education needs," and "its dominant feature is its intimate relations to the life of the community it serves" (President's Commission on Higher Education, 1947, p. 5). In order to serve its

community's needs, community colleges have provided educational services that are not limited to either vocational training or transfer education.

The variety of offerings under this heading make it difficult to develop a precise definition of the nature of community education, but both credit and non-credit offerings are included. Generally, the audience for community education offerings is not the traditional college-age student, and most are not degree related. Courses to support licensure and certification for specific occupations, entrepreneur training, and contracted training to industry also are common. In addition, community colleges offer a range of courses related to community interests that might include courses on how to use E-mail for retirees and other leisure activities. One of the most important offerings from the community college is that of developmental or remedial education.

Common programs in the community education arena include adult basic education (ABE) and general educational equivalency degree (GED) programs. Roueche and Roueche (2000) consider what we know about the future of higher education. They estimate that 75% of the students who begin college will require one or more remedial courses and point out that many states have required that all remedial courses be taught at community colleges. Alexander Astin has stated, "Providing effective remedial education would do more to alleviate our most serious social and economic problems than almost any other action we could take" (as cited in Roueche & Roueche, 2000). Ironically, these are offerings that are seen by many as inappropriate for an institution of higher learning (Cohen & Brawer, 1996, p. 300).

De los Santos and De los Santos (2000) warn that the community college needs to prepare for the "waves of minority and economically challenged students with significant

linguistic and cultural differences" and conclude that "the majority of the digitally disenfranchised students will be knocking on the community college's open-door" (p. 1). De los Santos and De los Santos (2000) discuss the growing gulf between the "haves" and "have-nots" in America and assert that the Digital Age will exacerbate the problem by creating a Digital Divide. Those who understand and can access information technology will continue to see their share of the economic pie grow while the disadvantaged will fall further behind. Not surprisingly, the Digital Divide parallels the Racial Divide with ethnic minorities comprising a disproportionate share of those who are unable to access information technology. Through a variety of programs, including ABE, GED, and ESL, community colleges have been able to bridge the divide between the "haves" and "have-nots" in our economy. As technology exacerbates this problem, the need to provide these educational services will become even more urgent.

Raisman (1996) likens the tension in the community college mission to the middle child syndrome in which the middle child is overshadowed by both older and younger siblings. He attributes the extensive efforts of community colleges to carve out a niche in the world of workforce development as a way of forging a unique identity and increasing status by embracing activities rejected by other institutions. Raisman (1996) believes that community colleges have expended too much energy in workforce development at the expense of the college transfer function but points out that the workforce emphasis did "not fulfill the psychological needs for status in the past fifty years" since it is not a "collegiate" role (p. 20).

Whether or not community colleges have put too much emphasis on workforce development, it is plain that like other institutions of higher education, they are sensitive

to their position in the educational hierarchy. The educational needs of some of the poor and underprivileged in our society likely would be neglected save for the existence of community colleges. Community colleges serve their communities and are a vibrant force in the economy. But they are also subjected to criticism for "cooling out" student aspirations and for engaging in activities that are not appropriate for a college. Forces within the higher education community could work to erode the community college mission until it is nothing more than a diminutive and lower class version of the elite institutions of higher education—a junior college.

Gleazer (2000) reflects on the core values of the community college in the coming millennium. He cautions that the inclusive vision of the community college epitomized by the "open-door" is threatened by subtle undercurrents:

> There is a force to be reckoned with, a kind of gravity, which makes the structures and behavior of educational institutions, often called "academe," the major referent in decisions by and for community colleges. Early in the metamorphosis of junior college to community college there was a powerful aspiration to demonstrate that these institutions were no longer extensions of the high school but collegiate institutions in their own right. (Gleazer, 2000, p. 8)

Those who would lead community colleges must understand the pressures that are brought to bear to on the original community college mission in an effort to gain stature and legitimacy in the eyes of the rest of the educational community. Future presidents will cope with many stresses including changes in technology and the struggle for funding, but one of the most complex tasks may be developing a vision for the future of an institution whose mission is in tension.

Problem Statement

Although an impressive body of research exists on leadership in general (Bass, 1990), insufficient research has been conducted on community college leadership in particular (Baker, 1992). To date, studies of the community college presidency have helped develop a profile of the leaders that includes information about the necessary attributes for transformational leadership (Roueche, Baker, & Rose, 1989). Extensive research has been conducted to accumulate demographic information about the presidents themselves including age, race, gender, career paths, and education (Ross & Green, 1998; Vaughan, 1986; Vaughan & Weisman, 1998;). In addition, important work has been done to identify the preparation factors common to outstanding community college presidents (McFarlin, 1997; Crittenden, 1997), but no researcher has undertaken a qualitative study of the leadership theories and practices of outstanding community college presidents and of the preparation experiences that the presidents themselves perceive as important in their development as outstanding leaders.

Purpose of the Study

This study was undertaken in order to gain a deeper understanding of the leadership theories and practices employed by community college presidents identified as outstanding by McFarlin (1997). In addition, the study examines how people within their own institution perceive presidents who were identified as outstanding by their peers. Finally, the study sought to understand what experiences these outstanding presidents believe have prepared them for their role as community college leader.

Research Questions

McFarlin (1997) utilized a peer nomination process to identify 96 outstanding community college presidents. From the pool of 96 presidents identified by McFarlin as outstanding, four presidents were selected to participate in a qualitative, multi-case study. The following research questions guided the study:

1. What leadership concepts, theories, and practices are employed by presidents identified as outstanding by their peers in McFarlin's (1997) study?
2. What are the differences among the leadership theories, concepts, and practices employed by these presidents?
3. Are these presidents viewed positively by strategic constituencies within their own institution?
4. How do these presidents perceive that they were prepared for the presidency?
5. How do outstanding community college presidents believe that we should prepare future community college leaders?

Significance of the Study

Community colleges are an important sector of higher education. They are important to the overall economic health of the nation. The open-door admissions policy of community colleges makes them especially important to the economic and socially disadvantaged (De los Santos & De los Santos, 2000). Demographics indicate that community colleges face a dramatic wave of retirements that will affect the executive leadership of these institutions. The leaders of these institutions are faced with many challenges, especially the current conflict over the community college mission. Given the

importance of the community college, the wave of retirements among the top leadership, and the current challenges they face, it is critical that we know more about their leaders.

This knowledge will help search committees and boards identify excellent candidates for the office of president and will guide those who seek the office of president. In addition, it will help universities develop more effective leadership preparation programs and help current presidents be more successful.

Limitations

The combined research of McFarlin (1997) and Crittenden (1997) surveyed the entire population of community college presidents in the United States. Their work identified 96 presidents as outstanding. This study considers the experiences of only four of the presidents identified in these studies. This study is conducted within the naturalistic research paradigm, and no claim is made that these four presidents are representative of the larger population. Generalization to the larger population should not be made on the basis of this study. In addition, the study considers only two-year public, community colleges, and the findings should not be extended to four-year colleges or universities.

Definition of Terms

Chief Academic Officer: the chief academic officer (CAO) may go by other titles including vice president of instruction, academic vice president, and dean of instruction. The CAO is "the person responsible for the institution's academic programs, the academic leader who works directly with the faculty" (Vaughan, 1990, p. 6).

Community college president: the chief executive officer (CEO) of a community college. The CEO may carry other titles including chancellor, provost, and director.

Community college: a public, two-year institution of higher education.

Strategic constituencies: the board, faculty, and administrators. These were identified as crucial to a successful presidency by Birnbaum (1992).

Culture: This study utilizes the definition of Kuh and Whitt (1988) which states that culture is the "collective, mutually shaping patterns of norms, values, practices, beliefs, and assumptions that guide the behavior of individuals and groups in an institute of higher education and provide a frame of reference within which to interpret the meaning of events and actions on and off campus" (p. 13).

Founder: the first president of a community college. According to Schein (1992), the founder's values provide the "main cultural thrust" for an organization in its first stage of growth (p. 303).

Mentor: one who acts as a role model for another. In the context of the community college this is frequently an older or more experienced professional who guides and advises a colleague in her or his career development.

Mission: an organization's purpose; its reason for existence

Outstanding community college president: a community college president identified as outstanding by her or his peers. For purposes of this study, outstanding presidents are those identified in the study conducted by McFarlin (1997).

Preparation factor: experiences thought to be relevant in preparing for a leadership role.

Vision: the picture or image of an institution's future that provides inspiration and a basis for planning and decision-making.

Chapter Summary

This chapter established the importance of the community college in providing opportunities for the disadvantaged and supporting the economy. In addition, this chapter

introduced the need for leadership in the community college and the attendant need for the study of outstanding community college presidents. The purpose of the study was explained, the significance of the study was established, and relevant terms were defined. Chapter Two will examine the relevant literature that provides the foundation for this study.

CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The review of literature is divided into three major sections. The first section is a review of general theories of leadership. Following the review of general leadership theory, the second section discusses the smaller subset of academic leadership and the community college presidency. In the final section of this chapter, preparation for academic leadership is considered.

Leadership Theories

There is a substantial body of research on leadership. For his exhaustive summary of the literature, Bass (1990) reviewed more than 7,500 studies. In order to make the extensive literature on leadership theory more manageable, it can be grouped into six categories: trait theories, behavioral theories, contingency theories, power and influence theories, cognitive theories, and cultural and symbolic theories (Bensimon, Neumann, & Birnbaum, 1989). The review of literature for this study will include these categories but will also include an additional section on value-based leadership.

Trait theories

Trait theories focus on identifying the traits that distinguish leaders from others and determining the extent of the difference. The traits considered have included physical characteristics of height, weight, age, appearance, and energy, as well intellectual qualities like intelligence, fluency of speech, originality, and social attributes like extroversion, dominance, and responsibility. Trait theories have an innate appeal. The myth of the hero is powerful, and it is natural to want to know what makes the hero different from the ordinary mortal. The "great man" theories are a type of trait theory and assert that leaders are endowed with unique qualities absent in the masses. The "great

man" conception of leadership posits that men like Winston Churchill, Martin Luther King, and Lee Iacocca are "great men" whose leadership qualities enabled them to alter the course of history. Significantly, women have not been considered despite the existence of great female leaders like Joan of Arc and Elizabeth I (Bass, 1990).

Most of the leadership research conducted in the first half of the twentieth century was based on a trait approach. Leaders were identified through a variety of methods including peer nomination, expert ratings, and evaluation of biographical and historical information. Those who were identified as leaders were studied, generally through observational methods, to determine what special qualities they possessed. By the midpoint of the century, however, the pure trait approach was challenged by research which indicated that no universal set of traits existed that identified leaders in every situation (Stogdill, 1948). This led to a reconceptualization of leadership as a relationship between leader and followers and an emphasis on situations as the determinant of leadership that in the extreme view asserted that personal attributes were not related to leadership (Northouse, 1997). In the same way that the pure trait approach ignored the constraints of the situation, the extreme situational view asserted that individual variance among people was unrelated to leadership.

According to Bass (1990) the trait verses situation debate creates a false dichotomy. Based on his review of the research, he concluded that "some of the variance in who emerges as a leader and who is successful and effective is due to traits of consequence in the situation, some is due to situational effects, and some is due to the interaction of traits and situation" (Bass, 1990, p. 86). Despite the fact that, to date, it has not been possible to identify a universal set of leadership qualities, the trait approach to

leadership can still be useful. Bass (1990) found positive evidence in at least 15 studies that leaders exceeded the average member of their group in the following characteristics: intelligence, scholarship (higher academic achievement), dependability in exercising responsibility, activity and social participation, and socioeconomic status. Clearly, all of these attributes are relative. Intelligence, for example, is positively correlated with leadership until the leader's intellectual capacity exceeds the followers to such a degree that followers are no longer able to relate to the ideas and concepts of the leader, and the leader has difficulty relating to the group (Bass, 1990, p. 83).

Critics of the trait approach emphasize the fact that not only have researchers failed to identify a definitive list of leadership qualities that applies across all situations but defining qualities like self-confidence is problematic and highly subjective (Stogdill, 1948; Bensimon, Neumann, & Birnbaum, 1989). However, taken with the qualification that situations mitigate the influence of traits in determining leadership, a century of research on the trait approach does provide a basis for concluding that there are traits that can be identified which enable leaders to succeed in certain situations (Bass, 1990; Kirkpatrick & Locke, 1991; Northouse, 1997). In preparing people for leadership roles in academic settings, trait theories can help identify strengths and pinpoint weaknesses, and while it may not be possible to teach qualities like intelligence, there are qualities like dependability in exercising responsibility that can be learned.

Behavioral theories

When, at mid-century, the search for a set of universal leadership traits appeared to be at a dead end, many researchers turned their focus to the study of the behaviors rather than the traits of leaders. The change in approach represented a considerable shift

in perspective from consideration of leadership as a dimension of personality to viewing leadership as a set of behaviors of the leader toward subordinates (Northouse, 1997).

The Ohio State studies

Research on behavioral models of leadership began in the late 1940s at Ohio State University. This research is the most comprehensive and replicated and has resulted in the most influential leadership theory in the behavioral tradition (Bensimon, Neumann, & Birnbaum, 1989; Robbins, 2001). In the Ohio State University studies, researchers generated a list of 150 statements that described different aspects of leadership behaviors. These statements formed the basis for a research instrument--the Leader Behavior Description Questionnaire (LBDQ). The questionnaires were given to subordinates who rated their leaders on the frequency of the behaviors. Two significant leadership factors--consideration and initiation of structure--emerged from the research (Bass, 1990).

Consideration behaviors are related to the leader's focus on relationships and are an indication of the extent to which the leader is considerate of the needs and welfare of her or his subordinates. Leaders high in consideration behaviors are friendly and approachable, are concerned with the job satisfaction of subordinates, and treat employees as equals. Inconsiderate leaders threaten the job security of subordinates, criticize them publicly, and refuse to accept their suggestions.

Initiating structure is related to the leader's focus on completing tasks and refers to the extent to which a leader initiates, organizes, and defines the activities of the group. Leaders described as high in initiating structure emphasize meeting deadlines, assign specific tasks to individuals in the group, and maintain high standards of performance. Leaders who are low in initiating structure are described as hesitant in making decisions,

slow to take action, and offering suggestions only when members of the group ask for help.

Extensive research found that leaders who are rated high on both initiating structure and consideration were more likely to achieve high levels of employee performance and job satisfaction. However, this was not found to be true in all cases. Increased rates of employee grievance and absenteeism were sometimes associated with leaders who were rated high in initiating structure. In other instances, poor performance was associated with high consideration. In general, there have been enough exceptions to warrant the integration of situational factors into the theory (Robbins, 2001).

The managerial grid

A widely used model of managerial behavior was developed by Blake and Mouton (1978). The managerial grid resulted from integrating the task and relationship orientations into a single model. The vertical axis of the managerial grid represents the leader's concern for people or relationships; the horizontal axis represents concern for production or a task orientation. According to Blake and Mouton (1978), managers who score high on both orientations are the most effective on a variety of performance criteria. Like the LBDQ, however, a number of situational contingencies affect the outcomes. Among the factors that moderated the effectiveness of leaders were the orientation of the subordinates and the nature of the task (Bass, 1990).

Critics of behavioral leadership theories argue that the results of the massive research on behavioral theories are inconclusive (Yukl, 1994). Moreover, they argue that behavioral theories are problematic in helping to define effective leadership behaviors--the definition of effective leadership changes with the situation (Bensimon, Neumann, &

Birnbaum, 1989). As in the case of the search for a set of universal set of leadership traits, no universal set of leadership behaviors has been identified. The appropriate behavior depends on the leadership context. However, the behavioral approach to leadership has helped to broaden the scope of leadership research beyond the identification of leadership traits (Northouse, 1997). Through extensive research, it has also identified two main types of leadership behaviors: relationship and task oriented. In addition, useful instruments such as the LBDQ and the Managerial Grid have been developed as a result of the behavioral approach to leadership.

Contingency theories

Contingency theories posit that effective leadership traits and behaviors depend on context. The leader whose personality or behavior is effective in situation A, may or may not be effective in situation B. Contingency theories attempt to isolate situational variables that affect leadership effectiveness (Robbins, 2001).

The Fiedler model

Fiedler (1967) developed the first complete model of leadership based on contingency theory. Fiedler's model asserts that effective leadership results from the appropriate match between leader and situation. Depending on the leadership situation, the most effective leader could be either relationship or task oriented.

Fiedler (1967) maintained that a leadership situation could be analyzed on the basis of three factors. The first factor, leader-member relations, refers to the degree of confidence and trust that members have in their leader. The second factor, task structure, refers to the degree of freedom people have in completing tasks assigned to them. Routine tasks in which there is little possibility for individual variation are considered

highly structured. The final factor, position power, refers to the amount of authority the leader has to reward or punish followers. A leadership situation is considered favorable to the leader to the extent that all three factors are present.

A situation that favors a task oriented leader is one in which leadership factors are considered either very favorable or very unfavorable. A situation that favors a relationship oriented leader is one in which the leadership conditions are judged to be only moderately favorable. For Fiedler (1967), the key to successful leadership is to match the right type of leader to the situation. People are essentially either relationship or task oriented, and a change in one's leadership orientation is not likely to occur.

Fiedler developed a simple leadership assessment instrument called the Least Preferred Co-worker (LPC) questionnaire. According to Fiedler (1967), a leader's task orientation can be determined by evaluating her or his attitude toward her or his least preferred co-worker. The rationale for this assertion is that one's attitude towards a co-worker reflects a motivational hierarchy. Those who view their least preferred co-worker merely as a barrier to task completion and fail to see any redeeming qualities in the person are considered task oriented. Relationship oriented individuals find good qualities in their least preferred co-worker despite the fact that they represent an obstacle to task completion.

Path-goal theory

Unlike Fiedler (1967) who argues that leaders have a single way of dealing with subordinates, path-goal theory assumes that leaders are flexible, and can behave differently depending on the situation (House, 1996). Path-goal theory is based on the idea that the leader's job is to help clarify the path toward follower goals and to ensure

that the follower goals are congruent with organizational goals. It also assumes that people will be motivated by the recognition that they are capable of performing their work and by the belief that their goals are worthwhile.

Path-goal theory identifies four leadership behaviors: directive, supportive, participative, and achievement-oriented. The choice of leader behavior depends on the needs of the subordinates and the characteristics of the task. For example, path-goal theory predicts that for subordinates with a strong need for affiliation, a participatory approach is appropriate. The requirements of the task also influence the leader's choice of behavior. For example, if the task requires structure, the leader must supply it.

One of the criticisms of path-goal theory is that it is too complex to be practical. It is difficult for a manager to analyze subordinate needs and the influence of tasks to the extent necessary to make a decision on the appropriate type of leadership behavior. Furthermore, the theory does not explain why different types of leadership behavior affect subordinates' motivation. Finally, path-goal theory views leadership as an activity that only involves the leader's influence on the followers. It does not include any influence that the follower has on the leader (Northouse, 1997).

Situational leadership theory

More than 400 of the Fortune 500 companies have incorporated Hersey and Blanchard's (1969) situational leadership model into their leadership training programs. It is estimated that more than 1 million managers receive training in the basic elements of Hersey and Blanchard's model each year (Robbins, 2001). The situational leadership theory (SLT) is based on the common sense principle that leaders cannot be effective unless their followers accept their leadership (Hersey & Blanchard, 1969).

The model posits that followers are in various states of readiness to complete a task. Followers are in one of four states: willing and able, willing and unable, unwilling and able, or unwilling and unable. Leaders must match the correct combination of relationship orientation and task orientation with their followers' state of readiness. For example, if the followers are willing but unable, the leader does not need to supply a high level of support on a personal level but rather needs to supply careful direction in order for her or his followers to be successful. On the other hand, if the followers are unwilling but able, the leader will need to put her or his effort into building a relationship in order to motivate followers to complete the task. If a leader is fortunate enough to have followers that are both willing and able, not much is required of the leader (Bass, 1990).

Robbins (2001) has described the relationship between leader and follower in this model as analogous to a parent-child relationship. Like a parent, the leader supplies support and guidance as long as the follower needs it. When the follower is able to complete the task without support or guidance, the leader withdraws.

Leader-member exchange theory

The unique contribution of the leader-member exchange theory (LMX) is that it recognizes the fact that leaders do not treat all followers the same (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995). The LMX theory posits that within organizations, there is normally both an "in" group and an "out" group.

Members of the in-group are chosen by the leader either because they have a higher level of competence or because they have personality characteristics that are similar to the leader's. The in-group is trusted more than the out-group, receives more attention, and more special privileges. In return, the in-group contributes more to the

organization, takes on additional assignments, and provides assistance to the leader outside the boundaries of the normal job description.

By contrast, the members of the out-group are treated fairly, but are not accorded any special treatment. The out-group performs their job function adequately, and they do what is required of them, but nothing more. The out-group tends to have higher rates of absenteeism, higher turnover, and members do not work beyond their prescribed schedule.

LMX theory recognizes that not everyone in an organization is treated the same, a reality that runs counter to most people's idea about what is fair. However, Graen & Uhl-Bien (1995) also argue that leaders should attempt to develop high quality relationships with all members of the group in order to maximize productivity. Moreover, leaders should look beyond their own unit within the organization, and create in-group style partnerships with other units.

Research tends to support the existence of in- and out-groups within an organization, the basic premise of LMX theory. However, the mechanism through which leaders select in-group members has not been fully explained, and it remains unclear how leaders are to develop in-group relations with all members (Yukl, 1994).

The Vroom-Yetton model

Vroom and Yetton, (1974) developed a model that determines the optimum degree of subordinate participation in decision-making. They developed a continuum of participation divided into six gradations. At one end are directive decisions. At this point on the continuum, the leader makes the decision without any consultation using whatever

information she or he has available. On the opposite end, the decision is made in a group setting, and the leader does not even attempt to influence the outcome.

The type of decision and the circumstances determine the appropriate degree of participation. Leaders must answer "yes" or "no" to a series of seven questions. The answer to each question directs you to a different point on a decision tree. The degree of participation is determined when all seven questions have been answered.

An obvious criticism of this model is that it is too complex to practice on a day-to-day basis, and since its original formulation, more variables have been added bringing the number of questions that the leader must answer to 12 and adding delegation to the participation continuum (Vroom & Jago, 1988). However, despite its complexity, the model does supply a theoretical framework for determining the degree of participation in decision-making, and research tends to be supportive of the model (Bass, 1990).

This section has provided an overview of selected contingency theories. These have included the Fiedler (1967) model which recognizes the need to match the leader's style to the situation; path-goal theory (House, 1996) which argues that the leader's role is to motivate followers by facilitating their pursuit of goals; situational leadership theory (Hersey & Blanchard, 1969) which is based on matching the leader's behavior to the followers' readiness; leader-member exchange theory (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995) which recognizes the fact that not everyone in an organization is accorded the same treatment; and the Vroom-Yetton leader participation model (Vroom & Yetton, 1974) which asserts that different situations require leaders to utilize different decision-making processes. Each of these models has in common the basic recognition that the leader's behavior is

dependent on the context. The context of the leadership behavior is affected by variations in the nature of the task and subordinates.

Power and influence theories

Power and influence theories explore the dynamics of the power relationship between leader and follower. Power is the ability of one individual to obtain compliance with her or his wishes. This is made possible because of the dependency of one person on another for the satisfaction of desired outcomes (Bass, 1990).

French and Raven (1959) identified five sources of power that can be exercised by leaders: expert power, referent power, reward power, coercive power, and legitimate power. Expert power is based on the follower's perception of the leader's competence and ability. Referent power is based on the identification with or personal affinity for a leader. Reward power is based on the leader's ability to reward followers for complying with the leader's directive. Coercive power is based on the leader's ability to punish followers for non-compliance. Both leaders and followers base legitimate power on the acceptance of common values or norms.

Expert and referent power are considered forms of personal power. Reward, coercive, and legitimate power are considered positional, that is, obtained as a result of one's role within an organization. Followers tend to react differently to the leader's use of different forms of power. They seek approval from leaders who exercise referent and reward power. They find leaders who use coercive power less attractive.

Power is not the exclusive prerogative of the leader, however. Burns (1978) argues that all sources of power have one commonality: "they must be relevant to the motivations of the power recipients" (p. 17). The distinction between power and

leadership is that leadership attempts to realize goals mutually held by both leader and follower. The essence of the leader-follower relationship is the interaction of people with different motives and levels of power (Burns, 1978).

Transactional leadership

Transactional leadership is based on an exchange between leader and follower (Hollander, 1978). The exchange is based on the satisfaction of needs and goals that are not necessarily held in common. The exchange can include the satisfaction of either material or psychological needs. The exchange begins with a negotiation to decide what is being exchanged and whether it is satisfactory. The transaction results in follower compliance in exchange for the leader's assistance in attainment of the desired outcome. An example of a transactional exchange would be the negotiation over the number of publications required for tenure. People attain leadership status or achieve success as an appointed leader by demonstrating competence in completing tasks and by conforming to the group's norms (Hollander, 1978).

The relationship between leader and follower does not go beyond the exchange. There is nothing enduring that would bind leader and follower together in a pursuit of a higher purpose. From this perspective most of the leadership models discussed so far would be considered transactional. By contrast, transformational leadership is based on the idea that both leader and follower transcend self-interest in the pursuit of higher goals (Burns, 1978).

Transformational leadership

Transformational leadership is a process whereby the level of motivation and morality is raised in both leader and follower. Mahatma Gandhi is an example of a

transformational leader. Gandhi was able to raise the consciousness of millions of people in pursuit of freedom from social and political domination. In pursuit of this goal, many of his followers suffered imprisonment and even death (Burns, 1978).

Transformational leaders are those who can effect dramatic change within an organization. Business leaders like Lee Iacocca are credited with the turnaround of major corporations as a result of their transformational leadership (Bass, 1990).

Transformational leaders are typically charismatic and act as models for their followers. They usually have high ethical standards, and followers trust them to do the right thing. Transformational leaders create a sense of purpose in their followers and inspire them to commit to a shared vision. In addition, transformational leaders encourage followers to challenge their own and the leader's beliefs and values. Finally, transformational leaders provide a supportive climate for followers and use a variety of means to help them reach their potential (Burns, 1978).

Bass (1985) provided an expanded model of transformational leadership. In this model, transformational leadership is at one end of a continuum, laissez-faire leadership is at the other end, and transactional leadership is in the middle. Laissez-faire leadership is actually the absence of leadership. The laissez-faire leader is not involved in exchanges with followers, makes few decisions, and makes no effort to help followers grow or satisfy their needs. In this expanded model, transformational leadership actually augments the effects of transactional leadership.

An important leadership task for transformational leaders is the creation of a shared vision of the future. Both leader and follower work towards this transcendent goal. For many researchers and commentators, the creation of a shared vision is the defining

characteristic of transformational leadership (Bennis, 1989; Kouzes & Posner, 1987; Nanus, 1992)

Vision and transformational leadership

Vision is defined by Kouzes and Posner (1991) as "an ideal and unique image of the future" (p. 85). Senge (1990) describes vision as an answer to the question, "What do we want to create?" (p. 206). Nanus (1992) defines vision as "a realistic, credible, attractive future for your organization" (p. 8). Thus, a vision can be thought of as an image of what the organization will be in the future. A vision is not a solution to a problem. It produces a creative tension. The vision represents where the organization wants to be in contrast to where it is today. The difference between the two can guide everyday decision-making in that problems are addressed with the vision in mind.

Vision statements are common in industry, but often they are merely the product of the ruminations of top management and do not represent the aspirations of others in the organization (Senge, 1990). A vision that represents only the goals of management will not result in follower investment. Such a vision leads to transactional rather than transformational leadership. People within the organization will comply with management's desires in exchange for rewards, but there is no change in follower values and commitment. The leader must articulate a vision in which people see their own dreams: "No matter how grand the dream of the individual visionary, if others do not see in it the possibility of realizing their own hopes and desires, they will not follow" (Kouzes & Posner, 1991, p.113).

Nanus (1992) offers an explanation of how a vision operates in an organization; behavior in an organization is shaped by the vision: "The right vision . . . attracts and

energizes people . . . creates meaning in worker's lives . . . establishes a standard of excellence . . . bridges the present and future" (p. 16). The vision is a source of empowerment. Those in possession of the vision have the authority to take action on its behalf because such actions will be valued and considered legitimate by others who share the vision.

Power and influence theories emphasize the dynamics of the power relations between leader and follower. Leaders have a number of sources of power available to them, but followers can also exercise power. Transactional leadership involves satisfying the needs of leader and follower in an exchange. Transformational leadership moves both leader and follower to commit to a transcendent goal. Vision is considered to be a key to transformational leadership.

Cognitive theories of leadership

Cognitive theories of leadership are based on the idea that when we observe a behavior in a person, we develop an interpretation of that behavior based on our own individual social learning. Based on their social learning, leaders and followers develop their own implicit theories of leadership. We observe a behavior and infer that the behavior is caused by a variety of internal and external factors. If the causes match our own implicit theory of what we believe leadership should be, then we call that person a leader. Thus the study of leadership becomes a study of social reality (Bass, 1990).

Attribution theory attempts to explain why we judge people differently depending on the meaning we attribute to the behaviors we observe. A key consideration is whether we believe that a behavior is internally or externally caused. Internally caused behaviors are within the individual's control, while externally caused behaviors are those believed

to be outside the person's control. For example, in considering the behavior of a student who is late to class, an instructor might conclude that she was late because she was out too late the night before, an internal cause that is within her control. On the other hand, the instructor may believe that the student's car broke down on the way to school, an external cause that is generally outside the student's locus of control.

Three factors influence our determination of whether an observed behavior is the result of internal or external causes: distinctiveness, consensus, and consistency. A behavior is considered distinctive when it does not fit with a general pattern of that person's behavior. In the example of the student, we are more likely to conclude that the behavior is the result of internal causes if the student is usually dilatory in turning in assignments and completing other work. On the other hand, if the student's behavior is sterling in every other respect, an instructor might be more likely to conclude that external factors are responsible. Consensus refers to the degree to which others exhibit the behavior in the similar circumstances. If, for example, the student is a single parent, and other students who are single parents are often late, the instructor might conclude that external causes like difficulties arranging childcare are responsible for the behavior. Consistency refers to the presence or absence of the behavior over time. If the student is late nearly every day, the instructor is more likely to conclude that the behavior is the result of internal causes. If the student is seldom late, the instructor is more likely to conclude that an instance of tardiness is the result of some external cause beyond her control.

Of particular significance for leadership studies are the errors and biases that distort attributions. For example, when we make inferences about behaviors, there is a

tendency to attribute more to internal causes than is warranted. This is known as the fundamental attribution error. In addition, there is also a tendency for individuals to attribute more of their successes to internal factors like ability and to believe that failure is a result of external factors. This is called the self-serving bias. The radical position taken by some attribution theorists is that outcomes are the result of factors outside the control of leaders. Errors in perception and interpretation may result in leaders being credited with what happened after the fact (Bass, 1990).

Cognitive leadership theory addresses the relationship between people's implicit leadership theory and behaviors. If we want to understand why leaders act the way they do, we must find out what they think about leadership and the leadership situation. Followers will make their judgment about leadership effectiveness based upon their implicit theories of leadership.

Cultural and symbolic leadership theories

Cultural views of leadership emphasize the significance of an organization's culture in determining organizational outcomes. From this perspective, the importance of the leader is diminished. Organizational culture has been defined by Schein (1992) as:

> A pattern of shared basic assumptions that the group learned as it solved its problems of external adaptations and internal integration, that has worked well enough to be considered valid and, therefore, to be taught to new members as the correct way to perceive, think, and feel in relation to those problems. (p. 12)

The process of socialization is inherent in this definition. New members of a group are taught the norms and assumptions by long-time members who mete out rewards and punishments for compliance and non-compliance respectively. Culture, then, is a

mechanism for social control. The definition also emphasizes shared assumptions as opposed to behaviors. Behaviors are a manifestation of shared assumptions about how people perceive, think, and feel about things (Schein, 1992).

Large organizations may not have a single unified culture. While certain assumptions may be shared across the entire organization, there may also be sub-cultures within smaller groups. Sub-cultures may develop common assumptions that are in conflict with the larger culture. The common assumptions of the larger group generally come into play when a crisis or a common enemy threatens the group. Not all groups have a culture. Groups with a high degree of turnover, for example, may not develop any shared set of assumptions (Schein, 1992).

The founder of an organization has the most influence on its culture. The founder shapes the way in which the organization adapts to its environment. The founder generally hires people who share the same assumptions as she does, and they, in turn, perpetuate these assumptions by hiring people who also share these assumptions. Promotion to leadership roles will be based upon the degree of conformity to these basic assumptions (Schein, 1992).

According to Schein (1992), "leadership and culture are two sides of the same coin" (p. 15). Once the culture is established in an organization, it is the culture that determines who will be a leader. If a culture becomes dysfunctional (can no longer adapt to its environment), it is the leader's task to identify the functional and dysfunctional elements and influence the culture to change in order to ensure survival. The implication for leaders is that "if they do not become conscious of the cultures in which they are embedded, those cultures will manage them" (Schein, 1992, p. 15).

Value-based theories of leadership

Authors who emphasize values in their theories of leadership tend to write for a popular rather than an academic audience. Most do not support their assertions with empirical research although they generally include anecdotal evidence. In addition, value –based theories of leadership tend to have a religious orientation that would be unacceptable in academic settings (Bowman, 1997).

Heifetz (1994) argues that all theories of leadership have an implicit value orientation. Trait theories, for example, place value on the history maker, the person of great influence. The mark of a great man is his influence on history. Great man theories allow Hitler to be considered in the same way as Gandhi. Behavioral, contingency, and transactional theories all imply that influence is important and, by inference, that people should aspire to be a person of great influence. Even Burns (1978) theory of transformational theory, which suggests that leaders should raise followers to a higher value orientation, fails to suggest what the hierarchy of values should be or what set of values would be common across cultures. In the absence of explicit values leaders "can encourage people to realize their vision however faulty their sight" (Heifetz, 1994, p. 24).

Heifetz (1994) argues that the central task of leadership is to help members of the group and members of the larger community in which the group exists to clarify values and identify the trade offs that must be made between competing value perspectives. It is the leader's responsibility to encourage people to face difficult realities and tough decisions. Hitler was able to mobilize a nation to lift itself out of an economic quagmire, but he did it with grandiose visions of an Aryan nation. Hitler's formidable leadership was transformational and visionary, and his vision grew out of the shared dreams of

millions of German people, but he silenced competing voices and values within the country.

The servant leader

One of the most influential paradigms of value-based leadership is that of the servant leader (Greenleaf, 1996). The servant leader concept is drawn from the Bible (e.g. Mathew 20:26), and simply posits that those who would lead must first be willing to serve. A servant puts the highest needs of others first. The best test of a leader is to see if those around them are growing into servants themselves, servants who benefit those who are the least privileged in society:

> Do those served grow as persons? Do they, while being served, become healthier, wiser, freer, more autonomous, more likely themselves to become servants? And, what is the effect on the least privileged in society; will they benefit or, at least not be further deprived? (Greenleaf, 1996, p. 2)

Leaders who are first concerned with their own aggrandizement, professional advancement, or personal gain fail to meet the basic requirement for a servant leader.

Greenleaf (1996) argued that leaders must have the capacity to develop a vision, but they must insure that the vision is the correct one. A leader must be able to state the organization's purpose in a way that "excites the imagination and finds something people want to work for, something they don't know how to do, something they can be proud of when they achieve it" (Greenleaf, 1996, p. 300). But the purpose that people work toward must be the correct one, if it is not right, nothing else matters.

Empowerment

A reoccurring theme in value-based leadership is the importance of empowering followers. Leaders build their own power by empowering others to exercise leadership and authority. This approach shifts attention from the traits and behaviors of leaders to their followers and how they can be enabled (DuPree, 1987; Kouzes & Posner, 1987; O'Toole, 1996; Senge, 1990).

O'Toole (1996) argues that leaders have a natural tendency to force their will on followers. In his view, contemporary leadership approaches are contingency based in the sense that they require leaders to change their behavior based on the situation. Leaders have traditionally responded to different situations with three basic behaviors: command, manipulation, and paternalism. The command response usually results from difficult times. Leaders believe that their dictatorial behavior is justified and in their followers' best interest. Manipulation of followers often succeeds in the short run, but once followers learn that the leader cannot be trusted, the leader's influence is eroded. Paternalistic behavior differs from manipulative behavior in that the leader acts selflessly rather than for his or her own interest. Each of these approaches has in common the fact that the focus is on the wisdom of the leader. Followers have no opportunity to influence the organization's direction.

The approach advocated by O'Toole (1996) is based on the fundamental belief that the highest leadership value is respect for followers. Leaders "listen to their followers because they respect them and because they honestly believe that the welfare of followers is the end of leadership" (O'Toole, 1996, p. 9). But leaders cannot pander to the wishes of the masses if the desires of the majority are immoral. Leaders must act in such a way as

to bring out the best in their followers. The leader's vision is their vision because it is based on the followers' needs and highest aspirations. Leadership is not a matter of "Christ telling people to love their neighbors; instead, people come to want to love their neighbors of their own volition" (O'Toole, 1996, p. 10).

Senge (1990) identifies five disciplines that are essential for the learning organization: achieving personal mastery, working with mental models, building a shared vision, team learning, and systems thinking. The dramatic difference in this approach is that individuals at all levels within the organization are expected to acquire these disciplines, not merely the leader. Empowerment comes through learning, and the leader's task is to encourage learning.

Dupree (1989) advocates participative management and sets forth a list of worker rights including the right to be needed, the right to be involved, the right to a covenantal relationship, the right to understand, the right to affect one's own destiny, the right to be accountable, and the right to make a commitment. Participative management "guarantees that decision-making will not be arbitrary, secret, or closed to questioning" (Dupree, 1989, p. 25). People also have the right to influence decisions; however, participative management is not a democracy, and everyone does not get a vote.

Kouzes and Posner (1987) believe that conventional management thinking conceives of power as a fixed sum. People who hold this view are reluctant to give up power. When people feel that they have little power, whether they are managers or subordinates, they are likely to cling desperately to what little they have. They adopt petty and counter productive behaviors like passing the buck.

When leaders adopt the view that power is expandable, everything changes. People who believe that they can influence and control the organization have greater commitment and job satisfaction. Leaders who share power are willing to be influenced by followers, but paradoxically, the leader's influence is increased. Followers feel more attached to the leader and more committed to carrying out their duties. According to Kouzes and Posner (1987) empowering others "is essentially the process of turning followers into leaders themselves" (p. 179).

Value-based theories of leadership tend to be written for a general rather than an academic audience and are not generally supported by empirical research. Heifetz (1994) argues that there are values inherent in all leadership theories, but the values are not explicitly stated. Greenleaf (1996) advocates a leadership theory based on the concept of leader as servant. Empowerment of followers is a central tenet of most value-based leadership theories.

Leadership in the Academic Setting

Birnbaum (2000) argues that there are differences in the way that colleges and universities are organized that have significant implications for leadership. In contrast to the hierarchical, tightly coupled structure of business, institutions of higher education "are professional organizations--loosely coupled systems in which managers with limited authority provide support for the relatively autonomous specialists performing complex tasks within relatively stable structures" (Birnbaum, 2000, p. 150). Moreover, most institutions of higher education have no owners and do not make profits, and as a consequence, they do not experience the same pressure to operate efficiently. Their

product is less tangible than most goods or services, and its true value may not be realized for many years.

College and university presidents

Unlike CEOs in corporations or military commanders, the presidents of colleges and universities must operate with significant restrictions on their authority: "It is a grave mistake for either trustees or presidents to see the position and powers of the university president as analogous to the presidency of a for-profit corporation. Such a view is contrary to the fundamental values of an academic institution" (Balderston, 1995, p. 96). In fact, some researchers believe that college and university presidents have little impact on their institutions (Cohen & March, 1986), and some believe that the president's influence is limited or is significant only under certain circumstances (Birnbaum, 1992). Others believe that the role of the president is crucial to higher education, but that forces both within and outside of higher education have worked to mitigate the president's influence (Kerr, 1984). Largely as a result of their history, community colleges represent a more hierarchical and bureaucratic leadership context, and many scholars contend that community college presidents have significant influence in their institutions (Kerr & Gade, 1986; Roueche, Baker, & Rose, 1989; Vaughan, 1986).

Thwing (1926) is one of the earliest commentators on the college presidency. Although not strictly speaking a study, Thwing supports his assertions about the office with direct quotes from presidents of many institutions including such luminaries as Eliot of Harvard and Harper of Chicago, and thus adds authority to his opinions. His observations, while admittedly dated, offer a view of the presidency that is pastoral in its simplicity in comparison to the challenges faced by some modern institutions. However,

it is ironic to find that many of his concerns for the future of the presidency have materialized. For example, he states that in the future the president should not be forced to "go up and down the country begging for funds" (Thwing, 1926, p. 323). No doubt Thwing would be appalled by the fact that the success of many presidents today is measured by whether or not they are able to deliver on the bottom line (Glass & Jackson, 1998).

Spriestersbach (1999) chronicles many of the changes that have taken place in the modern university in the 25 years between 1964 and 1989 in his history of the University of Iowa. Campus unrest, increasing financial pressure, and the computer invasion are only a few of the many challenges faced by the president. One of the chapters describes the loss of the funding for the university's state-of-the-art laser facility through a series of intricate political and public relations debacles. While Thwing (1926) is able to write of the "college boys and girls" (p. 81), Spriestersbach (1999) writes in an era of the emancipation of students and the end of the doctrine of in loco parentis. It is clear from Spriestersbach's (1999) account that the role of the president has become more challenging than perhaps anything Thwing (1926) could have imagined.

In this challenging environment, there are some researchers who believe that the college president has only nominal influence on the institution. Cohen and March (1986) prepared an analysis based on a stratified sample of 42 four-year institutions. They based their analysis on an organizational theory that conceives of colleges and universities as a special type of organization characterized by "organized anarchy" (Cohen & March, 1986, p. 3). They believe that the presidency is "honorific" (Cohen & March, 1986, p. 78). Cohen and March (1986) are not convinced that presidential leadership makes much

of a difference, stating that while the presidency is important to the president, it is really an illusion. Certain aspects of the job disappear upon close examination, particularly decision-making. Problems and solutions in a university are "de-coupled" making the president's role "more commonly sporadic and symbolic than significant" (Cohen & March, 1986, p. 2). The college makes the president, not the other way around. They see decision-making in an organized anarchy taking place through a non-linear "garbage can process" where the problem is de-coupled from the choices (Cohen & March, 1986, p. 90). According to the authors, it makes little difference who is president since the president's role in the decision-making process is limited.

Models of presidential leadership

Concern that colleges and universities might be suffering from the weakened state of the college presidency led the Association of Governing Boards of Colleges and Universities to form a commission under the directorship of Clark Kerr (Kerr, 1984). The Commission on Strengthening Presidential Leadership conducted 848 interviews with presidents, former presidents, spouses, trustees, and a variety of other individuals knowledgeable about the role of the president in colleges and universities. The research focus for this study was the difficulty and complexity of the role of president. The presidency was perceived as less supported and more restrained than in the past. Fund raising is an increasing burden to the presidents, and most stated that they were unable to focus on long term planning. The Commission's findings indicate that the office of the president needs to be strengthened through increased support from campus constituencies, especially the board of trustees.

Kerr and Gade (1986) expanded the original work of the Commission on Strengthening Presidential Leadership by examining some of the forces that affect the American college presidency. Kerr and Gade (1986) acknowledge the existence of the organized anarchy model of Cohen and March (1986), but argue that it is only one of several models that obtain on college and university campuses. Kerr and Gade (1986) identify four models of presidential power and influence. Each model has implications for effective presidential leadership.

The president has the most power and influence in the vertical model in which the board is at the pinnacle of a pyramid of authority. In one form of this model, the president reports only to the board and exercises complete authority over the rest of the institution. The president need not seek the opinion of others before reaching a decision, and responsibility for the success or failure of the institution is hers or his alone. In variations of this form, the flow of authority remains vertical, but other officers within the institution report directly to the board. This, of course, weakens the authority of the president, and in some instances, pits the president against the provost or the vice president of business or external affairs. Regardless of the exact form of this model and the extent of presidential authority, the board plays a central role, and the flow of authority is along a vertical axis.

In second model, authority flows along a horizontal axis, but the president remains at the center of influence. This model emphasizes shared governance and consensus. The president, in the center of the process, acts as the chief communicator, negotiator, mediator, and arbitrator, and is the "first among many equals" (Kerr & Gade, 1986, p. 133). In addition to the board and president, the faculty becomes the other major

center of influence along the horizontal axis of the organizational structure. This model functions effectively where there is widespread tolerance and respect among the college community and where a strong sense of cohesion exists. The president has great influence in this model, but the level of presidential responsibility exceeds her or his authority. According to Kerr and Gade (1986), the president in this model "has two powers: to persuade and to persuade" (p. 137).

The third model, described by Kerr and Gade (1986) as polycentric, envisions the president as only one center of power and influence among many. In addition to internal centers like faculty and students, this model includes other sources of power and influence from diverse arenas. These may include federal and state government, coordinating councils, alumni organizations, the press, and special interest groups represented on the board. The climate in this model is more adversarial than the others described so far, and while many (but not all) of these centers lack the power to bring an initiative to fruition on its own, nearly all have veto power. As a result, decisions are made slowly, and fewer are made due to the extensive consultation that is required, "stasis is the most likely overall result" (Kerr & Gade, 1986, p. 143).

In the polycentric model, the president has strong bargaining power due to the extent of his veto power over budget and personnel appointments, but Kerr and Gade (1986) explain that, in order to be effective, the president must engage in a "pacific form of guerilla warfare" (p. 145). She or he must be careful not to take on more than one power bloc at a time, and then only when in possession of an overwhelming force. The president must possess the political skills to build coalitions and, at times, become combative and confrontational.

In last model set forth by Kerr and Gade (1986), the president has limited power and influence. The model has two basic forms, one of which is the "organized anarchy" described by Cohen and March (1986). The president is essentially a figurehead and plays a minor role in this model. Decision-making authority is dispersed throughout the institution rather than concentrated in the office of the president. The college lacks clear goals that could be advanced by a president even if they had the authority. Kerr and Gade (1986) also posit a slightly different form of this model that they call "atomistic decision-making in a shared environment" (p. 153). The chaos and anarchy of the first form is replaced by a stable and productive environment in which individuals make decisions on their own, and the president, like a constitutional monarch, acts as guardian and protector of the environment.

The presidential leadership requirements are different for each of these models. In the first model, the president must be decisive, whereas in the second model of shared governance, the president must be more effective at negotiation and consensus building. In the political environment of the third model, the president must be more Machiavellian, exercising shrewdness in bargaining and creating power blocs and coalitions. In the final model in which the president is largely a figurehead, Kerr and Gade (1986) explain that the president "must be able to analyze realistically what can and cannot be done and, because not much can be done, to relax and enjoy the perquisites of the job" (p. 151).

The belief that a college or university president "ultimately determines the success or failure of an institution" led Fisher, Tack, and Wheeler (1988) to undertake a study to determine what makes some presidents more effective than others (p. 102). The

authors adopted a view of the presidency based on transformational leadership theory. The study used an expert nomination process to identify effective presidents. Two hundred twenty-two experts, individuals who were considered knowledgeable about higher education, were asked to identify the five people they considered to be the most effective college presidents. The experts were allowed to use their own individual definitions of effectiveness. Through this process, 412 presidents were identified.

The study concluded that effective presidents are different from the representative presidents. When compared to representative presidents, effective presidents were aloof, risk takers, more thoughtful than spontaneous, and more flexible than rigid. Effective presidents were "action-oriented" and "visionary" in contrast to the "collegial prototype" (Fisher, Tack, & Wheeler, 1988, p. 105). They emphasized the importance of vision above all other qualities stating that in the absence of vision "there is no evident challenge; no real prospect for achievement; and no overt, compelling need for people to follow" (Fisher, Tack, and Wheeler, 1986, p. 23).

In opposition to the view that institutions of higher education operate in a rational, linear fashion, some scholars approach the study of academic leadership from a cultural and interpretive perspective (Bensimon, Neumann, & Birnbaum, 1989; Birnbaum, 1992; Kuh & Whitt, 1988). Culture consists of shared assumptions, values, and norms that shape interpretations of events and guide decision-making. Culture is developed and influenced by the institution's history, its founders, and the attitudes of its members. From this perspective, organizations are created as people come to agreement about important values and assumptions over time (Kuh &Whitt, 1988).

According to the cultural view of leadership, effective leaders must be knowledgeable about the institution's culture. They will have difficulty in effecting change that is in conflict with the institution's culture, and must adopt interpretive and symbolic strategies to exercise influence. They must help people determine the meaning of events in light of existing stories and sagas and be aware that culture is not easily altered (Kuh & Whitt, 1988).

Birnbaum (1992) analyzed presidential leadership from a cultural perspective based on a five-year longitudinal study of 32 institutions of higher education and concluded that "the performance of colleges and universities may usually be less dependent upon presidential leadership than most of us care to believe" (p. 196). Transformational leadership is a myth, "an exercise in rhetoric" (Birnbaum, 1992, p. 195). Presidents, however, can exercise two types of leadership: instrumental and interpretive.

Instrumental leadership is exercised through the day-to-day operations of planning, budgeting, and public relations. Most presidents, by virtue of the judgment and experience developed through successive administrative positions, possess the competence and skills to provide instrumental leadership, but instrumental leadership has only marginal influence on institutional performance.

Interpretive leadership is a process that involves influencing the perceptions of what happens within the institution and in relation to its external environment. The president does this by highlighting certain aspects of an occurrence and explaining the connections to institutional values and assumptions. Articulating a vision for the institution that represents the underlying values and expectations is another means

through which a president can exercise interpretive leadership. A deep understanding of the institutional culture is a prerequisite for interpretive leadership.

The community college culture

Although a subset of the larger set of institutions of higher education, community colleges represent a different culture with significant implications for presidential leadership (Birnbaum, 1988; Cohen & Brawer, 1996; Kerr & Gade, 1986; Richardson & Wolverton, 1994; Vaughan, 1986). A variety of factors contribute to the differences in culture between four-year institutions and community colleges. One significant factor lies in the origin of many community colleges in secondary schools systems administered by the superintendent of schools and organized in a bureaucratic fashion (Cohen & Brawer, 1996). Another factor is related to the founding presidents of community colleges.

Founders of organizations tend to establish the culture to the extent that it is difficult to change even after they are gone (Birnbaum, 1992; Kuh & Whitt, 1988; Schein, 1992). In the 1960s there were 300 "founder presidents" of community colleges (Kerr & Gade, 1986, p. 166). Vaughan and Weisman (1998) explain that when most colleges were founded in the 1960s, presidents often began with no staff, no faculty, and in most cases, no campus. They made all the decisions themselves. Hiring, purchasing, and budgeting were done without the need or benefit of consultation. The founding presidents had a major influence on the institutions they started:

> Much of the community college's culture formed in the 1960s and 1970s, while always evolving, has endured to this day. Although most of the founding presidents have left the scene, they often have become a part of the college's culture. (Vaughan & Weisman, 1998, p. 8)

Furthermore, Vaughan and Weisman (1998) assert that the autocratic tendencies of these early presidents were handed down to their successors since "many of today's presidents were influenced, mentored, and trained by founding presidents of the 1960s and 1970s, often adopting their philosophies and practices" (Vaughan & Weisman, 1998, p. 1).

Despite, or perhaps in reaction to, the autocratic tendencies of early leaders, community college trustees, students, and especially faculty have begun participating in decision-making. Collective bargaining has had a significant impact on the context of community college leadership (Lewis, 1989). Among all post-secondary institutions, faculties at community colleges are the most unionized (Cohen & Brawer, 1996). The rise of collective bargaining in community colleges prevented presidents from making ad hoc decisions and shifted governance patterns so that union representatives and various committees made more of the decisions. From the standpoint of organizational structure, unionization did not change the essentially vertical axis of authority, but it sometimes added an additional axis leading from the faculty union directly to the board, and created confrontational situations for the president (Kerr & Gade, 1986).

Community college presidents

George Vaughan is one of the most widely respected researchers on the community college presidency. Vaughan (1986) conducted a Career and Lifestyles Survey (CLS) of 838 presidents of public community colleges. The CLS provided basic demographic and personal information about the 591 presidents who returned the survey. In addition to the demographic and personal information, each of the presidents was asked to identify two presidents in their state that they considered to be "outstanding." From these nominations, Vaughan selected individuals who received five or more votes

in their state or the largest number of votes (minimum of two votes). Seventy-five presidents were identified as outstanding using this method and were asked to complete a leadership survey.

In addition to demographic information, Vaughan (1986) was able to identify the personal attributes and skills and abilities that outstanding presidents believed were most important. The top personal qualities required for presidential leadership were integrity, judgment, courage, and concern for others. The most important skills and abilities were identified as producing results, selecting qualified people, resolving conflicts, communicating effectively, and motivating others. Among the roles most important to the president was that of chief advocate for the institution, "the failure to interpret and articulate the mission is likely to prove disastrous" (Vaughan, 1986, p. 118).

The CLS survey was administered again in 1991 and in 1996. Vaughan and Weisman (1998) summarized the results of these surveys, creating a profile of the community college president, and showing how presidential demographics have changed over time.

Vaughan and Weisman (1998) divided the results of the CLS into a personal and a professional profile of the presidency. Six hundred seventy-nine presidents responded to the survey. They found that 82% were men, 86% were Caucasian, their average age was 54, and 92% were married. Forty-one percent of the respondents had been a student at a community college. Eighty-nine percent of the respondents held a doctorate as opposed to 74% in the 1984 survey.

The professional profile revealed that the average president in the survey had held her or his position for 7.5 years, a figure that is relatively unchanged since the initial

survey conducted 12 years prior. Most presidents arrived in the position after having served as an administrator with academic overview (54%). The second most common previous position was that of chief student affairs officer. The professional profile also revealed information about the length of employment contract, housing benefits, and retirement.

In addition to the demographic information gleaned from the CLS, Vaughan and Weisman (1998) conducted interviews with 13 presidents selected to represent a variety of institutions from various parts of the country. The focus of the interviews was the adequacy of resources to fulfill the community college mission, open access and the mission, and internal and external threats to the mission. All presidents interviewed emphasized the importance of communicating the mission and believed that the commitment to open access was important. They recognized the internal and external threats to open access, but stated that even though resources were a constraint, open access would be preserved.

Hammons and Keller (1990) conducted a national study to identify the competencies and personal characteristics that future community college presidents should possess. The study was conducted using a stratified random sample of community college presidents. A Delphi process was used to develop the list of 62 competencies and characteristics. These were divided into leadership, group-related, and personal characteristics. The three top leadership competencies were delegation, personnel selection, and decision-making. In the category of group-related competencies, the three most important competencies were motivation, use of power, and entrepreneurship.

Among personal characteristics, judgment, commitment, and integrity were considered most important.

Roueche, Baker, and Rose (1989) studied community college presidents from the theoretical perspective of Burns' (1978) transformational leadership. Their research attempted to determine the common characteristics of community college presidents who were identified as transformational leaders. Transformational leaders were identified by requesting nominations from all AACJC member colleges. From this process 296 presidents were identified. From the 296 presidents, 50 were selected for in-depth interviews.

From the interviews and from written documents, including the CEOs' educational statements, a set of common themes emerged. The most significant theme was vision: "This theme is clearly an essential element of transformational leadership, and the data confirmed that both leaders and their teams regarded vision as the key to successful leadership" (Roueche, Baker, & Rose, 1989, p. 104). They also emphasized the need for the vision to be jointly developed in a process in which leaders were influenced by followers, and critical decisions were made jointly.

Biggerstaff (1992) analyzed the transcripts of interviews conducted with the presidents who participated in the study conducted by Roueche, Baker, and Rose (1989). Her analysis was based on the assumption that "exceptional leaders lay the groundwork for creating, managing, and transforming the culture of their organizations" (Biggerstaff, p. 46). The study was conducted for the purpose of identifying and describing examples of "leadership behavior associated with transmitting and embedding culture" (p. 47). Based on the analysis of these transcripts she identified presidents who lead by

influencing their community college's culture—its basic assumptions, values, and beliefs. She concluded that exceptional presidents engage in a variety of culture embedding activities including their reactions to critical events, the modeling and rewarding of desired behaviors, and the selection of new members who share their vision.

Fryer and Lovas (1991) analyzed community college leadership to determine successful strategies and behaviors. They used a transformational definition of leadership in their study of leadership in nine community colleges in California. They found that people internalize the values and spirit of the institution in which they work and that the commitment that people make affects the quality of the work and the attention they give to students. According to Fryer and Lovas (1991), the art of leadership is the creation of a climate in which people will want to contribute more than the bare minimum. They emphasize the need for leaders to empower people and to articulate a vision for the institution.

Bensimon (1989) examined the cognitive frames implicit in college presidents' characterization of leadership. The most distinctive pattern that emerged from the research was found in the definitions of leadership among community college presidents. Community college presidents tended to use a single frame for analysis of leadership. Moreover, the fact that the most common frames among community college presidents tended to be bureaucratic or collegial suggests that presidents tend to view the institution as a closed system with decision-making taking place in a centralized manner.

Vaughan (1986) and Hammons and Keller (1990) utilize a trait and behavioral approach to leadership in the community college setting. Roueche, Baker, and Rose (1989) and Fryer and Lovas (1991) approach their studies from the perspective of

transformational leadership, but in their search for attributes and behaviors of transformational leaders they also utilize a behavioral orientation. In opposition to these rational and objective approaches, Bensimon (1989) and Biggerstaff (1992) view leadership from a cultural and interpretive perspective. Each of these approaches adds to our understanding of the phenomenon of leadership in the academic setting, and no single approach is appropriate in all circumstances. Bensimon, Neumann, and Birnbaum (1989) reviewed the literature on leadership and considered its application to higher education; they concluded that:

> A research agenda for leadership in higher education must recognize that leadership, as is the case with other social constructs, is multidimensional and that its definition and interpretation will legitimately differ among different observers with different values whose assessments may be based on conflicting criteria, units of measurement, or time horizons. For this reason, no consensus presently exists—or even is likely to—on a grand unifying theory of academic leadership. (p. 80)

Colleges and universities represent a different context for leadership than the world of business and industry (Balderston, 1995; Birnbaum, 2000). Leaders in academic settings must share authority with a variety of constituencies. The governance structure of colleges and universities ranges from hierarchical systems with most of the decision-making authority concentrated in the president, to those in which the president is essentially a figurehead (Kerr & Gade, 1986). Major studies of presidential leadership in colleges and universities have included transformational, and cultural and interpretive approaches to leadership (Fisher, Tack & Wheeler, 1988; Birnbaum, 1992). Studies of the

community college presidency have included trait, behavioral, and transformational studies, each with its own contribution to the field (Fryer & Lovas, 1991; Roueche, Baker, & Rose, 1989; Bensimon, 1989; Vaughan, 1986).

Preparation for the community college presidency

To date, few studies have focused specifically on preparation for the college presidency. Thwing (1926) is one of the earliest commentaries on the academic presidency, but he does not suggest any particular preparation experiences. College presidents rise from the ranks of the faculty to the presidency and presumably learn what they need to be successful on the way. When we compare Thwing's (1926) portrait of the presidency to the environment described by Spriestersbach (1999), we are confronted with the dramatic change in the demands on the college presidency that have taken place in this century and, by inference, the need for investigation into the appropriate preparation for the office. It raises the question as to whether experience in the traditional administrative roles is adequate preparation for the current office of president.

Birnbaum's (1992) distinction between instrumental and interpretive leadership suggests that the traditional route to the academic presidency through a series of incremental promotions may prepare a person for the task of instrumental leadership, but not for the role of interpretive leader. Birnbaum (1992) believes that most presidents do well in the day-to-day tasks of budgeting, scheduling, planning, and so forth—the domain of instrumental leadership. These are tasks that can be mastered by years of experience in various administrative posts. Birnbaum (1992) asserts that interpretive leadership is the domain in which presidents can make a difference, but does not suggest any experiences to prepare for that role.

Vaughan's (1986) study identified outstanding community college presidents, but most of his volume is devoted to creating a profile of the community college president without regard to the distinctions between outstanding and normative presidents. The profile of community college presidents developed by Vaughan revealed a number of common factors related to preparation for the role of president. Most community college presidents were "insiders." They attained the role of president after a number of years as administrators within the community college system and often held the position of chief academic officer prior to the presidency. Vaughan found that the majority of community college presidents came from homes in which the parents were not college educated. Seventy-five percent of the presidents held doctoral degrees.

Vaughan (1986) also developed a Leadership Survey that was administered to the community college presidents identified as outstanding. The Leadership Survey enabled Vaughan to determine some differences between the normative and the outstanding presidents related to their preparation. Among his findings was the fact that outstanding presidents had held their current position longer and were more likely to have held more than one presidency. This would seem to suggest that their leadership skills improved with experience. In addition, the outstanding group was more likely to hold a terminal degree in education and more likely to have published within the last five years than the normative group. This implies that the best academic preparation for outstanding presidents is a research-oriented degree majoring in higher education.

Vaughan's (1986) study was the first major step toward expanding our understanding of the community college presidency. His method of identifying outstanding community college presidents has been instrumental in further studies, but

while the information regarding differences between normative and outstanding presidents was a useful beginning, a void remains in our knowledge of how one develops into an outstanding community college president.

Fisher, Tack, and Wheeler (1988) compared effective college and university presidents with representative presidents. Although preparation for the presidency was not a specific focus of this study, the researchers asked the 18 interviewees to identify what early experiences led them to believe that they could be successful leaders. Most effective presidents cited early leadership experiences that helped them learn to take risks and to motivate others to follow. Effective presidents also cited leadership opportunities that helped them develop and hone their leadership skills. In addition, the authors asked the 18 presidents what they would include in an academic program designed to prepare people to be a college president. The presidents' responses were grouped into three categories: general education courses, administrative courses, and practical experiences.

The effective presidents favored a general education curriculum over "how-to" courses in an education administration program. They also stated that an interdisciplinary program that promoted breadth of learning was preferred. Courses in history and historical literature as well as political science, sociology, human relations, and anthropology were mentioned as an integral part of leadership training. The presidents also emphasized the importance of language arts and the development of analytic thinking.

The case study approach was identified as the preferred method of training effective presidents. Case studies afford the opportunity to see the interplay of values and theory in complex problems. Finally, the presidents emphasized the importance of

internship or mentoring experiences in developing an understanding of budgeting, and policy and personnel issues.

Roueche, Baker, and Rose (1989) conducted an extensive study of community college presidents to determine common attributes of outstanding leaders. They utilized a transformational definition of leadership. Vision was found to be the most important attribute of transformational leadership, but no examination into the experiences that would develop this skill was undertaken. Fryer and Lovas (1990) also used a transformational definition of leadership in their study of leadership in nine community colleges in California. They argue that transformational presidential leadership is needed but offer no guidance as to how to prepare a leader for this role.

McFarlin (1997) utilized a peer selection method based on the work of Vaughn (1986) to identify a group of outstanding community college presidents in the upper Midwest. His quantitative study focused on the preparation factors common to the outstanding presidents that differed significantly from the norm. He described his study as the "basis of a composite picture" much like the "sketch made by a police artist" (McFarlin, 1997, p. 88). McFarlin's study concluded that compared to the normative group, outstanding community college presidents were more likely to have completed a terminal degree. They were more likely to have completed a Ph.D. as opposed to other types of degrees, and they were more likely to have a terminal degree that focused on higher education. In addition, the outstanding presidents were more likely to be community college insiders, and more likely to have participated in a mentor-protégé relationship. McFarlin recommended that more research be conducted into the relationships between various preparation experiences and leadership actions.

Crittenden (1997) expanded McFarlin's (1997) study of presidents in the upper Midwest to include all community college presidents in the United States. Crittenden (1997) confirmed McFarlin's work with regard to educational preparation and participation in a mentor-protégé relationship. Crittenden also recommended qualitative studies of community college presidents be pursued that included both male and female presidents.

Studies of leadership outside the academic community also leave a void with regard to leadership preparation. Although lacking research to support their assertions, some commentators suggest that early leadership experiences are the best preparation (Burns, 1978; Kouzes & Posner, 1991). These early leadership experiences are thought to develop social skills and self-esteem. Gardner (1990) suggests graduate school may tend to isolate students by placing them in conditions where they interact with others like themselves as opposed to cross-cultural boundary crossing experiences. In a similar vein, Greenleaf (1996) cites early experience as foreman of a diverse group of construction workers as significant to his own leadership development.

From the foregoing discussion it is clear that there is a great deal that is unknown about the preparation of leaders, especially the preparation of outstanding community college presidents. Two factors, the Ph.D. degree and experience in previous academic positions, emerge as common preparation factors.

The Ph.D. degree

Trumbell (1974) identified a trend for community college presidents to obtain the Ph.D. as their highest degree. Since Trumbell (1974), other researchers have noted the increasing likelihood that community college presidents will have the Ph.D. as their

highest academic credential (Kubala, 1999; Vaughan, 1986; 1989; Vaughan, Mellander, & Blois, 1994;). Moreover, Crittenden (1997) and McFarlin (1997) have demonstrated that outstanding community college presidents are more likely to have completed a Ph.D. than modal presidents. With such overwhelming evidence of the trend, it might seem pointless to question the merits of achieving the Ph.D. as a prerequisite to becoming a president, but while the attributes of a successful community college president have been identified—vision, influence, people orientation, values, and motivation--the link between the skills and abilities acquired in a Ph.D. program and these attributes has not been established.

The ability to conduct research and produce scholarly publications is one of the skills that should be demonstrated in completing a Ph.D. degree, but Vaughan (1989) points out that community college presidents stated that scholarly publication has "little importance" for them (p. 119). Hammons and Keller (1990) found that, in a stratified random sample of 27 community college presidents, of 43 competencies required of a successful president, scholarly publication was ranked the lowest.

Vaughan, Mellander, and Blois (1994) interviewed seven community college presidents selected because "of their current positions, their knowledge of higher education in general and the community college specifically, because of their success in their current roles, and because they represented a variety of institutions" (p. 51). The seven presidents were asked to comment on the qualities, skills, and attributes successful presidents must possess now and in the future. Vision and interpersonal skills were common themes in their answers, yet no link has been established between development

of these skills and the attainment of the Ph.D. degree. One of the presidents interviewed by Vaughan, Mellander, and Blois (1994) stated:

> While it is essential that one have proper academic credentials—you have to have them to get in the door for an interview—I have come to believe less and less that credentials have anything to do with one's ability to lead a college. Some people with the very best of credentials turn out to be the worst presidents. (p. 64)

Undoubtedly, there are benefits to obtaining a Ph.D. degree besides the mere acquisition of a credential, but in selecting leaders with vision and other leadership abilities, it is clear that we need to look for other preparation experiences in addition to academic credentials.

The explanation for the emphasis on completion of a Ph.D. as preparation for the presidency may lie in the community college's struggle for legitimacy and status. Vaughan (1988) states:

> The failure to include scholarship as an important element in the community college philosophy is a flaw that erodes the image, indeed erodes the status of these institutions among other institutions of higher education. . . . community colleges can never achieve their full potential without a commitment to scholarship, nor can they assume a legitimate place as members of the higher education community. (p. 497)

If one accepts the premise that legitimacy in the higher education community is conferred at least in part on the basis of the institution's contribution to scholarship, then the completion of the Ph.D. degree, with its emphasis on scholarship, can be seen as another dimension of the struggle for community colleges to achieve legitimacy.

The problem with placing such an emphasis on the attainment of the Ph.D. degree as a requirement for the community college presidency is that good candidates may be overlooked. Search committees may seek candidates with strong records of publishing and scholarly activities at the expense of candidates with other qualifications, such as aptitude for working with people or the ability to facilitate the creation of a shared vision of the institution's future. This may result in the selection of a president who is an outstanding scholar with marginal leadership skills.

Experience in previous administrative roles

Ross and Green (1998) project that at the current rate of growth, it will take approximately 40 years for women and ethnic minorities to be represented in the college presidency in the same proportion as they are in the general population (p. 73). That this is true may be due to the persistence of a belief in the value of the "academic pipeline" as preparation experience for the presidency. The academic pipeline is a career path that begins at the faculty level and moves incrementally through a series of administrative posts that generally include department chair, dean, and academic vice president (Boggs, 1988).

Kubala (1999) found that of 52 community college presidents appointed between 1995 and 1997, 72.2% had come through the academic pipeline (p. 2). Birnbaum and Umbach (2001) found that presidents of two-year institutions followed the traditional path to the college presidency of faculty appointment followed by successive administrative positions. Vaughan (1986) found that of the 590 presidents surveyed, more than 50% had come through the academic pipeline. A decade after his initial study, Vaughan and Weisman (1998) found that "...the presidential pipeline has not

dramatically changed; the most common position held by presidents before their first presidential appointment is still an administrative position with academic overview" (p. x).

Career paths outside the academic pipeline may lead to dead ends in middle management (Boggs, 1988). Top management positions are considered line positions that involve faculty supervision. Positions in student services are often stereotyped as support positions with little power to initiate or implement policy changes. Unfortunately, many minority and female administrators are in positions in student services where there is little opportunity for promotion.

The reason that women and minority administrators are not in line positions may be explained by the fact that images and beliefs about the qualities required for a leadership position are often exclusionary. Because community college leaders have traditionally been described using terms like "commander," "pioneer," and "builder," redolent of the "great man" theories of history, images of women and minorities are not evoked (Amey & Twombly, 1993). This may lead to women and minority candidates not being considered suitable for top positions. Women, for example, may not be considered tough enough for the job.

Ironically, women's traditional leadership styles tend to be more inclusive, a style that some consider more appropriate for modern leadership (DiCroce, 1995). Moreover, Burns (1978) explains, "As leadership comes properly to be seen as a process of leaders engaging and mobilizing the human needs and aspirations of followers, women will be more readily recognized as leaders and men will change their own leadership styles" (p. 50). Bowen (1993) also suggests that minority presidents may also be more inclined to

favor inclusive leadership styles as a result of having experienced the effects of exclusion.

The foregoing does not necessarily suggest that the experience gained through various administrative posts in the academic pipeline is not valuable. Indeed, one could argue that Birnbaum's (1992) finding that most presidents are good instrumental leaders is evidence that the academic pipeline is an important preparatory experience, but the fact that many potential leaders are effectively excluded from the presidency should give pause to consider the degree of emphasis placed on this career path. In Roe's (1989) study of behavioral competencies associated with outstanding community college presidents, he concludes that "readiness for community college leadership is not necessarily implied from length of time in leadership positions or from multiple leadership roles" (p. 198). Thus, not everyone who travels a particular career path is ready for top leadership positions. By the same token, many who do not follow this path, given the opportunity, may be some of our best leaders.

To date, studies of the community college presidency have identified some of the preparation factors common to outstanding presidents (Crittenden, 1997; McFarlin, 1997), but no studies have specifically addressed the presidents' perceptions of the significance of various personal and professional experiences that may have contributed to their development as outstanding leaders.

A number of studies have considered the traits and behaviors required for presidential leadership in the community college (Kubala, 1999; Roueche, Baker, & Rose, 1989; Vaughan, 1986). McFarlin (1997) and Crittenden (1997) examined the preparation factors common to outstanding community college presidents and determined

that the outstanding community college president is likely to have completed a terminal degree in education and have frequent experiences with publishing and presenting. In addition, the outstanding community college president is likely to have experience as a change agent and extensive involvement in peer and mentorship relationships

Chapter Summary

Bensimon, Neumann, and Birnbaum (1989) developed taxonomy of leadership theory that consists of the following categories: trait, behavior, contingency, power and influence, cultural and symbolic, and cognitive. Another significant body of theory, largely unsubstantiated by extensive research studies, can be categorized as value-based.

The leadership context in academic settings is unique largely due to the existence of shared governance and the fact that most academic institutions are not operated for financial gain. Community colleges represent a smaller segment of the spectrum of higher education and have their own unique features that affect the leadership context. In general, community colleges are more bureaucratic as a result of their distinctive history.

Studies of executive leadership in the community college have been conducted from the trait and behavioral perspective as well as the cultural and symbolic orientations. Studies of the preparation of leaders for the community college presidency have identified several common factors; among them are the attainment of a terminal degree and movement through successive positions in academic administration. Both these factors are problematic in that no connection has been established between either of these factors and outstanding performance as a community college president.

Chapter Three will establish the conceptual framework for the study and describe the study's research methodology including the process used to select participants, data

gathering and analysis, and the role of the researcher. In addition, Chapter Three will explain the procedures used to enhance the study's trustworthiness claims.

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODS

Since this study was concerned with the presidents' leadership theories and the perceptions of the president, qualitative research methods were chosen. One of the foundational premises of qualitative research is that reality is socially constructed and that qualitative researchers are concerned with how people construct meaning out of their experiences (Merriam, 1998). A multiple case study design was chosen. An advantage of the case study method is that it preserves the context and affords a holistic view of the process under consideration (Gummesson, 1991). The work of McFarlin (1997) was used to identify outstanding presidents within the upper Midwest. From these, purposeful sampling (Patton, 1990) was used to select four outstanding presidents for personal interviews. The primary source for data was a series of semi-structured interviews with the presidents and with their strategic constituencies: administrators, faculty, and board members. The interviews were supplemented with document analysis and personal observations. Within-case and cross-case analyses of the interviews were conducted. The criteria developed by Lincoln and Guba (1986) were followed to increase trustworthiness.

Conceptual Framework

This study was conducted within the paradigm of critical theory. Critical theorists believe that historical and social forces shape reality, especially the capitalistic ideology of commodity exchange. The impact of ideology is not limited to mental constructions, however; it also forms the basis for the material practices and structures of society and its institutions. These practices and structures become reified--treated as real, natural, or inevitable--and provide the means through which power and control are exercised for the benefit of the privileged within society (Guba & Lincoln, 1998). Research conducted

from the standpoint of critical theory is committed to exposing the oppressive nature of these structures and practices. Critical theorists are not determinists; they believe in the power of individual action, but they recognize that individual agency is in constant tension with the forces of control and repression expressed in social and institutional structures (Horkheimer, 1991). Within the paradigm of critical theory, schools can be viewed both as the means of reproducing the existing social order and the hope for critical empowerment and emancipation (Kincheloe & McLaren, 1998).

Moving from the broader paradigm of critical theory to the beliefs associated with specific strategies of inquiry, this study will utilize the theories and practices of critical ethnography. Guba and Lincoln (1998) assert that critical theory subtends several alternative paradigms including neo-Marxism and feminism. Anderson (1993) describes how critical ethnography evolved from the basic concepts of structural constraints (class, race, patriarchy) inherent in neo-Marxism and feminism along with interpretivist movements in anthropology and sociology, specifically ethnomethodology and symbolic interactionism. From this synthesis, critical ethnography has developed into a discipline that is both emancipatory and interpretive.

Since meaning is essential to the creation of reality, interpretation is both the source of oppressive ideas and the mechanism to achieve emancipation. Critical ethnographers recognize that the individual's perceptions of social reality are themselves theoretical constructs (Anderson, 1993). But more importantly, the critical ethnographer asserts that within a given culture, the individual's constructions of social reality "are often permeated with meanings that sustain powerlessness and that people's conscious models exist to perpetuate, as much as to explain social phenomenon" (Anderson, 1993,

p. 252). Thus critical ethnography seeks to unveil the underlying meanings that constrain and limit alternative perceptions and actions.

Symbolic interactionism provides an interpretive paradigm within critical ethnography for understanding the meaning that individuals make in the context of their culture. Herbert Blumer, the originator of the term "symbolic interactionism," identifies three foundational premises (Blumer, 1969). First, human beings act towards things on the basis of the meanings those things have for them. Second, meanings arise out of the interaction of the individual with others, and third, that the person uses an interpretive process in each instance in which she or he must deal with things in the environment. Thus, human beings are purposive agents who act and react on the basis of the meanings they create.

Group action, according to Blumer (1969), is the collective action of individuals carried out on the basis of their interpretation of reality including their interpretation of the intentions and actions of others:

> An institution does not function automatically because of some inner dynamics or system requirements; it functions because people at different points do something, and what they do is a result of how they define the situation in which they are called on to act. (p. 19)

In group settings, the role of interpretation is far more significant than the role of organization or structure.

Blumer (1969) states that the methodology implied by the symbolic interactionist perspective is:

> to go directly to the empirical social world—to see through meticulous examination of it whether one's premises or root images of it, one's questions and problems posed for it, the data one chooses out of it, the concepts through which one sees and analyzes it, and the interpretations one applies to it are actually born out. (p. 32)

The empirical social world is the group life of human beings, their experiences individually and collectively. Inquiry in the empirical social world may involve "direct observation, interviewing of people, listening to their conversations, securing life-history accounts . . . consulting public records . . . and making counts of an item if this seems worthwhile" (Blumer, 1969, p. 41). Analysis from the symbolic interactionist perspective is a process in which:

> One goes to the empirical instances of the analytical element, views them in their different concrete settings, looks at them from different positions, asks questions of them with regard to their generic character, goes back and re-examines them, compares them with one another, and in this manner sifts out the nature of the analytical element that the empirical instances represent. (Blumer, 1969, p. 45)

Thus, symbolic interactionism provides a suitable conceptual framework for this study in that it emphasizes the importance of perceptions and interpretations to the understanding of leadership. In addition, it forms the philosophical underpinnings for the qualitative methodology of this study.

Participant Selection

This study is built on the recent quantitative studies of outstanding community college presidents (McFarlin, 1997; Crittenden, 1997). These studies identified

outstanding community college presidents by utilizing a peer assessment technique that was developed and validated in Vaughan's (1986) study of the community college presidency. Each community college president or CEO was asked to identify the three "outstanding" community college presidents/CEOs in her or his state. Presidents were identified as outstanding if they received five votes or the largest number of votes in their state, minimum of two votes. McFarlin (1997) surveyed the presidents and CEOs of the upper Midwest; Crittenden (1997) surveyed the remaining population of presidents and CEOs in the United States. Taken together, the two studies surveyed the entire population of two-year community college presidents and CEOs. When the work of Crittenden (1997) and McFarlin (1997) was combined, 975 surveys were mailed. Seven hundred eighteen were returned for a survey return rate of 73.6%. Ninety-six presidents were identified as outstanding (Crittenden, 1997, p. 52).

Purposeful sampling (Patton, 1990) was used to select four presidents from the 96 outstanding presidents identified by McFarlin (1997) and Crittenden (1997). The presidents were selected based on their potential to add to the understanding of the phenomenon of leadership rather than seeking representative cases or performing random sampling in the manner of quantitative studies. The logic behind this method of selection is that the goal in case study research is not statistical generalization but a deep understanding of the particular case (Stake, 1995). Generalization will be from the results of the case study to some broader theory (analytic generalization) rather than from a sample to a larger universe (Yin, 1984).

The selection criteria were straightforward. I wanted to include at least one rural and one urban community college. I also wanted to include a large community college

(enrollment more than 10,000 full time equivalent students) and a college led by a female president. Finally, due to the constraints of time and resources the geographic proximity of the colleges was a consideration. Choosing campuses that were near the researcher made longer visits possible thereby increasing the trustworthiness of the study as a result of prolonged engagement (Lincoln & Guba, 1986).

Letters were sent to the four community college presidents asking them to participate in this research project (Appendix A). Presidents were asked to participate in an interview of about two hours in length. They were also asked to provide a copy of their curriculum vita. Follow-up telephone calls were made to confirm the arrangements.

Birnbaum (1986) found serious discrepancies between the effectiveness ratings that presidents gave themselves and those given to them by others. Given the tendency of leaders to overrate their own behavior, Bass (1990) cautions "we need to proceed with great care in drawing any inferences from leader-only data" (p. 889). One of the goals of this study was to determine if the presidents identified as outstanding by their peers were viewed positively by their strategic constituencies. Birnbaum (1992) found that there were three strategic constituencies whose support the president must maintain in order to be successful. These were the administrators, the faculty, and trustees. Of these constituencies, however, the faculty was the most critical. Presidents who enjoyed the support of the other two constituencies were not successful unless the faculty also supported them. If the faculty did not support the president, the president was not successful even though she or he enjoyed the support of the other two constituencies.

In addition to the president, interviews were conducted with members of each of the three strategic constituencies. In each case at least one board member, administrator,

and faculty representative were interviewed. In order to insure consistency, the academic vice president (Chief Academic Officer, CAO) was interviewed at all of the colleges in the study. Other administrators were interviewed, both formally and informally, including the vice president for student services and the vice president for operations. Interviews with other administrators added supplemental information, but for purposes evaluation, the CAO was the representative administrator. The president of the faculty collective bargaining unit was also interviewed. In one case, there was no collective bargaining unit, and the president of the faculty senate was interviewed.

In addition to the three strategic constituencies, I also interviewed a community leader, a student, and the president's administrative assistant. I believed that each of these constituencies presented a different perspective on the institution. The presidents themselves chose the community leaders. This was done as a purely practical matter since I wanted to interview someone who had worked with and had some knowledge of the president. The president's administrative assistant was chosen because I wanted the additional insight provided by someone who worked closely with the president on a day-to-day basis and could provide a more intimate view of the president as a person. Each of the students was president of the student senate or president of the Phi Theta Kappa chapter.

Data Gathering

Personal interviews were the most important source for data in this study. Interviews are suitable for obtaining the observations and interpretations of others (Stake, 1995). Interviews can be either structured or unstructured (Fontana & Frey, 1994). Structured interviews are similar to a survey in that the interviewer asks a series of pre-

established questions with answers limited to selections from response categories. In the ideal structured interview the interviewer is intended to act as a neutral observer and follows a script that sets the pace and guarantees that all interviews will be treated in a like manner. By contrast, an unstructured interview is based on a non-standardized format in which the respondent is free to range widely in her or his answer to broad questions. The semi-structured interview is guided by a list of questions or issues, but the wording and the order of the questions is not fixed. The format allows the researcher the freedom to respond to new ideas and topics that emerge (Merriam, 1998).

The primary data gathering method for this study was the semi-structured interview. A list of questions guided the interview. One set of questions was prepared for the presidents (Appendix B), and a second set for all other participants (Appendix C), but their purpose was to keep the interviewer on track and to insure that important topics were covered. In the course of the interview, however, there was considerable latitude and opportunity for the presidents to go beyond the bounds of the questions. Flexibility was maintained in order to allow for in-depth follow-up questions and to allow for full explication of developing themes or topics.

In all, 32 formal interviews were conducted. Signed consent forms were obtained from each of the participants (Appendix D). All of the interviews were tape-recorded and transcribed except one in which technical problems rendered the tape unusable. Summaries were written of all the interviews and copies were sent to the participants for their additions and corrections (Appendix E). In the case of the interview in which the tape was rendered useless, a summary was written from notes and memory, and the

participant agreed that the summary accurately represented the interview. Transcripts and summaries ran to more than 300 typed single-spaced pages.

Document analysis was also used as a means of gathering data. Document analysis provided a means of more fully understanding the leadership context. Written materials such as the college catalog, self-studies, recruitment materials, the college web page, and materials obtained from the college's information office were analyzed. In addition, demographic information about the community was obtained, and local newspapers were examined. On-line versions of the local newspapers facilitated a review of archived editions. News stories and editorials were researched.

The campus visit provided an opportunity to meet the participants personally and to obtain a feel for the campus and community. I was able to share meals and attend meetings with the participants, adding depth to my understanding of the leadership context and providing a means of triangulation for other data.

Data Analysis

According to Yin (1984), data analysis consists of "examining, categorizing, tabulating, or otherwise recombining the evidence, to address the initial propositions of the study" (p. 105). In a similar vein, Huberman and Miles (1994) state that, "Qualitative studies ultimately aim to describe and explain (at some level) a pattern of relationships, which can be done only with a set of conceptually specified analytic categories" (p. 185). This process of fracturing and recombining the data gathered from interviews, observations, and document analysis in meaningful ways requires some initial strategy that should be a part of the study's design from the outset (Yin, 1984).

The analytic strategy employed in this study is case-oriented. The case-oriented approach looks at individual entities and seeks structures or configurations within the entity. The researcher then looks for common patterns among several entities (Huberman and Miles, 1994).

In this study, each president and institution is considered as an individual entity or case. Each case was reviewed and analyzed for emergent themes. I then performed a cross-case analysis looking for common themes or significant differences among the cases. This process was conducted iteratively in order to build successively better explanations for the data.

Although computer software specifically designed for coding (e.g. NUDIST) was not used for data analysis, I found that a basic word processor was a very powerful tool. All of the transcripts are in electronic form. When I was studying the transcripts, and I found a passage that seemed to suggest a category or a theme, it was a simple matter from a technical standpoint to select and copy passages from the transcripts to a separate document. The new document was identified with that theme, and as more supporting material was discovered, it was also copied to the new document. The new document identified with this theme could then be analyzed and a revised document created by selecting and copying passages to another new document. In this way coding and categorizing could be accomplished in a relatively straightforward manner.

Lincoln and Guba (1985) offer four criteria to help the researcher determine that the iterations of data collection, categorizing, and analysis have reached a point of diminishing returns: exhaustion of resources, saturation of categories, emergence of regularities, and overextension. Exhaustion of sources refers to the situation in which it is

not possible to obtain new data to analyze. Saturation of categories occurs when further data collection produces only trivial increments of new information. Emergence of regularities indicates that patterns in the data have become evident. Finally, overextension has been reached when additional data appears to be very far removed from the emergent categories and does not create meaningful new categories. In this study, analysis of the data continued until clear patterns began to emerge and further analysis did not generate new themes that were sufficiently supported by the data.

Role of the Researcher

One of the important distinctions between qualitative research and quantitative research involves the role of the researcher. The ideal in quantitative research is an experimental design in which researcher biases and values have no impact on the outcome. Since the researcher in a qualitative study is the measurement instrument through which the data is gathered, qualitative research assumes that the researcher biases and values will impact the outcome of the study (LeCompte & Preissle, 1994; Merriam, 1988).

In order to allow the audience for the study to evaluate the validity of its conclusions, the researcher in a qualitative study should neutralize or bracket his or her biases by stating them explicitly to the extent possible as part of the study (Altheide & Johnson, 1994). This procedure helps the reader to make a critical evaluation of the researcher's conclusions. While it is probably not possible (or even desirable) to give a full accounting of one's own biases, in the following paragraphs, I will attempt to outline the experiences which would clearly influence my interpretation of presidential leadership.

The most important dimension of my background that affects my view of this study is my work experience. I have grown accustomed to strong presidential leadership both in my current position working under Dr. Lyle Hellyer, President of Indian Hills Community College, and in my previous position at Truman State University under the leadership of President Charles McClain. In my view, Dr. Hellyer's dynamic leadership is in large measure responsible for creating a strong college in an economically and socially disadvantaged region. I worked under Dr. McClain at Truman State University during the transition years when his visionary leadership transformed the school from a regional institution into a liberal arts institution with a statewide charter and mission.

Each of these leaders set the direction for their institution. In the case of Truman State University, President Charles McClain believed that the region's declining population base would shrink the institution's enrollment to unacceptable levels. In addition, he acknowledged that enrollment driven funding had corrupted the institution's academic integrity and threatened to relegate it to the status of an inferior school. These ideas were communicated to the entire staff and faculty through meetings and publications, and all were encouraged to work on developing solutions to both the problem of enrollment and the equally important problem of quality. The outcome of this process was that the university underwent a metamorphosis, replacing its regional charter with a statewide mission as a liberal arts institution and raising its admission standards to increase academic quality. Even the name of the institution was changed from Northeast Missouri State University to Truman State University (TSU) to reflect its new identity.

As a part of the change, all two-year programs were eliminated, having been deemed unsuitable for a liberal arts institution. In addition, the higher admissions

standards excluded many students who would have been admitted in previous years. While aware of the need to make these changes, this process also left me acutely sensitive to the needs of those who are not stellar students and for whom a liberal arts education is not the best fit. It also caused me to reflect on the connection between admissions standards and academic quality. Clearly, TSU will produce better graduates by raising admissions standards, but it is equally clear that the increase in graduate quality does not necessarily result from improvements in the educational processes of the institution itself.

My experiences at Indian Hills, an "open-door" institution, has helped me to understand higher education's responsibility for helping students from a wide range of abilities achieve their potential. Throughout my years of work experience at Indian Hills, there have been repeated challenges to the open-door admissions policy. Many faculty members would prefer that we did not have to cope with the problems of students who are not in the top half of their high school class. But President Lyle Hellyer is adamant on this point and insists that we provide the remedial help and support that students need to succeed. As a result, many people have had access to the social and economic benefits of higher education that would have been excluded had it not been for his leadership. I have also learned that students can achieve high levels of academic performance if they are provided with a ramp rather than a brick wall. As Koltai (1993) points out, "More than any other segments of higher education, community colleges, with their open-admissions policies and their programs of remediation and English as a second language, have confronted this responsibility of creating winners rather than merely selecting them" (p. 112).

These experiences have lead to believe that leaders can make a difference by setting and maintaining a course for their institution. It is also clear to me that selecting the appropriate direction is critical to the institution's future and to its constituencies. I have enormous admiration and respect for the leadership of Dr. Charles McClain, but I am sensitive to the fact that the vision he created for TSU is inappropriate for a community college. Community college presidents must advance a different purpose for their institutions, and as discussed earlier, the mission of the community college is in tension.

In addition to professional experiences my personal background may influence my approach to this study. My personal background is somewhat parochial. I have spent my entire life in the Midwest within a few hundred miles of where I was born. My family's blue-collar background has helped me empathize with students who are bewildered and intimidated by the college experience. My father spent most of his life working in the local meat processing plant, and I am anxious to help the new generation of people working in that plant (most of whom are immigrants) move up the economic and social ladder. In my view, education is the only means they have to do this.

I believe that people can help themselves, but only incrementally. Education must deal with people on the level that we find them. I think the community college president's job is to help design an institution that will be effective in helping people succeed. In order to do this, she or he must be able to help shape a vision of the community college that is inclusive and reaches out to all members of its community

Trustworthiness

Lincoln and Guba (1985) use the concept of "trustworthiness" as the analog to the idea of rigor in the positivist paradigm. They describe four criteria for establishing trustworthiness within the naturalistic paradigm: credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. These four criteria are analogous to the four criteria of internal validity, external validity, reliability, and dependability used to establish rigor within the positivist paradigm. For each of these criteria, Lincoln and Guba (1985) have developed techniques and activities that increase the probability that these criteria will be met. In the paragraphs that follow, I will explain how each of the criteria and the associated techniques and activities set forth by Lincoln and Guba (1985) have been addressed by this study in order to strengthen its trustworthiness claims.

Credibility

Lincoln and Guba (1985) suggest six activities for making it more likely that a study will produce credible results: prolonged engagement, persistent observation, triangulation, peer debriefing, negative case analysis, and member checks. Each of these activities and its relation to the proposed study will be considered in turn.

Prolonged engagement and persistent observation are related, yet distinctly different activities. Prolonged engagement is the practice of spending sufficient time in the field to be able to detect distortions that might creep into the data collected and to build trust with the participants. Persistent observation refers to spending sufficient time observing important themes or dimension of the research in order to fully understand or account for them. The researcher visited each of the colleges in the study for approximately one week to observe, conduct interviews, and obtain and review

documents. The goal of the study was to identify the leadership theories articulated by the president and the perceptions of the president held by strategic constituencies. Given the goals of the study, the visits at each of the community colleges provided adequate time for both prolonged engagement and persistent observation. Prior experience in the community college system aided me in acquiring an understanding of the leadership context more quickly and made it easier to establish rapport and trust.

Triangulation enhances credibility through the use of multiple methods and sources. Data for this study was collected through interviews with presidents, board members, faculty, administrators, students, and community leaders. Additional data was gathered through several days of on-site observations and through analysis of relevant documents. Additional sources for information included telephone conversations with the presidents and their curriculum vita.

Peer debriefing is a technique for increasing credibility that uses a disinterested colleague who poses as a devil's advocate. Peer debriefing provides an opportunity for a researcher to test initial hypotheses and interpretations for their soundness and sustainability. Lincoln and Guba (1985) recommend that the person selected to serve as a peer debriefer is a colleague who is familiar with "both the substantive area of the inquiry and the methodological issues" (p. 309). For this study, Dr. David Kirchner acted in this capacity. Dr. Kirchner is my colleague at Indian Hills Community College. He has over 20 years experience as a teacher and administrator in the community college system and currently serves as the Dean of Regional Academic Services. Dr. Kirchner completed a qualitative research project on the role of heroes and myth in community college culture

(Kirchner, 1992). He is familiar with the naturalistic research paradigm and understands the culture of the community college.

Negative case analysis increases credibility by eliminating all exceptions and outliers. This is done by continually revising a given hypothesis until it subsumes all data to which it refers. Lincoln and Guba (1985) point out that a perfect fit of hypothesis and data that requires no exceptions may be too rigid a criterion to obtain in practice. In this study, hypotheses were refined through repeated iterations in order to eliminate as many exceptions as possible while acknowledging that reducing anomalous data to zero is not always achievable. In these instances, negative evidence for assertions about the cases are also presented.

Lincoln and Guba (1985) believe that member checking is the "most crucial technique" for establishing credibility (p. 314). Member checks ensure that the conclusion and interpretations made by the researcher are tested with the participants. Informal member checking consists of reflecting back to the participants the interpretation and understanding that the researcher has obtained from interviews and observations. Informal member checking was used in this study to provide an immediate opportunity to confirm or correct the data collected in the course of interviews. In addition, a formal member check was conducted with written summaries provided to the interviewees for their emendation or approval (Appendix E).

Transferability

Lincoln and Guba (1985) compare transferability to external validity and point out that while they both relate to the question of a study's application beyond the context in which it is conducted, the two concepts are distinctly different. In the frame of the

experimental paradigm, external validity is possible because representative sampling implies that generalizations drawn from the sample will hold when applied to the larger population. Naturalistic inquiry does not embrace representative sampling since a foundational principle is that inquiry is context sensitive.

Naturalistic inquiry constructs working hypothesis within the confines of a given context. The hypothesis may or may not be transferred to a similar setting, but in order to reach this judgment, the researcher would need to know both the sending and the receiving contexts. Since the researcher is not in a position to know the receiving context, it is her or his obligation to provide as much detail as possible about the sending context. Known as "thick description" this detailed narrative about the setting, process, and data helps others assess whether transferring the resulting hypothesis to another context is appropriate. This study provides extensive description of all aspects of the research including both the setting within which the inquiry takes place and the processes and transactions observed in that setting. This should enable readers to assess whether or not they feel that the results of this study are transferable to other settings with similar contexts.

Dependability and confirmability

Lincoln and Guba (1985) compare dependability and confirmability in naturalistic studies to reliability and objectivity, respectively, in the experimental paradigm. They propose that the inquiry audit is a method that will help increase both dependability and confirmability. Like a financial audit, the inquiry audit looks at both process and product. An examination of the research process increases dependability while an examination of the research product increases confirmability.

An inquiry audit is not possible without an audit trail. The audit trail is a comprehensive record of the research conducted and should include: raw data; data reduction and analysis products; data reconstruction and synthesis products; process notes; personal materials related to predictions, expectations, and intentions; and schedules, observation formats, and surveys. A complete audit record for this research project was maintained, but no formal audit is planned. If such an audit were to be required, all the necessary materials are available. Developing the set of materials in a way that will withstand scrutiny should, in itself, enhance the dependability and confirmability claims of the research.

Chapter Summary

This chapter has established the conceptual framework for the study and explained the processes used for participant selection, data gathering, and data analysis. It has also described the role of the researcher in the research process and the techniques used to enhance trustworthiness. The following chapter will present the findings of the study including the descriptions of the context for the four case studies and the results of the interviews with participants.

CHAPTER FOUR: RESULTS

The results of each of the four cases are presented in this section. A description of the community and the college itself develops the context for each case. Results of the interview with the president are presented next, followed by an evaluation by her or his strategic constituencies--administration, faculty, and board. Then an analysis of themes that emerged from the participant interviews is presented. Each case concludes with a summary.

In order to maintain anonymity, the names of participants and colleges have been replaced with letter designations that reflect the order in which they were visited. For example, College A is the first college visited, and the president is referred to as President A. Likewise, the chief academic officer is known as CAO A. Other naming conventions were considered, but each carried connotations that were unacceptable. For example, if the names were more descriptive, the first college visited, located in a major metropolitan area, could be called College Metro, but then the faculty member becomes Faculty Metro, a term that may or may not be descriptive of the faculty member. The letter designations, while less descriptive, remain essentially neutral.

Case A

Community A is a suburb of a large metropolitan area. The metropolitan area has a population of over 1,000,000 people. Strategically located, the greater metropolitan area is the transportation hub, not only of the state, but also of the entire region. The economy of the state is primarily agricultural and agricultural-related industries, but the metropolitan area has developed into a trade center and enjoys a highly diversified manufacturing base. It is also the region's cultural center.

Unemployment is low, and the area's primary economic challenge is locating a sufficient number of skilled workers. The median household income in 1998 was more than $41,000. The population is 95% Caucasian, and the largest minority group, African-Americans, comprise less than 2% of the population. The largest employers in the area are retail sales and high technology industries.

There are five community and technical colleges and a major research university in the metropolitan area. The population base for recruiting students is large, but any institution of higher education faces strong competition.

College A

College A is a public community college and the largest two-year institution in the state. Enrollment is just over 6500 students. Despite its urban location, the student body of College A is 90% Caucasian. African American students comprise only 5% of the enrollments and Asian American students an additional 5%. The student body is 61% female, and the average age is 25.

Like the student body, the ethnicity of the faculty and administration is primarily white. Minorities are represented in only 9% of the faculty positions. Of the 221 faculty members, 158 are full-time. Seventeen percent of full-time faculty members have achieved the doctorate degree, and 76% hold the master's degree.

Since its inception in 1965, and throughout its years of existence, College A has been known primarily as a junior college. Faculty A believes that preparing students to transfer to four-year institutions remains its primary focus, "We primarily provide. . . undergraduate education for students who aspire to go on to baccalaureate or advanced degrees elsewhere" (Faculty A, p. 2). Vocational offerings include nursing, dental

hygiene, criminal justice, business, and one advanced technology program. About one-third of the students are enrolled in vocational programs; the remaining two-thirds are enrolled in classes leading to an associate of arts degree. There are no residence halls at College A.

As you walk through the building, one of the most noticeable features is the Success Center. The Success Center is dedicated to tutoring and remedial coursework. The large complex of rooms is bustling with activity. Its walls are adorned with pictures of the math faculty. The faculty is committed to helping students succeed. The entire math faculty, regardless of credentials or tenure, spends time tutoring in the Success Center, "I've got Ph.D.s that will sit down and teach intermediate algebra, which is basically ninth grade algebra, with our students" (CAO A, p. 5).

A large trophy case adorns the wall outside the cafeteria, but there are no recent additions. Intercollegiate athletics were dropped eight years ago. President A explained that intercollegiate athletics only provided benefits for a small number of students, "We have all these wonderful stories, but I have to tell you that for the same number of dollars that we were serving maybe 150 athletes, we now have 1500 students participating in recreational sports" (President A, p. 16). During my visit to the campus, I observed that many students did indeed actively participate in intramural sports. Wheelchair athletics are included as part of the program. However, Student A commented wistfully, "It's real sad because when you look at all the pictures when there were a lot of athletics, you could see that there was a real sense of community on this campus. Now it's more of a transitional place. . . . I think it provided a sense of community and bonding" (Student A, p. 4).

President A

President A is a tall, pleasant man. He is soft-spoken, warm, and outgoing. His small unpretentious office is located in the middle of the college complex and has no outside windows. The furnishings are warm and inviting, and the desk is located against the wall so that visitors are not required to look at him across the desk. He is neatly dressed in a dark suit with a conservative tie. According to CAO A, unless he is on the golf course, the president always wears either a sport coat or a suit.

Career path

President A did not set out to be an educator. He wanted to be a physician even though friends and relatives told him that he should consider a career in teaching. As an undergraduate student, he changed his major to education after a summer teaching experience, "I just loved it. I got in the classroom, I started working with these kids, and it was fun" (President A, p. 4). After working as a high school English teacher, President A earned a master's degree in counseling and took a job as a counselor at College A. He then took a leave of absence and accepted an innovative position as the college's representative on a curriculum development project.

After completing the curriculum project, President A returned to the college in a different position, his first step into administration. This position involved a variety of duties including the supervision of adult and continuing education, grant writing, and supervising the library. He then became dean of students. After a change in presidents, he stood in as the dean of instruction. He next served as the executive dean. As the executive dean, he was in charge of the internal operation of the college. During this time, he was also finishing his doctorate. Just as he completed his doctorate, the presidency of College

A was opening up. He applied, not thinking that he would get the job, but to his surprise, he did, and he has been president of College A for nearly 10 years.

Leadership

President A believes that a leader in a community college setting must thoroughly understand the college's mission and the expectations of students, employers, and the state. It is the leader's responsibility to translate his or her understanding into an environment in which people can do their best in pursuit of the institutional mission. He illustrated his leadership philosophy with the help of a metaphor. In his view, a leader is like the conductor of an orchestra:

> My job as leader is to allow all of these wonderful musicians here--faculty, classified staff, student leaders, whatever--I have to provide them with the opportunity to perform, to be able to do their best work in a way that suits the mission of the institution. (President A, p. 5)

According to President A, the task of the leader varies according to individual needs, "Every situation is different" (President A, p. 12). The leader's behavior is contingent upon follower needs, "Sometimes it means providing resources, sometimes it means providing motivation. Sometimes it means providing recognition or providing the opportunity" (President A, p. 5).

Communicating expectations and coaching are strategies that President A uses to help people achieve their best in the pursuit of the institutional mission:

> You really need to be able to communicate to people what is expected of them so that they understand the context in which their behavior or whatever is going on

> fits. You need to be a coach in many cases. You're helping people to understand how they might do their jobs better. (President A, p. 9)

President A views himself as a "participatory manager" (President A, p. 9). He believes in delegating authority to both administrators and faculty because it is impossible for the president to oversee everything. He trusts them to make good decisions, but he insists on accountability. He stated that he is "much more of a delegator than I think some other presidents are, but then I expect people to do the job, and to successfully accomplish what their role is here at the institution" (President A, p. 9). At the same time, he wants to foster an environment where people feel free to experiment and innovate, "You'll never get criticized from me for making a mistake. Everybody makes mistakes. . . . I want people that are trying things and are experimenting and looking at different ways of doing things" (President A, p. 10).

President A stated that there are times when he observes someone at the college doing a job, and he thinks he knows how to do it better. This is especially true in student services where he spent many years as the dean, but he believes that it is important to approach these situations carefully, "There's a whole culture behind the way that certain procedures are followed. If you just go in and say, 'Why are you doing that? Stop that!' it can have a rippling effect all the way down through the organization" (President A, p. 11). President A believes that the president needs to find a gentle way to draw attention to a problem and then take care not to undermine the authority of other administrators.

Achieving consensus is important to President A, but in the end, not all decisions can be made after consensus is reached. In these situations it is important to make a decision with dispatch. If the resolution is not forthcoming quickly, resentment may

build, "At some point, you have to make a decision. You have to get off the dime, otherwise it just gets out of control. It kind of boils and simmers and gets out of control" (President A, p. 12).

President A believes that the community college president must have a thorough understanding of the budget. Financial pressures require community college presidents to spend more of their time in activities that are external to the college. The president is the college's chief advocate, but he believes that there is a funding disparity in his state that is unfair to community colleges, and he believes that this may be the result of some community college presidents failing to do their part "in telling the story" (President A, p. 8).

Fundraising and working with the state legislature require, on average, about 25% of his time. He would rather spend more time working within the institution where it is easier to see where your efforts have made a difference. His frustration with the job is essentially financial. The budget is so tight that there is no venture capital. Opportunities must be forgone because there is no money to support them, "We're really limited here. We have a very lean administrative staff. We have our faculty working full loads. And to expect someone to stop what they're doing to take on a new venture is just not realistic" (President A, p. 7).

President A recognizes that as president he has a symbolic function. His decision to make an appearance at a meeting or a college event makes a difference. The presence of the president sometimes creates a sense of community and belonging. The fact that the president recognizes a staff member and calls to them by name tells them that they are important to the college and that it matters that they are here, "I try to make sure that

everybody here gets appreciated for what they do" (President A, p. 10). President A tries to create a friendly and accepting environment. He stated that if the atmosphere were not pleasant, if people were rude and unfriendly, "I couldn't stand that" (President A, p. 11).

Constituent evaluation

It is difficult to understand the evaluation of President A without considering the perceptions people hold of the previous president. Nearly everyone interviewed saw President A in contrast with the previous president. In comparison with the previous president, President A is viewed very positively, and the consensus is that he is a very good fit for College A.

The institution's former president was the founding president, and he served for 25 years. He was described by participants as a workaholic, and is credited with numerous positive achievements including the construction of virtually all of the present campus and the phenomenal growth in student numbers. According to Staff A, who worked as his administrative assistant, he was completely dedicated to seeing College A become a first class institution, but his leadership style was perceived as dictatorial and autocratic, and he left behind a culture that was significantly imbued with mistrust.

The former president did not enjoy the support of the faculty. Near the end of his tenure, the faculty gave him a vote of "no confidence," and he was removed as president, spending his final years before retirement in a staff position in the state system office. Staff A acknowledges that he was not a strong believer in shared governance, and that once he had set a course, he could not be dissuaded, "He tried to get people on board and to make this a team effort. He gave them every opportunity, but if they didn't take it, you

know that train was moving" (Staff A, p. 1). However, Staff A actually preferred his decisive style to that of her current boss, President A.

Staff A has a more positive perception of the previous president than most of the other interviewees. She believes that a vocal, negative minority of faculty gained control of committees and were not productive, just critical. She stated that many of the best faculty members would not participate because they did not want to be part of the negative thinking. She believes that there is still a core of negative faculty members.

Administration

CAO A described the previous president as a micro-manager who was unwilling to delegate. As the institution grew beyond his ability to control, he simply delegated his directives. CAO A described how issues of mistrust from the previous president's tenure surface frequently. Recently, there was a meeting about the academic calendar, and a faculty member complained about having been required to work on Saturday. CAO A was astonished since no one in the current administration had ever required a faculty member to work on the weekend. It had actually occurred under the previous president 10 years prior, and the faculty member still resented it.

In another instance, he held a spring faculty conference that somehow turned into a strike reconciliation meeting:

> People brought all their old stories and placards and stuff on the strike. It was twenty years ago! I thought it was going to be kind of nostalgia about the good old days . . . They were still healing. They were still healing from it. I couldn't believe it. (CAO A, p. 5)

He would like to change the existing administrative structure because he believes that a different structure would allow more decision-making to reside with the faculty, but the lingering mistrust makes it a challenge. Faculty members interpret changes he attempts to make as indirect ways to increase their workload.

CAO A believes that President A has demonstrated patience and persistence. The president's style is to keep pushing forward, but in a gentle manner. From the president, CAO A has learned how to continue to move forward when other presidents might have become frustrated. CAO A stated that the way that President A remains effective in the environment of mistrust is to simply keep reminding faculty that there is "a new sheriff in town" (CAO A, p. 6).

Faculty

According to Faculty A, the administration at College A has no hidden agendas. President A is viewed as something of a champion by the faculty, not only in his own institution, but also throughout the system for his efforts on behalf of part-time faculty. Faculty A is not in total agreement with the president on the subject of part-time faculty, and believes that the issue will be revisited for refinement, but he is grateful not only for the substance of what the president was able to accomplish, but also for the way in which it was done. Faculty A stated that President A has "been listening to the faculty and responding to their--not just their institutional needs--but almost to their psychological needs" (Faculty A, p. 5).

In the opinion of Faculty A, the president delegates effectively. He has restructured and created an additional layer of administration between his office and the faculty, but the move is perceived as having relinquished authority to the deans who are

in turn sharing that authority with the faculty. Faculty A points out that everyone knows who ultimately is going to make the decision, but they believe that President A listens, values their opinions, and lets them know that they are important. Sometimes they feel better about the decisions than others.

Faculty A's description of the president's role is strikingly similar to President A's own explanation of his duties. According to Faculty A, the president's job is to direct the internal affairs of the college so that they are in harmony with the political and legislative environment and to insure the financial health and the integrity of the institution. Faculty A believes that the climate is positive from the faculty perspective, that things are going right, and that it has a lot to do with the administration.

Board and community

According to Board Member A, the president is an effective leader. When you talk to President A, you know that he has heard what you have said. He is always well prepared, and he is not afraid of discussing controversial issues or addressing criticism. He is fiscally responsible. President A is affable and approachable, but not boisterous. He never loses his cool. He tolerates a high level of frustration and calmly and patiently moves forward.

Community Leader A believes that President A has a gift for partnering. He knows how to be a leader, but he also knows how to serve as a team member. He is accomplished at the public relations aspect of his job. For example, after the funding campaign for the new science center was successfully completed, he held a celebration in which the artist's rendition of the new facility was on display. It helped to provide a sense

of closure and a feeling of accomplishment for those in the community who worked on the fund drive.

Emergent themes

Three themes emerged from participant interviews at College A. First, listening was identified as one of the president's most positive attributes, and the way that listening skills play a part in President A's leadership is crucial to understanding his leadership strategies. Second, President A has a played a role as a healer of old wounds left by the previous president. This residual of hurt and mistrust affects his leadership style and affects his ability to implement change. Third, it is noteworthy that while there is general agreement on the mission and values of the institution, there is a general lack of congruence with regard to the institution's significant accomplishments and the vision of the institution's future.

Listening

Many of those interviewed commented on the strength of President A's listening skills. Most remarkable was Faculty A's comment that the president seemed to respond "almost to their psychological needs" (Faculty A, p. 5). In the context of College A, given the legacy of hurt and mistrust from the previous president, the ability to listen is critical. Listening in this instance implies more than merely hearing the words that people say. It seems to convey the feeling that they are respected, that their opinion is valued, and that their needs matter.

Listening is an important dimension of President A's leadership strategy and contributes significantly to his effectiveness. In his relations with the faculty, it is the means through which faculty members believe that their views on governance are

included in the decision-making process. President A stated that listening is his strategy for testing the institutional climate, to find out "what's going on" (President A, p. 2). He stated that listening to both sides of a story helps him resolve conflicts, and listening carefully and thoroughly helps him avoid precipitous decisions.

Healing

Staff A describes one of the problems faced by an incoming president. Ideally, he or she would clean house and start with a new staff, but you have to work with those you inherit from the previous president. You can make replacements, but "it's like redecorating a piece at a time" (Staff A, p. 11). President A made reference to this phenomenon when he spoke of the ability to change the institution when replacing retiring faculty members. Presidents must work with the existing situation in an institution, and in the case of College A, the president was faced with an institution that had rejected a president that they believed was too harsh and autocratic.

The hurt and mistrust felt by the faculty required a president with the appropriate qualities and a president who could develop strategies for working in this environment. President A's ability to listen is clearly effective here. In addition, his willingness to be patient is important. The faculty is likely to react strongly to dramatic changes when there is no reserve of trust to draw upon. Faculty A mentioned that early in his tenure, President A had made some decisions that the faculty thought were offensive without consulting them. Because of the faculty reaction, President A changed his style and included the faculty in subsequent decisions likely to affect them.

The faculty mistrust that he inherited from the previous president has limited President A's ability to make changes, but he recognizes the need for faculty support and

moves forward with patience and calm. A president who felt the need for more rapid change would probably encounter serious difficulties with the faculty at College A. President A has the requisite personal qualities--patience, persistence, and equanimity--to be a successful leader at this institution.

Divergence of vision

While there was general agreement about the fact that the institution is on a positive course, there is no widespread agreement as to what that course might be. Among those interviewed there was consensus about the important aspects of the college mission, but there was little agreement regarding the institution's accomplishments and disappointments or the vision for the future.

CAO A stated that a high regard for teaching was a strongly held value at College A, and he noted that there are people in the math department with doctorates who teach the introductory algebra course. They also teach remedial classes and dedicate a part of each day to tutoring. CAO A has extensive experience in higher education having taught at a variety of two- and four-year institutions both in the U.S. and abroad. Compared with other institutions, he does not hear the sniping about student quality at College A, even though most students come in with some academic deficiencies.

Faculty A also stated that there was a "commitment to providing quality liberal arts education to more or less traditional students" (Faculty A, p. 2). According to Faculty A, there is also recognition among the faculty of their responsibility to serve the needs of students who begin college without adequate academic preparation. Student A also identified the commitment to support for students as a common value among faculty, "They help you find the help you need so that you can be successful" (Student A, p. 2). In

hiring faculty, President A seeks people who are student centered, not merely a scholar, "What that really means is that they are adept at knowing who their students are and creating a course that's going to be challenging yet attainable by the students that they're working with . . . Our responsibility is to be a gateway, not a gate" (President A, p. 7).

When asked to identify what accomplishment at the institution he was most proud of, President A referred to the institutional climate. He believes that there is a warm, friendly, welcoming atmosphere at College A, and that if the place were unattractive, and the people were rude and unfriendly, "I couldn't stand that" (President A, p. 11). Remarkably, President A could have cited some of the unique programs, the enrollment increases, the partnerships, or the new building that is forthcoming, but chose not to.

By contrast, CAO A identified the years of enrollment increase as the institution's most significant accomplishment. CAO A stated that he had faced a struggle to make people aware that the college needs to compete for enrollment, and even updating brochures and other recruiting materials met with substantial resistance at first. Both Board Member A and Community Leader A believe that the college's most significant accomplishments are its achievements in the area of workforce development.

The disappointments in the institution are few. President A is disappointed that he is unable to have the resources to undertake the many initiatives that are possible. Community Leader A does not feel that the institution has failed in regard to workforce development, but wishes the institution could do more. CAO A is disappointed in the difficulty in making changes and attributes it to the significant distrust with which administration is viewed as a result of the last president. Faculty A finds some disappointment in the rate of change also. He is interested in seeing the expansion of

shared governance, which is supported by President A, take place more rapidly. Student A merely joked that her only disappointment was that the teachers wouldn't do your homework for you.

Among those interviewed, there was little agreement about the future direction for the institution. President A wants to throw open the doors of the institution. He believes that the early days of the community college were days of building and internal focus, but the time has arrived to begin looking for partners among the community. His vision for the future is that the institution will become more involved with the community.

By contrast, both CAO A and Faculty A state their vision of the future in terms of governance issues. CAO A wants to see increased faculty governance and an expanded system of department chairs. Likewise, Faculty A is concerned with expanding shared governance, but also mentions that he sees an increase in the number of technical programs, especially "professional types of technical education" (Faculty A. p. 3).

Student A sees the future in terms of offering different types of education including on-line classes, and flexible scheduling. Staff A sees the future of College A in terms of increased growth both in student numbers and in facilities. Board Member A believes that the college is where it needs to be and only questions if the college will be able to support the number of students that will want higher education. Community Leader A wants to see more workforce development.

Summary

President A holds relatively complex views about leadership. He recognizes the importance of relationships and is also cognizant of the importance of the symbolic role he plays. He is aware that he plays a variety of roles and must adjust his behavior to fit

circumstances. He does not appear to fit the definition of Burns' (1978) transformational leader--people do not appear to hold a shared vision of the future.

President A is very concerned with the general feeling of the institution. This is the achievement he is most proud of, and creating this climate is his idea of what a leader does. He is people rather than task oriented; he would rather move more slowly and achieve consensus than get ahead of the people he is leading. His relationship focus is reflected in his vision for the institution. He wants to see the college develop relationships--partnerships---with other organizations.

President A is very well liked within his institution. He is perceived to be facilitating a healing process that was made necessary by the actions of the previous president. Nearly a decade after his predecessor left, President A faces substantial challenges in dealing with mistrust of administration from the faculty, but the faculty evaluation of President A is positive, and the faculty credits him with helping to create a positive climate within the institution. The CAO believes that President A is the person that he would emulate if he ever became a president.

It is clear that President A has an idealistic view of people, but he is at the same time a realist. His interview reflects a balance between these two values. He stated that the integrity of the institution must be balanced against the needs of individuals. He believes that people are well intentioned, until they prove otherwise. The goal is to achieve consensus, but the president must make a decision if consensus cannot be reached. He states that the institutional mission is to help individual students achieve their goals, but he adds the qualification that "we can't do everything for everybody" (P-A, p. 5).

President A understands the influence of culture. He sees the opportunity to replace faculty as a means to effect change. He understands the chilling effect that intervening in the decision-making process can have. He understands the symbolic role that he plays, and he acknowledges that the president's most important role is translating the mission into an environment where people can do their best.

President A described an approach to leadership that emphasizes relationships and concern for the needs of followers:

> My philosophy of leadership is that in my job as a leader, I always use the metaphor of the leader of an orchestra. My job as the leader is to allow all of these wonderful musicians here—faculty, classified staff, student leaders, whatever—I have to provide them with the opportunity to perform. To be able to do their best work in a way that suits the mission of the institution. So whatever that means, sometimes it means providing resources. Sometimes it means providing motivation. Sometimes it means providing them recognition or providing them the opportunity. (President A, p. 5)

From the standpoint of formal leadership theory, President A articulates a model that closely resembles path-goal theory (House, 1996). House's (1996) path-goal theory is a contingency theory. It asserts that the effectiveness of leadership behaviors depend on circumstances. The essence of path-goal theory is that effective leaders "engage in behaviors that compliment subordinates' environments and abilities in a manner that compensates for deficiencies and is instrumental to subordinate satisfaction" (House, 1996, p. 324). In path-goal theory, leaders help followers define their goals and help clear the paths toward those goals. The metaphor of the orchestra leader that President A uses

to describe his leadership philosophy contains the essential principle of path-goal theory--that leaders must clear the path so that followers can achieve their goals.

House (1996) also describes four kinds of behavior that leaders use to clarify the path toward goals and to support subordinate needs. President A clearly describes each of these four behaviors when he explains his leadership strategies. The first of these behaviors is path-goal clarifying behavior and involves "providing psychological structure: letting subordinates know what they are expected to do" (House, 1996, p. 326). President A demonstrates his understanding of this leader behavior when he states that, "You really need to be able to communicate to people what is expected of them. . . .You're helping people to understand how they might do their jobs better" (President A, p. 9). The second leader behavior described by House (1996) is behavior designed to satisfy the subordinates' needs "such as displaying concern for subordinates' welfare and creating a friendly and psychologically supportive work environment" (House, 1996, p. 327). President A's comments about the importance of creating a friendly and pleasant work environment and his tolerance for mistakes illustrate his concern for the well being of subordinates and creating a supportive environment. The most striking example, however, is Faculty A's comment that the president has "been listening to the faculty and responding to their--not just their institutional needs--but almost to their psychological needs" (Faculty A, p. 5).

The third leadership behavior is behavior that encourages "subordinate influence on decision-making" (House, 1996, p. 327). President A's statement regarding the delegation of authority to "all of my administrators and to faculty" demonstrates his desire to encourage subordinate participation in decision-making (President A, p. 9). The

last of the four leadership behaviors defined by House (1996) is achievement-oriented behavior. Achievement oriented behavior is directed towards achieving performance excellence and includes "showing confidence that subordinates will achieve high standards of performance" (House, 1996, p. 327). President A describes this leader behavior when he states that "I trust that they'll make good decisions. . . . but then I expect people to do the job" (President A, 1996, p. 9).

Because of President A's comments about the need to adjust his behavior to accommodate subordinate needs, and the fact that he makes statements that parallel the four leader behaviors of House (1996), path-goal theory is the best description of his implicit leadership theory. Within the context of College A, such an approach is highly appropriate. President A places a higher priority on relationships than tasks. The mistrust and hurt that lingers among the faculty requires healing. President A's patience and willingness to endure frustration in order to achieve consensus before moving forward was identified by other participants as a factor that will enhance the healing process, "He's more willing to take more time to accomplish it and to bring more people on board and work through it" (Staff A, p. 1). The previous president was a founder and responsible for building the college. He was a task-oriented leader who was determined to move ahead without regard to consensus, "He made his plan and then just moved ahead not to be deterred by anything or anybody" (Staff A, p. 1). While the founding president's leadership style may have been appropriate when the college was in its initial building and growth phase, President A's leadership model is more appropriate for the college at this time. His patience, his efforts at achieving consensus, and his efforts to

create a climate that supports people's needs while clarifying goals are viewed positively by his critical constituencies—administrators, faculty, and the board.

Case B

Community B is a prosperous community. Both the cost of living and the median household income are within 2% of the national average; unemployment is below the national average. Its diverse economy is based on agriculture, agricultural manufacturing, and food processing. In addition, the economy has been supported for many years by a large manufacturer of high technology electronics equipment with both government and commercial operations, and recently from the growth of a major telecommunications company. The population of Community B is predominantly white and totals just over 100,000 people.

There are three private four-year colleges and one private two-year college in Community B. In addition, a major public research university is located within 20 miles of Community B. College B has a significant presence near the campus of the research university.

The college enjoys extensive positive coverage in the local media. Sports are covered regularly, but there is also frequent coverage of the college's involvement in workforce development activities and cultural events. Significantly, one of the most ubiquitous publications one encounters at the college is a summary of the extensive partnerships that have been developed by the institution. It seemed that everyone I met at the college was anxious for me to have a copy.

College B

College B is a large, comprehensive community college enrolling more than 11,000 students. Fifty-five percent of the student body is female, but only 4% of the student body is African American. Sixty percent of the students receive financial aid.

The college maintains a high profile among community colleges across the nation. Faculty and administrators are frequent contributors to national conferences. It is a member of the League for Innovation, and boasts a number of nationally recognized programs. It has been the recipient of several National Science Foundation grants and has been a national leader in distance education. The college has nationally competitive athletic teams.

Historically, the college has shaped state legislation affecting community colleges. The college has an outstanding reputation for creating business and industry partnerships, and other states have adopted the college's economic development model.

The college's board of trustees is remarkable. In the history of the college there have been only two board presidents. The board members are active in national trustee development conferences, and several have received national awards. One member of the board of trustees has served continuously since the college was founded in 1965.

College B has an impressive complex of modern, functional buildings located on a campus of more than 100 acres. Student housing is located off campus in apartments jointly operated by the college and the development corporation. Construction of a major addition to the campus administration building was in progress during the campus visit. In addition to its main campus, College B maintains a presence in other parts of its region

though distance education delivered via fiber optic cable and microwave and through the operation of satellite centers.

President B

President B is a robust and energetic man who is the center of attention when he arrives in the room. In contrast to President A, he is casually dressed and is not given to wearing suits on a regular basis. Warm, friendly, gregarious, outgoing, he immediately puts you at your ease, but he also dominates the conversation with his loud raspy voice. According to Staff B, "[President B] likes to get out and be involved in a lot of things. I think that makes him more comfortable around or makes people more comfortable around him. I think that's the biggest thing about [President B]. People really like him and feel comfortable coming to him" (Staff B, p. 1).

At the moment I meet him, his staff is attempting to explain the necessary connections that must be made to a sleek new laptop computer that he is about to take to a presentation he is making. According to CAO B, the president does not prepare much for presentations, and the special assistant to the president describes him as a "ready, fire, aim guy."

Apparently a person who likes his desk free of clutter, his large office includes an impressive overlook of the campus. He often takes his lunch here with community leaders and potential donors. Fundraising and the external part of his job are what he loves. He enjoys the fact that the working days are never the same, "that's what so much fun" (President B, p. 2).

Career path

President B began his career in education as a high school coach. He maintains that without his interest in sports, he probably would not have gone to college. He did not have a desire to be an administrator much less a college president. The first superintendent that he worked with encouraged him to go back to school for his master's degree and become a high school principal. After two years as a high school principal, he decided that the superintendent "had a much better job than I did" (President B, p. 1).

President B served seven years in his first job as a superintendent of schools, and he loved it, especially the public relations part of the job. He then had an opportunity to come to College B as assistant to the president, a job he held for one year. Following that he served as vice president of administration for three years and as vice president of academic affairs for two years before becoming president. He has served as president for almost 16 years.

Leadership

Leadership is very different than management in President B's opinion: "I really believe that's what we're lacking. I think we get a lot of people in presidential roles that focus far too much on management and not enough on leadership" (President B, p. 6). The president ought to delegate management. In President B's view people are motivated by the level of responsibility and authority that has been given to them. The organizational structure of College A is streamlined. No employee is more than four reporting levels from the president. The budget is set at the beginning of the year, but after that the deans have complete responsibility for their operations:

> If you're the dean of industrial tech, and your budget is $1.7 million, it becomes your responsibility. [CAO B] doesn't sign off on it. I don't sign off on it. . . . If he's got the money to send five instructors someplace, then send them. That is his problem. Those are going to come out of his budget. If he wants to spend $30,000 on materials and supplies for communications electronics, then it's his problem. He's just got to figure out how to keep from failing. . . . To me, Stan, that's why our people get a lot done. That's what keeps their motivational level high because they are given a lot of responsibility. (President B, p. 3)

President B does not want to get involved in the day-to-day decisions of the operation. He believes his job is to ensure that the institution is "going in the right direction, not the detail as to how we're going to get there" (President B, p. 5). He believes that he is a "catalyst" and that his job as leader is "cultivation, opening doors, helping direct the institution more than trying to direct people" (President B, p. 5).

Yet President B does make certain that he knows what is going on within the college. For example, at the board meeting I attended, two new technical programs were presented for approval, "I have been very much in tune with all of those, but I didn't do any of the work" (President B, p. 2). He meets regularly with the vice president of instruction, and although he does not try to run the instructional programs, he is involved in all decisions regarding staffing. He also personally answers all of the 30 to 40 E-mails that he receives each day, and administrators remark on the fact that it is not uncommon to arrive at work in the morning and find E-mail from the president that was written in the middle of the night.

While President B does not get involved in the day-to-day operation of the college, he is not reticent about directly confronting problems, "I can't say that I don't have management traits because I'm particular as people will tell you" (President B, p. 7). For example, at a basketball game earlier that week, President B noticed that there was a light out above the opposing team's basket "so I went to [the physical plant director] and asked why we would have a basketball game with a light burned out over the basket" (President B, p. 7). The director explained that the work order was sent in, but there had been no action taken yet. President B was upset. He went directly to the supervisor and told him that it was not to happen again, "If a president is willing to ignore that kind of sloppy thing, it will go on forever . . . You've got to be willing to confront the issues no matter how small they are" (President B, p. 7).

President B also cuts across organizational lines when necessary, although he tries to avoid it, "My management style, Stan, is very, very different, and they have to understand me and tolerate me because if our people were hung up on turf or organizational structure, they'd have a difficult time" (President B, p. 2). If he has a question about something, he goes directly to the person involved rather than asking their supervisor. Likewise, if someone goes directly to him with a question, he is likely to answer without checking to see if the person has visited with their supervisor first, "but I'm getting better about asking" (President B, p. 2).

President B learned to manage from his predecessor. The former president "was a risk taker. He was a visionary. His whole interest was building . . . [He] didn't take no for an answer . . . it was very much from the top down" (President B, p. 1). President B tried to "blend that can-do attitude and constantly pushing people but probably more

diplomatic and with more input in giving them more voice and direction and decision than what I probably saw [him] doing" (President B, p. 1). President B's leadership philosophy is very simple: "I don't care how many awards we win. I don't care how many new programs we start. I want it better. I want it bigger. I want it more aggressive. Typically, I want it tomorrow. I think everybody around her knows that" (President B, p. 1).

About 50% of President B's time is spent externally. He believes that the CEO needs to be directly involved in partnerships "CEO to CEO" (President B, p. 5). Contacts with major donors are part of his responsibility, and he is directly involved with major grants such as National Science Foundation proposals. In these cases, the flow of information is reversed, and it is his job to keep the rest of the college informed about what is taking place.

President B believes that leaders needed to have "fire" and to be motivated (President B, p. 6). Leaders need to be prepared for hard work, they need to be good public speakers and writers, and they need to be able to interact with people in public. He also emphasized the importance of having a supportive board.

Constituent evaluation

Before President B, the college had only two presidents. Both were described as aggressive builders. The first president was involved in building the college from its inception and did not become involved in external affairs to any significant degree. He did not travel away from the college much, and had little interest in community relations.

The second president was also a builder. According to the people I interviewed, he set the stage for the college to attain national stature, but had poor people skills. He

was "was very dictatorial . . . everybody was afraid of him . . . I don't think he wanted to be anybody's friend. I think he wanted to be on that higher level" (Staff B, p. 3). His conflict with faculty culminated in media coverage of their complaints. At that point, many faculty members rallied to support the college, not because they approved of the president, but because they were concerned that the negative press would do permanent damage to the institution.

It is noteworthy that CAO B, who worked closely with both the previous presidents and works closely with the current president, remarked that among the three, "there are more similarities than differences" (CAO B, p. 1). The similarity that runs through all of them, he explained, "is that they are all very aggressive builders and pushers" (CAO B, p. 1).

All those interviewed at College B were supportive of President B, and their descriptions of him and his leadership were remarkably similar. Each seemed to genuinely like the president even while acknowledging that he had his faults.

Administration

CAO B is in a unique position in that he has known all three of the presidents at College B. He describes the first two as aggressive builders, and sees President B as a continuation of that tradition. The first president concentrated on building the campus, while the second president set the stage for the college to achieve national stature. President B was able to actually push the college to the national level.

According to CAO B, the president's strength is his "enthusiasm coupled with unimaginable aggressiveness in building a college. He believes in what the college is doing. He almost blindly charges to move the college into new directions and new

opportunities and keep it on the cutting edge. He would not be tolerant at all with standing still" (CAO B, p. 4). By contrast, CAO B says that his own penchant is for insuring that things within the college run smoothly, and that the president's involvement in internal operations is sometimes counterproductive because he lacks the necessary focus. While he and the president "probably don't overlap by five percent" in personality, CAO B believes that the president epitomizes the successful community college president (CAO B, p. 4).

In his opinion, successful community college presidents "set high standards and won't tolerate mediocre [sic]. They really push and drive us to improve," but some presidents are comfortable running the internal operations of the college when they should be more like presidents of private colleges "building all those external relations and fundraising" (CAO B, p. 5). Fifteen years ago, presidents could have been successful concentrating on the day-to-day management of the institution, but contemporary presidents need to bring in new resources, and President B excels at that, "He's fundraising all the time" (CAO B, p. 5).

CAO B also confirmed the president's own assertion that he was particular about the condition of the campus. President B walks the campus, and lets people know if he finds things that he believes detract from the image he wants the college to portray. He also takes a special interest in building projects, "Building and remodeling are the things he likes to do best" (CAO B, p. 6). Building projects involve a wide constituency including the advancement team made up of the people in plant operations, ten to twelve faculty, and some other administrators. The advancement team is one of the mechanisms that the president uses to encourage participation and strengthen communication. The

team looks at the long term needs for the college and seeks ways to integrate fundraising and grants into the vision for the college's future.

According to CAO B, the thing that drives the institution is "meeting as many community needs as possible. We very rarely say no . . . We've had a board of directors that has seen to it that we operate that way" (CAO B, p. 2). The board has always wanted the college to be innovative. They have encouraged risk taking, although not all ventures are successful. As an example, CAO B points to an initiative to develop a management information system for a consortium of colleges in the 1980s that failed, costing the college hundreds of thousands of dollars. On the other hand, the college's early foray into distance education has been enormously successful.

Faculty

Faculty B was enthusiastic in her support of the president. She stated that the president's most important achievement was the creation of a climate in which people felt they were able to communicate openly and honestly. She was pleased by the fact that President B placed a high value on achieving consensus. She was also impressed by the fact that President B recognized that he was also a member of the group that he sought to lead.

She was employed at a large Research I institution prior to coming to College B, but stated that she liked working at the community college better. She believes that there is more emphasis on student success at College B, and the administration is more approachable. For example, she feels comfortable calling the vice president to discuss problems, something unimaginable in her former position. Faculty B also praised the

college's efforts to reach out to the community. Finally, Faculty B emphasized the role that the board has played in the college's success.

Board and community

Board Member B stated that President B was a very good fit for the college. The president came to the college with a wide range of contacts in the area, and the fact that President B was a native of the state has helped him relate better to the region because he can "speak the language" (Board B, p. 3). Board Member B stated that the president's most important accomplishment was the creation of a positive climate at the college. It is a teamwork attitude in which all employees feel that they are an important part of the college, and that the president is one of them.

Another achievement Board Member B credited to the president was building strong community relations. Serving the community is the most important part of the college's mission in his opinion. Finally, he praised the president for substantially increasing the size of the foundation.

Community Leader B works for the Chamber of Commerce and has been involved with the college in economic development including industrial new jobs training and retraining projects as well as workforce recruitment. He stated that College B has been very responsive to community needs. If a need arises, the college will evaluate it, and if it fits in the mission of the college, they will respond with a program. Community Leader B gave two examples of the kinds of partnerships that the college has formed. In one instance, an insurance company built a data processing facility on the college's campus. The college has the use of a portion of the facility for computer training. In the

other partnership, a company built its research facility on the campus and in exchange, the college has access to classrooms and lab facilities.

Community Leader B believes that President B is a perfect fit for the college. The president's strength is relationship and consensus building. He has a unique ability to get a large group moving in the same direction, and he is a good promoter of the community, its businesses, and the college. He does not let his credentials or his position as president get in the way, and he has a good sense of humor.

Emergent themes

Three themes emerged from the interviews: innovation and community service, the importance of the board, and the president's lack of listening skills. Each was cited by several participants and identified as important.

Innovation and serving the community

Among participants, there is a commonly held perception that College B is a college of innovation dedicated to serving their community. This belief was stated very explicitly by CAO B, "I think that risk taking, innovation, and doing whatever we can to meet community needs is a common thread through our years. An outstanding board has supported all of this" (CAO B, p. 3). Faculty B stated that serving the community was an important value both to the college and to her personally. She stated that innovation was a part of the culture and that it would seem strange if a situation arose and the college was not striving to be first.

Moreover, the commitment to innovation is observable in many small ways. People at the college are technically literate and seem comfortable with technology. Administrators carry the latest Personal Digital Assistants and discuss how to best utilize

them over lunch. The boardroom is equipped with satellite downlink capabilities and a projection television system, and the board members seem comfortable discussing technical aspects of telecommunications systems with President B. Faculty make presentations to other colleges around the state on how to prepare courses for internet delivery. Based on the notable national successes mentioned earlier, the statements of participants, and observations made by the researcher, it seems clear that the culture at College B supports and encourages innovation.

Board Member B reiterated the commitment to serving the community emphasizing the need to serve "every nook and cranny in every corner of the district" (Board B, p. 1). The commitment to serving the community with special emphasis on reaching all parts of it may be related to the emphasis on innovation. For example, the college's early lead in distance education, long before the advent of the internet and web-based courses, drove the college to develop a course delivery system that included video and interactive audio based on microwave technology. Furthermore, the commitment to serving the community's workforce needs led to innovative partnerships between the college and local industries.

In the future, Board Member B believes that the college will continue serving community needs in innovative ways but believes that the direction could change dramatically if the need arose: "I think that's the advantage of a vibrant community college. You're prepared to change as the time and needs arise" (Board B, p. 1). President B sees the future in terms of responding to community needs for new vocational programs and new methods of delivery for "anytime anywhere" courses. Faculty B sees the future of the college in terms of ongoing innovation and excellence. Staff B sees the

college as only getting bigger and better in the future. CAO B sees the college continuing in its present direction: meeting community needs and continuing to innovate. Several participants mentioned that the future might bring challenges as important leaders retire.

Importance of the board

A locally elected board of trustees governs college B. The board is remarkable in several regards. First, there has been phenomenal continuity in its membership. In the college's history there have only been two presidents, and one member of the board has served since the college was created in the 1960s. Both board presidents have received awards from the American Association of Community College Trustees.

In addition, the board has been very active and supportive of the college. President B acknowledges that it is not possible to provide good leadership without the support of the board of trustees because in the absence of board support, "everybody on staff starts doubting your abilities" (President B, p. 6). Faculty B commented that the effectiveness of the board was an important part of the college's success, and in commenting on the college's commitment to community service and innovation, CAO B stated that the board of trustees "has seen to it that we operate that way" (CAO B, p. 2).

At the board meeting attended as part of the site visit for this study, it was apparent that the board was supportive of new proposals, but their thorough questioning demonstrated that they did not accept new initiatives uncritically. It was also noteworthy in the interview with Board Member B that he conceives of himself as an integral part of the college. He was emphatic in his assertion that the board was involved in every stage of building projects from planning to completion, and analysis of the transcript of the interview reveals uncommon consistency in the use of the pronoun "we" in referring to

the college. For example, community service is "something *we've* really worked hard at" and "*we* need to maintain the plant" (Board B, p. 1).

Participants in the study clearly believe that the board of trustees at College B is responsible in large measure for the institution's success. Observations and interviews support this view and lead this researcher to conclude that the president of College B was chosen largely because he fit the long-standing expectations of the board.

Listening

There was extraordinary agreement among participants about what constituted the president's greatest weakness, that he is not characteristically a good listener. Board Member B stated that, "he's not always probably the best listener," and "we've talked about that, and others have too" (Board B, p. 4). Staff B commented that, "he doesn't listen very well," and also pointed out that the president is aware that this perception exists. CAO B says that the president could gain another twenty percent if he would just listen:

> He misses an opportunity by not listening. It's like bargaining for the price of a car or house . . . By listening a little more, you could read the table easily. You could take better advantage of the situation and not give away things that might not have to be given away. Silence is so important sometimes. Let the other person be the next to speak. That's just not his strength. He may have a conversation or a half hour meeting with someone, and the other person may not have the chance to say anything . . . I don't think there's any advantage in not listening. It's only a disadvantage. (CAO B, p. 5)

The president's special assistant also commented on the president's lack of listening skills, and stated that he knew of several instances in which the president said things that later had to be retracted. The president's predilection for one-sided conversation was confirmed by the experience of the researcher. After the first question, the president took off and followed his own train of thought. Fortunately, during the course of his monologue, he answered most of the questions that I had prepared, and he was gracious about answering follow-up questions sent by E-mail.

Those who commented on the president's lack of listening skills had explanations for this behavior. Staff B stated that the president is "just always thinking ahead. He listens to you, but he's thinking at the same time. So sometimes you just have to tell him a couple of times to make sure that he knows that he's getting your side of the story" (Staff B, p. 2). The president's special assistant stated that the president is just a "ready, fire, aim" guy. Board Member B explained that, "Any issue that comes up, his mind is going so fast in terms of ideas and development that he doesn't always hear ideas and thoughts that are coming from other people" (Board B, p. 4).

Of possible significance is the fact that one interviewee, Community Leader B, actually described the president as a good listener. It may be that, in general, President B believes that he knows what is best for the college and knows the direction it should take; therefore, he is not as concerned with what staff, administrators, and even his special assistant has to say on a given topic. However, with the college's focus on serving the community, he may be more conscientious about listening to their needs and concerns or at least feel that it is more important to leave that impression.

Summary

President B is a pusher and an innovator. By his own description, he wants it bigger, better, and he wants it now. He continues the tradition of the first two presidents, both of whom were aggressive builders. He is not averse to mistakes. He is more interested in moving forward than in having things perfect. He is well liked and his constituencies support him. They recognize areas in which he could improve (and he does also), but they accept this as part of his personality.

There is a significant culture of innovation and striving for improvement at College B. The culture has its roots as far back as the first president, and has been strengthened and encouraged by a very stable board of trustees. It is clear that the board at College B has been a significant factor in the success of the college and of the president. The continuity of the board and its supportive attitude have been enormously important and are cited by many of the interviewees including the president, the CAO, Staff B, Faculty B, and the board member himself. It is clear that in some ways the president is a reflection of the goals and ambitions of the board. It is doubtful that the board would choose a person to succeed President B who did not share these values, and if a person who did not share these values was chosen, it is doubtful that she or he would be successful.

President B's idea that you have to confront problems and not tolerate sloppy work is a task orientation. His desire to have it bigger, better, and tomorrow is a task orientation. He also recognized the weaknesses of his predecessor in the area of human relations and has tried to balance his own approach with stronger interpersonal skills. For the most part he has succeeded. Participants universally like him, find him approachable,

and consider him a friend. The fact that interviewees also are critical of his listening skills may indicate that he leans more heavily on the task orientation than on the people orientation.

From the standpoint of formal leadership theory, President A articulated a model that blends a task orientation with strong people skills and sensitivity to the role of others in the decision-making process. This model parallels the leadership theory of Blake and Mouton (1978). Blake and Mouton (1978) posited that leadership behaviors could be situated on a managerial grid. The grid's axes are relationships (concern for people) and organizational tasks (concern for production). Leader behaviors are plotted along the two axes and the resultant position determines the leadership style.

President B's description of his theory of leadership emphasized both relationships and tasks. According to the model this type of leader is a team manager and can be effective in a wide variety of leadership contexts. The leader helps satisfy a basic need in followers to be involved and committed to their work. This type of leader stimulates participation and addresses issues openly. He or she creates a climate of trust, interdependence, and a sense of a common purpose in achieving institutional goals. The leader enjoys her or his work (Bass, 1990).

A number of other leadership theories also emphasize the relationship between people and task orientation but also include the role that moderators play in determining which orientation should receive the most emphasis. For example, Hersey and Blanchard (1969) emphasize the role that the psychological maturity of followers plays in the choice of people and task orientation. If followers lack ability or experience, then managers ought to be more directive; if followers lack willingness, then managers should

emphasize building good relations with them. Fiedler (1967) emphasizes the role that situations play in determining whether relationship or task orientation is most effective. According to this model, some situations are more favorable to leaders than others. Situations are considered favorable to the leader if the relations of leader and follower are positive, the task is highly structured, and the leader has a great deal of positional power. Leaders like President B, who are high in both relationship and task orientation, are most effective in situations that are either highly favorable or highly unfavorable. In situations in which the conditions for leaders are only moderately favorable, a leader who is high in relationship orientation is most effective.

President B may be inclined to adjust his leadership behaviors to accommodate various moderators, but he did not give any indication that this was the case. Therefore, the leadership model of Blake and Mouton (1978) is closest to the model that he describes.

Case C

Community C is the capital city in this sparsely populated, agricultural state. The city is not large. The greater metropolitan area consists of no more that 150,000 people. There is little ethnic diversity. African-Americans comprise barely one half of one percent of the population. The population has decreased steadily since the 1970s, and the dreary demographic picture is a concern. One interviewee said gloomily that in five years it may be "tell the last person leaving to turn out the lights" (VP Operations C, p. 6). Practically every issue of the local newspaper contains an article documenting further decline or offering a glimmer of hope as a business expands to add a few additional jobs. The government is the largest employer in the community, but a medical center and

energy companies are also large employers. People are quick to tell visitors that it is a great place to live. They point out that the crime rate is low, and the city has no slums.

The January weather is wretched. It is bitter cold with sub-zero temperatures and a relentless north wind. A trip to the car to retrieve a forgotten book is not undertaken lightly. Yet people seem to feel compelled to make excuses for the weather. Several people tell me that it is really "not so bad." A convenience store clerk grudgingly acknowledged that the current weather was indeed abysmal, but added by way of compensation that it "only lasts for about 16 weeks." Perhaps people feel the need to recruit outsiders to move into the region to compensate for the declining population.

College C

Early in the city's history, it had the choice of having either a four-year university or a prison. Since, in those days, a prison generated more revenue than a university, community leaders chose the prison. In addition to College C, there is a private four-year college and a private two-year technical college. College C began as a two-year city college during the Great Depression. Students were first enrolled on the high school campus. The college moved to its current location, on the bluffs of a river, in the 1960s. Governance shifted from the local to the state government in the 1980s, but the city still feels a strong sense of ownership for and identity with the institution. I was told that if I asked for a show of hands at a Rotary luncheon, nearly everyone there would have either attended College C, or would have had a family member who did.

College C offers vocational programs, continuing education, and has significant initiatives in workforce and economic development, but according to one administrator, the faculty still retains a strong identity as an "old time junior college" that serves arts

and science transfer students (CAO C, p. 2). The fall 1999 enrollment was just over 2700, and reflects the same lack of ethnic diversity present in the community at large. There is no collective bargaining unit at the college.

President C

Visitors to President C's office are immediately put at their ease. She is gregarious and unpretentious. Nearly everyone interviewed mentioned her remarkable gift for developing personal relationships. "She's able to make connections on a personal level with important people," commented one administrator (VP Student Services C, p.5). A staff member said that she "has a unique way of making people feel comfortable around her" (Staff C, p. 5). Even a faculty member, who acknowledged that he did not have a very good relationship with the administration, admitted that she was exceptional in this regard. It is a quality that has served her well in her drive to strengthen community relations and develop business and industry partnerships.

People credit the president with unusual persistence and strength of conviction. One administrator described her as "fearless. Not afraid to tackle any challenge. There's no policy or law that can't be knocked down" (CAO C, p. 2). She was described by a student as someone who "bites into something and won't let go until it's accomplished," a quality he finds lacking in many people (Student C, p. 4). This same student once told her that she really had teeth. She laughed, and said she'd been told that before. He likes her and has great respect for her, although he thinks that she can be confrontational and intimidating if you let her. He believes that she is open-minded and respects the students.

Both internal and external constituencies credit her with gaining stature and respect for the institution through her efforts at the state legislature and with the state

board of higher education. Prior to her administration, the president of College C took a chair at the back of the room when state board meetings were held. Not only does she insist on an equal position at the table, but now state board meetings are regularly held on the community college campus, a practice previously unheard of. People believe that it is her strength of purpose and ability to form relationships that has helped the institution secure funding, particularly the money for a new science center.

President C is also considered to be an extremely hard working person. Community Leader C was especially impressed by the fact that even when she experienced some serious health problems, she continued to execute her duties as president: "She'd come to meetings on crutches, in wheelchairs, and she didn't back away. She just kept coming at it" (Community Leader C, p. 5). She also requires more from those around her than her predecessor. One administrator stated that when she first came, she announced that they would all be working 60 hours per week—and she was right. Part of the increased workload is attributed to the fact that she is doing more, but part of it is also the fact that she is more willing to delegate and give responsibility to others for completing tasks.

Career path

President C began her career in education by teaching nursing for five years and then moved into administration serving as the Director of Health Occupations for an additional five years. She then accepted a position as Dean of Administrative services, a position in which she had great latitude to experiment and build. Prior to coming to College C, she served as vice president of student services at a well-known community college in another region of the country. Each of the positions allowed her to be involved

in a variety of tasks from grant writing to media relations. She has been president at College C for almost six years. Four years into her presidency she applied for the president's job at a larger school in another region of the country. Community Leader C expressed his relief that she was not selected for the position.

Leadership

President C presides over an institution that is in transition from a traditional junior college to a comprehensive community college. President C acknowledges that she is a change agent. Most of her career has been spent starting various enterprises and making them work. She loses interest once a project is running smoothly, "I'm not a good maintenance manager" (President C, p. 8). She believes that her background in nursing may have prepared her for this role, "I see the sick things and want to make them well" (President C, p. 12). She loves her job, and her greatest satisfaction comes from looking at the difference in where the college is today compared to where it was when she started. Her greatest frustration is the resistance to change that she encounters, "There's that group on every campus . . . I keep thinking that there must be a way to get them [to change]" (President C, p. 13).

In President C's opinion, the secret to leadership is "to get out of the way" (President C, p. 14). She provides the catalyst, but the key is to empower others. Her job is not the day-to-day operation of the college--that job belongs to the deans and vice presidents. The president has two primary tasks. One is to set a vision for the college, and the other is to obtain the resources necessary to make that vision a reality.

Developing the vision for the college is essentially a local process, but there are other entities like the state legislature that impact on the process. In brief, the vision for

College C is "a lifetime link to learning" (President C, p. 4). This is interpreted to mean that the college will attempt to be a connection to learning for non-traditional learners including customized training for business and industry. Because the college's historical mission was to serve as a transfer college, the notion of lifetime learning represents a radical change. The vision is communicated to the campus through process improvement teams and campus-wide meetings, but the president has the important task of keeping people enthusiastic about it and acting as "cheerleader" (President C, p. 5).

Externally, the president is "the personification of the vision" and represents the college's interests to the campus to the community and the legislature (President C, p. 3). This symbolic role is an important part of the president's job. If the president is liked, people tend to like the college. If the legislature is upset with the president, it could affect the college negatively. The president must be able to translate the vision in a credible way for the legislature and the community in order to secure funding for the college. President C points with pride to the fact that she has overseen the growth in the foundation from two to nine million dollars.

The vision also needs a structure in place to support it, "Stan, some people can do all the right things and still not quite get there . . . you can look at some very charismatic leaders whose movements have fallen apart because there wasn't any follow through" (President C, p. 10). Charismatic leaders can be successful in the short term without any management structure. According to President C, leaders need to be managers or to have managers who support them to ensure that their plans are carried out, "I think you can probably see instances where very popular presidents fall on their faces at some point. I

think it's because they've neglected to put in place the structure to maintain their vision" (President C, p. 11).

The pay-per-credit controversy

An issue mentioned by nearly everyone interviewed at the college, and one that President C considers to be the most significant of her tenure, was a change that occurred six months prior to the interviews in the way in which students were charged tuition. For many years, students were charged by the credit up to 12 credits. If they took more than 12 credits, however, there was no additional charge. From the administrative perspective, this created several problems, not the least of which was the lost tuition revenue. It also made enrollment management difficult since students tended to sign up for more classes than they intended to take and then drop one or more of them when they decided which classes they really wanted. The faculty believed that the system had some advantages in that it allowed students to do some experimenting, especially with elective courses like band and chorus.

President C decided that the system needed to change. She believed that students ought to pay for each credit regardless of the number. Faculty members were opposed to the change fearing that they would see enrollments decrease, particularly in the elective classes. At one point faculty opposed to the change went so far as to take out a full-page ad in the local Sunday paper to voice their opposition.

Both the faculty and the student senate voted down the per-credit model. The faculty senate president appeared before the board to state his opposition and read letters from several department chairs who also opposed the change. Because of the vociferous opposition, several top administrators urged the president to reconsider, but she refused to

back down, and the board approved the change. Based upon a recommendation by the faculty, however, she did modify the proposal to include a "free zone." Students would pay for the first 13 credits, 14 and 15 would be free, but students would pay for all credits beyond 15.

The change was instituted in the fall semester, and enrollment actually increased. In fact, enrollment in elective courses was strong, and an extra section of chorus was added, something that had never happened before. The president feels vindicated by the success of the change, and points out that the additional revenue, which amounted to $386,000, allowed them to raise adjunct salaries and provide some release time for full time faculty. The president of the student senate opposed the change, but likes and respects President C nonetheless.

President C maintains that she believes in shared governance of the institution, but explains that shared governance can be abused:

> I really believe in shared governance--but I think you have to be careful of the definition of that. Shared governance is not a democracy. We don't have one vote, one person on every issue on campus. The goal to me of shared governance is having decisions made at the appropriate level in the institution so that you get input and so that people have an appropriate input into it. It's appropriate for the administration and the board to make the decision that we were going to do this. I think that sometimes where the real big problem comes in is with this word "appropriate." It was appropriate to explore this per-credit model. That was not an appropriate decision for faculty. It was appropriate input for them to express their concerns about perhaps we need to have some mechanism for students

> because most of them are taking band as an elective. I wound up with the two free courses and two free credits. That's something we work at here all the time in terms of what is the definition of shared governance and getting that input at the appropriate level as opposed to a wide-open free-for-all. (President C, p. 2)

President C believes that the misapplication of shared governance has the potential to "bring the institution to a halt" because decisions cannot be made in time (President C, p. 2). She acknowledges that the faculty did not have much influence on the decision to change to a per-credit model, but she believes that the fact that enrollment did not drop and elective classes filled proves that she was right. She also points out that the original proposal was modified as a result of faculty suggestions. She illustrates her philosophy of shared governance by comparing it to taking a trip. The destination is New York:

> There are about fifty routes we can take. We can go up through Canada or we can go down through the mountains, but we are going to New York. Now the appropriate level of input from the campus is what route we're going to take. (President C, p. 2)

Thus, for President C, shared governance is a balancing act. She tries to maintain the appropriate balance between allowing the faculty a voice in the decision and keeping the institution functioning efficiently. Finally, she states that a leader is like the driver of the car, and the people riding with her must have enough confidence to lie down in the back seat and fall asleep.

Gender and leadership

President C tries to promote women to leadership roles. She inherited an administration that was entirely male, but they were talented people, "and you just don't

fire people to get gender equity" (President C, p. 14). She does not consider herself a traditional feminist "in terms of thinking that men were out to do me in, in my career" (President C, p. 9). President C believes that it simply does not occur to men that women either want or can handle the job of president, "Part of the hurdle that I faced has been to get it to occur to them that I can do the job" (President C, p. 9). One of her "pet peeves" is to hear women complain about not getting an executive position when they are "not willing to do what the job requires, or go where the job is, or put in and get their union card" (President C, p. 9). In order for her to achieve her first presidency, she had to obtain the necessary experience, move half way across the country, and obtain a doctorate.

Asked if she believed that there were any differences in male verses female leadership styles, President C answered that she did not believe there were any inherited differences between male and female leadership styles, but she added, "I think you have to figure out what works for you as a person. So much of my leadership style is who I am. I think if I tried to operate in a different mode, it wouldn't be genuine" (President C, p. 9). It is her observation that there are both men and women who are dictatorial and autocratic as well as men and women who are participatory in their leadership styles, "I don't know that you can tie it down to gender" (President C, p. 10).

Constituent evaluation

As in the other cases in this study, participants tended to evaluate President C in comparison with her predecessor. The previous president of College C held the office for 18 years. Current administrators and staff describe him as hierarchical, authoritarian, risk averse, and anxious to maintain the status quo. By all accounts he was interested in internal operations rather than focused on external relations. Both internal and external

constituencies agreed that this was a serious shortcoming. He was detail oriented and wrote a procedures and policies manual, parts of which are still in use. From the perspective of the administrative team, he was not inclined to delegate authority.

The former president was described as somewhat aloof. Staff C stated that, "he had a way of ticking people off like the faculty. I'm not sure why. He just felt like when there was a decision to be made, he just made it" (Staff C, p. 3). He received a vote of "no confidence" from the faculty. Apparently, it devastated him. Shortly afterwards he suffered a heart attack, and according to one administrator, when he recovered, he "gave up on the issues. He didn't get them accomplished" (CAO C, p. 1).

People described the last few years of the former president's administration as a period of stagnation. He controlled the institution by rigidly maintaining boundaries between people and departments. "He kept people apart," remarked one administrator, "He didn't believe in teamwork, so we were very fragmented on campus," and ideas tended to be stifled, "if you had a good idea, forget it, because it wasn't going to go anywhere. There really was nothing happening. We treaded water in the institution" (VP Student Services C, p. 2). He stated that it was a great place to be if you wanted to be comfortable.

Constituents chose to divide their evaluation of President C into two areas. They perceived that the president had two basic roles, external and internal. In keeping with their views, the evaluations are presented here in terms their perceptions of her effectiveness in these two separate leadership arenas.

External role

External relations are considered to be one of President C's strengths. Everyone interviewed stated that she had considerable skills in this area, especially in comparison with her predecessor. For example, on the strength of a personal relationship with President C, a software support company moved to town. The company has developed a partnership with the college and has a building on the campus.

The community leader I interviewed had the highest praise for President C. In his view, President C is much more aggressive about getting things done in the community than her predecessor. Developing programs that support the needs of area business and industry was cited as one of her most important accomplishments. He asserted that workforce development is one of the key goals for the future of College C. He also credited her with the building of the new science center. He considers her a community leader and a role model for other women in what is essentially a traditional region. He believes that the college is kept on the cutting edge of education through her leadership.

Board Member C was equally enthusiastic about the leadership of President C. In his opinion, her "knowledge of what a community college means in this day and age, to a community and a region" was one of her greatest strengths" (Board C, p. 1). In addition he cited the importance of her ability "to really have a grasp and relate very well and make a very concerted effort to understand and to work with business leaders and political leaders in the community. It's very important, and she's done that very well" (Board C, p. 1). It is clear that he believes that she is a master of external relations, a very important concern: "She built a lot of confidence quickly in those external groups, which

needed to happen. Doing that has been a very big part of her success. That transcended beyond just the community and region here to statewide" (Board C, p. 1).

President C's administrative team is aware of the importance of community relations and of her skills in this area. They make it clear that they believed that the previous president was too involved in operations and internal decision-making when his time would have been spent more profitably building external relations. According to one vice president, the community did not have the same level of respect for the college that it does now, "It just wasn't being worked enough" (VP Operations C, p. 3). Like the board member, they see the importance of external relations that extend beyond the local community to the state level, "Whether it's fluff or not, it's reality. That's what you need to be a player in today's environment" (VP Operations C, p. 3).

According to the administrators, the president must be supported by a good management team. The president needs to be able to concentrate on the external environment and be confident that the internal operation is running smoothly. She also needs to be confident that when she makes a commitment to an external constituency, the college can deliver. The management team is responsible to make it happen. Internal relations are as important to realizing the college's vision as the external.

Internal role

Among administrators and staff, President C is given high marks for her leadership. People feel that she knows how to delegate properly. Initially, when someone came to her with a problem, she had a tendency to go directly to the line people without following the chain of command, but she sees the problems that short-circuiting the system create, and she is less likely to do that now.

According to one administrator, she instilled a new confidence in people that their ideas were worthwhile. He believes that she will let you try new things as long as they fit within the goals of the institution. He believes that she has created an environment in which people are comfortable taking risks. At times she assumes the role of teacher. She becomes involved until she believes that people are on the right track, and then she backs away. If she believes that they are not going well, she will get involved again. She can be forceful when she needs to be.

There are few standing committees. Committees are formed to solve a problem and then dissolved. Generally, President C accepts the recommendations of the committee. There are genuine discussions in the cabinet, and there is not always consensus. Occasionally, President C will back down. For example, she opposed a request by the zoo to build a house for the zookeeper even though most of the cabinet supported it. In the end, she was persuaded to build it, and it was a success.

The per-credit tuition model is cited as an example of her fortitude and strength of purpose as a leader. Faculty and students were strongly opposed, and cabinet members who were initially in favor, urged her to back down when the magnitude of the opposition was manifest, but she would not be dissuaded. One vice president stated that had it not been successful, "she'd have paid a really great price for that" (CAO C, p. 6). Even President C acknowledged that had enrollment dropped, she might have been looking for another job. In the end, she seems to have earned a great deal of respect among the administrators for standing her ground on this issue. As one administrator put it, "That's what makes her a strong leader" (CAO C, p. 6).

Faculty members are not as supportive of President C's internal leadership. While acknowledging that her predecessor was somewhat hierarchical, Faculty C stated that he did not interfere in areas that were the legitimate prerogative of the faculty. He believes that the current administration is perceived as dictatorial, but anxious to maintain a façade of participative governance. Faculty C believes that even though there are committees in which faculty are represented and in which faculty participate, issues have been decided in advance. He believes that the administration is more interested in hiring people to teach and go home.

Faculty C shares the perception that the president is good at public relations and represents the college well in the community, but he believes that she spends so much time in external relations that she is not fully aware of what is taking place at all levels within the institution. In his view, a good leader should be willing to find out what is really going on and should be open and willing to take criticism. He believes that a leader should not focus so exclusively on outcomes. In his opinion, a leader should promote human interaction, not just the outcomes that show well on the outside.

Faculty C believes that too much of what passes for leadership in higher education is simply a fad. The Hawthorne effect explains many of the successes touted by various management seminars. President C brought in a consultant to help with strategic planning. The process he initiated was not simple; in fact, it was very labor intensive, but it was promising. Unfortunately, there was no follow through. In Faculty A's opinion, fads in higher education are like this. They are inspirational, but when you examine the situation five years later, little has changed. He believes that higher education has become more business oriented and is becoming essentially a service for hire.

Emergent themes

Three themes emerged from the participant interviews: the perception that President C could improve her listening skills, a disconnect between the faculty and administration, and the bifurcation of the president's role into external and internal domains.

Listening

When asked about an area in which President C could improve, those who identified a weakness cited her inability or unwillingness to listen. One administrator stated, "I think if she would just listen sometimes a little better. She sort of sets her agenda and is going to meet that agenda" (VP Operations C, p. 3). Or in the words of another, "She doesn't listen well at all. I mean really listen. She's very difficult to approach about any problems. She doesn't want to hear it, particularly if it's a problem with her or her opinions" (Faculty C, p. 6). Another remarked, "She doesn't listen enough to other people about themselves. That sounds very judgmental, but I think that's her greatest weakness" (Staff C, p. 8). It seems ironic that one who is considered gifted in interpersonal relationships would not have strong listening skills, but one administrator explains, "Her listening skills. Listening to what people are saying. I guess we all have that sometimes. It's pretty hard when you have a vision, when you really believe you know what people want" (CAO C, p. 3).

The tendency to feel that the president already knows where the college ought to go may explain some of the negative faculty reaction to the changes that she has initiated. It may simply be that President C believes so strongly that she knows where the college

should go that she does not feel the need to consider alternative views. As one administrator commented:

> Listening is not her strength. It's not that she doesn't listen, but sometimes she doesn't take the time to think through how we are going to communicate the change to everyone. You can't shortcut the change process. She sets her agenda and then moves forward. She sometimes gets too confrontational too fast. The process we use to come to a decision or an action could be improved. (VP Operations C, p. 4)

It is significant, though, that some of the same people who cited President C's lack of listening skills, later in the same interview, commented on her willingness to listen to the community, "She's really listened to the community. She's listened to the business factor" (CAO C, p. 6). Later in the interview, the same participant stated that her basic leadership philosophy was to listen to the customer, "If you concentrate on the fact that you're here to serve the student. What do they want? What do they need? Listen to what they're saying, and then you can talk. It's a pretty simple philosophy this lady leads by" (CAO C, p. 11). The perception of the president's listening skills may help explain the reaction of the faculty to the per-credit tuition model and the apparent disconnect between faculty and administration.

The faculty disconnect

One of the themes that emerged from the interviews at College C is that there is a significant divergence of perception between the faculty and the administration and board regarding the college mission. This gulf is apparent not only in the interview with Faculty C, but it is also mentioned by the administration and staff, and is supported by newspaper

articles and editorials surrounding the per-credit tuition controversy. It is important to point out that apparently the previous administration did not enjoy a good working relationship with the faculty either. Despite Faculty C's comment regarding the previous president's willingness to stay out of issues that were the purview of the faculty, the vote of no confidence attests to their dissatisfaction with the previous administration.

According to one staff member, the faculty viewed President C more positively when she first started, "They were all excited about her when she first came, and then I think, with any presidency, you make decisions" (Staff C, p. 4). Asked to elaborate she explained that the faculty "always feel like something's being pushed on them. They don't like being told what to do" (Staff C, p. 4).

One administrator stated that President C did not trust the faculty in the same way that she trusted administration. He stated that it might be due to the fact that she did not follow the traditional path to the presidency that included academic roles. He thinks that her background in nursing may have led her to expect quick decisions. She may not trust the faculty to spend a year arriving at a better decision than she could make right away. For example, she asked the faculty to reorganize their departmental structure. After two years she did not believe that anything of significance had been accomplished, so she instituted her own structure for reorganization, infuriating some of the faculty.

The administrator believes that this is an area that she needs to work on. He believes that the academic decision-making process may be slower and more deliberate, but it is a legitimate part of higher education. He believes that her tendency to intervene has led to unrest among the faculty, especially those who have been at the institution for a

long time. Faculty C, who stated that he believed that the faculty is no longer viewed as a legitimate governing body, confirms this.

The dual role of the president

It is significant that participants see the president's role as consisting of two distinct parts, an internal and an external component. Each viewed the internal and external realms as separate and evaluated the president relative to her success in accomplishing separate internal and external missions. This implies divergent views about the college's purposes and lack of a unified vision of what the college will become. Consider the contrast with College B in which participants consistently spoke of the college's commitment to community service and innovation. There was no suggestion that the president served two different purposes when he worked at developing external partnerships.

The divergence in the mission may be related to the college's roots as a traditional junior college role since a junior college is less involved in meeting community needs like workforce development. The president receives praise from both the board and community for the role she plays in making the college a part of the community, but the faculty does not support the idea. Faculty C indicated that he believed that higher education had become a commodity for sale. From this perspective, business and industry training programs would be viewed unfavorably. In effect, the president is attempting to change the values that faculty hold about education and the college's purposes. The mission is indeed in conflict, and the president finds herself at the center of the dispute. One of the challenges that President C faces is the need to unify the mission. At the point

where unification is achieved, people may perceive that the president serves a single purpose and evaluate her on a different basis.

Summary

College C is deeply rooted in a liberal arts junior college transfer tradition with the attendant ideas about the institution's purposes and the way in which it should be governed. Community leaders and the board want a different kind of college, and the president believes she has a mandate for change. Under theses circumstances, the question arises as to whether it would it be better to bring the college along more slowly and maintain support from the faculty or to push the change through more rapidly and experience the backlash that accompanies it.

Many participants, including President C, believed that she put her career on the line with the per-credit tuition model. Her leadership has been courageous. She has demonstrated that she is determined to see the college become a comprehensive community college regardless of the cost to her personally. The college will also pay a price for the change measured in terms of faculty support for its goals. The vice president for student services suggested that the president might need to mitigate her approach to change. In the longer view, the support of the faculty for an expanded mission may be critical to its success.

From the standpoint of formal leadership theory, President C's statements regarding the importance of vision and organizational change describe a transformational leadership approach (Burns, 1978; Bass, 1985). She described how when she first came to the college she met with every fulltime employee for half an hour to find out what their concerns and goals were. In this respect she demonstrates a willingness to involve others

in developing a vision and setting a direction for the college. In addition, she talked about the ways in which the vision could be communicated to others within the institution and mentioned her role as cheerleader in maintaining enthusiasm for the vision. Her perception of herself as a change agent also reflects a transformational approach. She also emphasizes the role of transactional leadership in her statements about the need for structure to support the vision. This is a striking parallel to Bass (1985). Bass (1985) asserts that the dichotomy of transactional and transformational leadership established by Burns (1978) is more appropriately conceived as a continuum with the absence of leadership at one end and transactional leadership in the middle. Transformational leadership is at the other end of the continuum and is built on transactional leadership. Transactional leadership is a necessary first condition and provides the structure to support transformational leadership.

President C also made statements about varying degrees of participation in the decision-making process that are consistent with the leader-participation model of Vroom-Yetton (1974). President C emphasized that shared governance involves having decisions made at the appropriate level. In her view, the difficulty lies in determining what is appropriate. In the same way, Vroom and Yetton (1974) argue that participation in decision-making depends on circumstances. They assert that increased participation in decision-making is warranted when the subordinates' acceptance, satisfaction, and commitment are important. Direction may work better than participation in short-term situations, but greater payoff results from participative leadership in the long run.

The fact that President C's leadership model is primarily transformational does not preclude the eclectic use of other leadership theories such as Vroom and Yetton

(1974) to model other dimensions of leadership. In fact, President C also indicated that she had adopted portions of Total Quality Management theory, in particular the creation of process teams to work on specific problems. She did not, however, discuss the systems orientation or other aspects of TQM at length. She also demonstrated recognition of the importance of the symbolic role of the president in her statements regarding the perception of the president in the community and how it affected the college.

Case D

Community D is a rural community of about 30,000. It is the largest city for 100 miles in any direction. Agriculture has and continues to be the linchpin of its economy. Hard work and openness are considered to be important values. It describes itself in Chamber of Commerce publications as having built a warm and friendly feeling from "long years of concern and mutual respect."

The community is proud of its school system. The high school completion rate is well above the national average. It is a stable community with seventy percent of residents living in owner occupied housing. Long-term demographics are not encouraging, however. There is essentially no growth in the population, and the average age is increasing. The total number of high school graduates declines each year.

The college is clearly the cultural hub of the region and supports a performing arts series that is remarkable for a community of its size. It was also described by Community Leader D as a "pretty tough" community, one in which people will "shoot arrows" at anyone trying new initiatives, and "it is fairly conservative and fairly skeptical of new ideas that come along" (Community Leader D, p. 1). It was also described as a place where people do not have a high tolerance for mistakes.

College D

College D was originally a public junior college, one of the earliest in the nation. The previous president was a nationally recognized leader in the community college movement. The junior college had, of course, a number of presidents, but the president who held the office before President D was the founding president of the community college, and served the institution for ten years. He was a very successful president. He provided oversight for the construction of the campus, and was well liked by people in the institution. A warm and friendly person, he was described affectionately by Staff D as "a big gentle bear" (Staff D, p. 3).

The college is small with an enrollment of just over 2900 students. Female students outnumber males by about 7%, and minority enrollment is less than 5%. The college enjoys strong support from the community. It recently completed a successful $5M capital campaign. The campus consists of attractive, contemporary buildings designed with similar architecture so that the effect is that of a campus that was planned rather than one which grew haphazardly. Currently, construction is underway to remodel administrative offices.

According to CAO D, the college cannot afford failed initiatives. It simply does not have the resources. Every new project must be researched, planned, and executed carefully. They will not undertake any ventures unless they are certain of success. No one that I interviewed could remember anything that could be described as a crisis or even a situation that became a controversial topic in the newspapers. Searches of the local papers do not reveal any controversial articles or editorials. In fact, the college is typically the subject of a great deal of favorable coverage.

President D

In the administrative building, wires protruding from conduit and stacks of wallboard menace visitors. Workers tramp noisily a few feet away behind plastic tarps. The president is in temporary quarters sitting at a conference table working at a laptop computer. A neatly dressed, soft-spoken man, President D greeted me warmly. The college's foundation director left recently, and President D is writing the college's Title III grant proposal. He is reserved, but very articulate.

Board Member D describes him as a perfectionist who does not like controversy and is sensitive to criticism. She showed me board evaluations of the president. There are no negative comments, and he was ranked either at the top or near the top of every category. Several remarked favorably on the fact that he ran a cost effective college. She stated that he was overly sensitive about receiving any marks that were not perfect. One vice president also described him as a perfectionist.

President D has a reputation for honesty and integrity. Staff D stated that state legislators had remarked on several occasions that they enjoy working with President D because they trust him. Community Leader D stated that because of the president's reputation, many people rely on him for guidance in community issues.

Several people remarked that he is quiet and reserved but not cold. CAO D believes that he is a little introverted, but a good friend, and believes that following a successful president, particularly at a young age (he was only 32 when he became president), may have made President D overly cautious and reluctant to make himself vulnerable.

Career path

Like all of the presidents in the study, President D did not set out to be a college president. He began his career as an industrial arts teacher. He chose to become an administrator, "as I simply wanted to improve my economic standing" (President D, p. 1). He began a master's degree program soon after he began teaching, and in the course of that program, he attended an American Vocational Association conference. At the conference he sat next to an employee of the Center for Research and Leadership in Vocational Education at Ohio State. Later that person recruited President D for a graduate research assistantship.

The network developed in his doctoral program led President D to the "most significant opportunity" of his career (President D, p. 1). After a brief stint on a research project for the state of Michigan, President D was recruited for the presidency of a newly created community college campus. After six years as a campus president, he believed that he was ready to move from the role of campus president to that of institution CEO. A position opened up, President D applied, and he was the successful candidate. It was one of the few times that he actually began a search and initiated the application process without having any connections to the institution. President D believes that if it were not for a network of friends and colleagues, he would still be an industrial arts teacher.

Leadership

President D articulated a philosophy of leadership based "first and foremost" on personal qualities. In his opinion, leaders must demonstrate a degree of order and discipline in their personal lives:

> I see people whose lives are kind of in disarray who I would have a tough time following. I'd say that's probably first, you know . . . . I think that clearly I'm a reasonably conservative, organized person. I'm just talking about everything from basic communications skills to just self-discipline on a social and moral point. I'm sure you've met people in the world who seem to be kind of disconnected and disorganized. The opposite of that is maybe in a sense an element for any kind of leadership inspired. (President D, p. 3)

President D believes that the most important job of a community college president is to "run processes" (President D, p. 3). He believes that to the extent that he is successful in running those processes, "the institution seems to thrive" (President D, p. 3). President D illustrated what he meant by processes. Processes can be anything from personnel to record keeping. Periodic processes include the monthly board meeting, the contract negotiations, and the legislative session. One of his strategies is to find the best practices in each of these areas and to try to modify them to fit the college.

A significant part of the community college president's job is external, more than President D would prefer:

> I'm not sure it's all that wonderful. In the life of the school maybe it's fine and it's good. In the life of the president himself, I'm not sure it's all that good. I liked it better when I wasn't perceived as the guy who was going to try to wrestle fifteen hundred dollars or fifteen thousand or a hundred fifty thousand or a million five out of me. It just changes the way people look at you. (President D, p. 8)

As with university presidents, fundraising and community relations are increasingly important, and a significant part of his job is external to the college, but he believes that

the president of a community college still has a critical internal role. In President D's opinion a large university cannot be managed in the same sense as a small community college, "Those organizations are unmanageable. They're just wild and enormous and flawed as organizations, but I think that [university president] has showed us that a president can make a difference. He set a tone and a direction for that institution that is quite easily recognized" (President D, p. 8). By comparison, a community college president is more like a high school principal, and the impact of the president at a community college is "far more dramatic and obvious than that" (President D, p. 8).

President D does not like to begin an initiative without being very well prepared. He believes that it is important to seek consensus and adequately communicate both the nature of the change and the rationale for it. President D implemented a tuition schedule change similar to the one that caused a furor at College C. The change at College D took place "without much of a whimper" (President D, p. 4). President D emphasizes that it is important that the institution is ready for the change that you propose. He compared it to rocking a boat, "At some point there's such a froth that you have to let it calm down a bit" (President D, p. 12).

President D pointed out that there are some changes that he would like to implement but he knows that the institution would not easily accept them. For example, he would like to see the faculty become involved in academic advising of students, but the faculty does not support the idea. He could force the issue, but he would face a backlash. Avoiding the backlash is more important than foregoing the opportunity to implement a faculty advising system. He does not believe in what he terms the "slash and burn presidency" in which a new president comes in, makes a major disruptive change,

and leaves, "It's hard to have a lasting effect on an organization you don't work for anymore" (President D, p. 12).

President D believes in seeking advice from faculty. From his perspective, the faculty has an enormous amount of power because he listens to them. That gives them tremendous influence on decisions. However, if you ask how much actual authority the faculty has to make decisions, the answer is "not very much" (President D, p. 6). He believes that there is enormous centralized authority in the position of community college president, but he rarely has to use it. If you use the power of the presidency very often, the power tends to dissipate.

According to President D, his long-term relationship with the college has allowed him to accumulate influence. He illustrated this idea with an example of a situation in which a faculty member became involved in a conflict with a local high school teacher. President D received a call from the superintendent who told him that some of the board members were concerned about the situation. Because President D has been at the college for many years, his statement to the superintendent that it would be taken care of was sufficient. He then talked to the faculty member and got the situation under control.

Maintaining balance in the institutional mission is an important part of President D's operational philosophy. No part of the mission is more important than any other, and no activity should grow at the expense of another. When asked what he is most proud of, he points to the fact that there are no areas of the college that are a disappointment. He compares it to the Olympic games. His goal is that the college wins a silver medal in all areas rather than a gold medal in a few. In his opinion, College D cannot boast national

preeminence in any area, but overall few colleges "can point to such a high standard accomplishment" (President D, p. 5).

President D believes that his strength as a leader is the fact that he is comfortable delegating to others and allowing others to take the credit for institutional successes, "If a person really has to earn daily constant recognition as the person who did things, I think he'll squelch a lot in the organization" (President D, p. 7). He has also learned the value of placing trust in people:

> I've not spent much time worrying about whether a person was worthwhile or capable. If they were there, I tried to rely on them. I think that has proven to have a more uplifting effect on them and their performance and their collective performance than I could have imagined. . . . I think that's been a really good strategy. (President D, p. 6)

At the same time, he believes this may be his weakness. Occasionally, people criticize him for "spending way, way too much time on people who probably aren't up to the task," and finding the right balance has been a challenge (President D, p. 6).

Like others in the community, President D recognizes that the greatest threat to the institution is the declining population base. He has responded to the threat with an extensive high school dual credit program that has provided a successful countervailing force against declining enrollments. He is also concerned with the state's waning commitment to community colleges.

According to President D, community college presidents must also live the role of institutional symbol. President D understands that when he speaks, people see him as representing the college. It is not possible for the president to simply speak his or her

mind on any given issue. President D has learned to process what he thinks along with what a number of other people think before he speaks. He does not believe that this causes any significant internal tension or takes a significant personal toll because he has not found himself in a position where his basic values came into conflict. He simply wishes that sometimes he could "say what I think and not be concerned about the consequences" (President D, p. 10).

Community college presidents have "one of the best jobs in the land," but a person who aspires to the presidency should realize that there is a reason why they pay you relatively well. The presidency is a huge commitment and requires long hours of hard work. In the end, the president has the final responsibility for the institution, "There are times when you realize that it's an ugly job that has to be done, and you're it" (President D, p. 11).

Constituent evaluation

President D was evaluated positively by the three critical constituencies: administration, board, and faculty. His case is unique among the four president studied in that he followed a president who was viewed positively.

Administration

CAO D believes that President D's methods have served the college well, particularly from the standpoint of resource conservation. Some organizations can afford to make mistakes because they have the resources to recover, but College D cannot. He compares it to a millionaire investing $20,000 in a risky stock as opposed to a person whose annual salary is $20,000 making the same investment. The millionaire can afford

to lose, the other person cannot. There have been very few failures at College D. In fact, he is unable to name any.

CAO D also praised President D for the way in which he tests a new idea or proposal before attempting to move forward with it. The president thinks an idea through very thoroughly before he even mentions it to anyone. He will usually ask the opinion of several administrators before he puts it in front of the faculty. President D listens very seriously to the faculty and genuinely ties to achieve consensus before proceeding. CAO D also mentions that he and the president think so much alike that "one of us can usually start a sentence and the other end it" (CAO D, p. 1).

The vice president for student affairs believes that President C is effective. She described how he keeps everyone focused on the college's strategic plan and goals. The president holds an ongoing series of structured meetings in which he makes formal presentations, "You can't avoid knowing what the mission is" (VP Student Services D, p. 2). The forty-minute presentations are not a dialogue--he does not invite discussion, argument, or controversy--but in the days that follow people are encouraged to forward their comments or concerns in E-mail or by scheduling a meeting with the president.

The administrative team is expected to know the vision and insure that everyone on his or her staff knows the vision and is "on board." Administrators are expected to be directing and guiding their staffs in concert with the vision and "definitely need not to be caught off guard by anything . . .Some might call that controlling, but that's what we call leadership here" (VP Student Services D, p. 5). In her view, President D's strategy is to keep an agenda in front of people all the time. It is a strategy to keep people from coming up with their own agenda. They have to work so hard to keep up with his agenda that

they are unable to come up with their own. There are some times when there are "a couple of voices saying 'I don't like that,'" but according to the vice president, "boy, they don't get far" (VP Student Services D, p. 11).

Of course, there are times when things do not go according to the plan. President D gets frustrated when people are not able to complete an assignment, "He's not one to want to wallow in why I can't. He doesn't want to hear it" (VP Student Services D, p. 5). She believes it would be nice for him to help them "feel more human" rather than to just "produce, produce, produce" (VP Student Services D, p. 7). She believes the institution would be just as effective.

Faculty

The faculty at College D has an association, but not a union. They elect a president who represents the faculty in the annual salary negotiation, but there is no formal collective bargaining unit. Typically, the faculty president has lunch with President D several times in the spring and explains the concerns and goals that faculty have for the year. President D shares his goals for the faculty. The legislature apportions community college funds for the year, and the administration establishes raises and benefits after considering faculty concerns. Faculty D is the current faculty association president.

Faculty D has been a union representative at other places he worked, and he believes that the situation at College D is much less adversarial. The board and administration believe that College D is one of the best in the state, and they believe that the faculty should be compensated accordingly. They try to keep the faculty in the top

third of all community colleges in the state. Faculty D is content as long as they make a good faith effort.

According to Faculty D, the administration rarely makes a major change without allowing debate and discussion among the faculty first. The administration does make changes in proposals based on faculty opinions:

> I don't know what it was like before our current president got here, but what I've heard is that it was pretty similar. Collegial is a word they use a lot. They don't just say it. It isn't just propaganda. (Faculty D, p. 4)

By way of example, Faculty D, described how during the planning for the new student center, faculty members were given the opportunity to suggest changes in the architect's plans. The blueprints were spread out for them to analyze and critique. A number of changes were made based on faculty suggestions. "That impresses me," commented the faculty president (Faculty D, p. 5). Occasionally, the administration pushes hard on an issue, and sometimes this makes the faculty uncomfortable, but "at least they don't just institute it like some despot" (Faculty D, p 4). Besides, many of the issues relate to funding and expansion, and in Faculty D's view, "What do we know about that anyway?" (Faculty D, p. 4).

In Faculty D's opinion, President D is a "great guy," but not a person who possesses great leadership abilities. According to Faculty D:

> I think he's a good researcher. I mean, I think he doesn't do anything unless he's pretty sure it's the right thing to do, and he's pretty sure he could actually do it. He doesn't go off on wild flights of fancy. I'm not sure he's all that much of a leader. I think he's just well organized. (Faculty D, p. 9)

Leadership, in Faculty D's view, requires patience, moderation, and the willingness to bend. The most important part may be selecting the battles you can win. Leaders must do the research, lay the groundwork, and be willing to forego the "great massive victories for a couple of small ones. Then let the next generation come and pick it up where you left off" (Faculty D, p. 6). He pointed out that the NAACP did not achieve any concrete victories from the time it was formed in the early part of the century until 1954. In his opinion, administrative leaders have to adapt to the climate and try to influence it incrementally. They must lay the groundwork so that after a few years, what was once perceived as a radical change seems more moderate.

Board and community leader

Board Member D was highly supportive of the president. She stated that the board was very fortunate to have President D. She stated that he was very good at keeping the board informed of what was going on even before a board meeting takes place. If a board member misses a meeting, President D schedules a make-up meeting. She believes that the president's most important job is to insure the financial health of the institution, and President D has run a very efficient and cost effective college. Maintaining a smoothly functioning college is critical, "We seldom hear of any dilemma at the college. So if there's any kind of controversy at all, it's taken care of before it ever would hit the board members" (Board D, p. 5).

Community Leader D stated that the president has been very effective in providing leadership in the area of workforce and economic development. He described the president as diplomatic and intelligent. In addition, he said that he found the president to be approachable and that he occasionally called the president for advice because he

stated that President D had a good understanding of the broad picture of the region. He stated that President D was a very good fit for the college and the region.

Emergent themes

Three themes emerged from participant interviews at College D. The first theme is the recognition by the participants of the importance of consensus building. The second is the successful implementation of quality management concepts at College D. The last theme is the low tolerance for mistakes or failure at College D.

Importance of consensus

More than at any of the other colleges, participants at College D recognized and commented on the importance of achieving consensus at their college. President D made clear his unwillingness to try to implement changes without achieving consensus when he discussed his desire to have faculty involved in student advising, "We don't do it. . . . I 'd kind of like to, but I have it in that category of things that I would like to do, but the institution prefers not to" (President D, p. 4). President D believes that institutional and community support is critical to presidential success: "I think I see one thing happen to a new president that's unfortunate. They seem to lack the basic understanding of the need of the people of the institution and community to support them if they're going to make any lasting impact or change" (President D, p. 12).

CAO D comments on the efforts to achieve consensus at the college when he discussed the strategic planning process that "gives everybody an ample opportunity to come on board and see the pluses, see the minuses, debate the issues" (CAO D, p. 4). Faculty D states that when the administration proposes a new initiative "they run it through the system, and they allow us to complain about it and debate about it" (Faculty

D, p. 4). Achieving consensus does not happen easily, and participants at College D provide a glimpse of how it is done.

VP Student Services D makes it clear that administrators have the responsibility for insuring the support of their subordinates for the current agenda: "Make sure all your people are on board. Watch your dissenters. . . . You better watch it, and then you don't let it grow" (VP Student Services D, p. 10). The process of achieving consensus is part of a long-term strategy of building a cohesive culture, "We have to build our culture. It's our culture that we rely on . . . [President D's] strategy is if you get people to bind your culture, you don't have to nag them about, and they don't nag you about. For the most part, it works" (VP Student Services D, p. 10). According to VP Student Services D, it is important to "always have an agenda out there in front of them. That's a strategy so they don't come up with their own" (VP Student Services D, p. 11).

It is noteworthy that while the approach to achieving consensus at College D may seem aggressive or heavy handed, in the end, as President D points out above, he will not move forward unless he believes that people support him. The approach is hierarchical in that the final decision-making authority rests with the president, and he is aggressive in his efforts at persuasion, but because of his dedication to achieving consensus, it is simultaneously collegial.

Continuous Quality Improvement

President D did not articulate a management philosophy that specifically mentioned Total Quality Management (TQM), but it is clear that College D has incorporated many the key concepts associated with TQM. TQM was touted as the way to reverse the decline of American industry and compete effectively with Japanese

companies in the 1980s (Deming, 1982), and it also became prominent as a way to improve higher education, although the name was changed to Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) in order to avoid the negative connotations that the word "management" aroused in higher education settings (Birnbaum, 2000; Cornesky, 1993).

Strategic planning and process improvement are key components of TQM, "TQM is a system designed to engage an entire organization in planning and implementing a continuous improvement process. . . . It requires an organization to look to its core processes and to find ways of systematically improving them" (Story & Allen, 1993). The basic tenets of TQM are clearly being practiced, not just talked about, at College D. Nearly all the participants at College D mention the importance of strategic planning. In discussing the strategic plan, Board Member D emphasized the fact that "we all follow it" (Board D, p. 2). CAO D stated that the college was just completing its three to five year plan, and "we tend to go about it pretty aggressively. We tend to take it seriously. We tend to get a head start on those strategic plans, in fact, because we've had a lot of consensus building" (CAO D p. 1). CAO D also emphasized that the college is actually practicing CQI, "You won't see any signs around here that says we're a CQI institution or anything like that, because when we go to those institutions we find that they're not, where the quality improvement initiative is taken seriously here" (CAO D, p. 2).

Process improvement is another core concept of CQI. President D stated that his most important job was to run processes, and "to the extent that I run those processes well, the institution thrives" (President D, p. 3). Adopting "best practices" among those processes is another CQI strategy practiced by President D:

> Pick out some aspect of the college and I think of it in terms of there's got to be some best practices surrounding that particular territory. Our job is to learn what those best practices are and try to fit them together as best as we can and to our operation. I presume that most of the things that I do on a day-to-day basis are really processes. (President D, p. 4)

Birnbaum (2000) cites CQI as merely another management fad that found its way into higher education after it had been quietly dropped by the business and industry community. It is significant that at College D, CQI is being practiced and perceived as successful by the participants in the study. The explanation may lie in the relative size of College D compared with the universities that Birnbaum (2000) was considering, or it may be simply that the culture of community colleges with their more hierarchical structure lends itself to the implementation of CQI more readily.

Failure is not an option

A major theme that developed in the interviews at College D related to the willingness to take risks. CAO D was the most eloquent in articulating this theme when he used the investment analogy. In his view, College D simply did not have the resources in reserve to be able to afford to make mistakes. Community Leader D was discreet but explicit in his formulation of the issue, stating that the community was cautious, skeptical, and quick to shoot arrows. Board Member D alluded to the issue indirectly. When asked about the most important part of the president's job, she identified two areas of responsibility. The first was keeping the college financially stable, and the second was making sure that the college is running smoothly, and that controversy is minimized.

This intrinsic conservatism is reflected in President D's description of most significant accomplishment. He stated that while there are no initiatives at the college that are of national prominence, there are also no disappointments. The significance for leadership is clear. Risk taking behaviors would not be tolerated. Benchmarking, the management strategy that seeks the best practice in a given area, is championed by the president as a way of achieving high performance, but it is inherently a risk free strategy—experimentation and the risk of failure are undertaken by someone else. The kind of leading edge, innovative leadership that the board at College B requires would be anathema here.

This conservatism is also reflected in the President's leadership style. The vice president for student services stated that controversy was always handled privately. The president's regular sessions that he holds to explain the college's goals are not intended to be a dialogue. There is an undercurrent of control implicit in this process. An open forum might lead to disagreement and open controversy. Administrators are urged to keep their people "on board." As the vice president for student services stated, "Some might call that controlling, but that's what we call leadership here" (VP Student Services D, p. 5).

Summary

From the perspective of those interviewed for this study, President D has been a successful leader. Unlike the other presidents in this study, President D followed a president who was well liked and considered successful. He did not feel the need to make a radical departure from the direction set by his predecessor. His description of his job was decidedly more internal and process oriented than any of the other presidents

interviewed. He demonstrated a remarkable understanding of the details of the day-to-day operation of the college.

Community D is conservative, and President D's leadership is appropriately cautious. It is doubtful that other styles of leadership could be successful in this community. A president who allowed his staff to make waves in the community could find himself in trouble with the board. The example President D gave regarding a conflict between a high school teacher and one of his faculty members illustrates the point. President D got the individual under control. The idea that a leader must have their "personal act together" also supports this idea (President D, p. 3). The leader not only portrays an image of self-control to the board and community, but also models it for the staff and keeps the staff under control.

President D's views on leadership are complex. He first emphasizes the role of leadership traits when he discusses the need for a leader to be organized and under control on a personal level. From this standpoint, his leadership theory is trait oriented. However, he states that his most important role is to run institutional processes and that to the extent the he is successful in running those processes well "the institution thrives" (President D, p. 3). The emphasis on process is a distinctive trait of reengineering management theory championed by Hammer and Champy (1993) and is also characteristic of Total Quality Management (Cornesky, 1992; Spanbaur, 1992). But President D also emphasizes the importance of developing an institutional vision. He works hard at communicating and keeping the organization focused on the vision. From this perspective, his leadership philosophy parallels Burns (1978) transformational leadership theory.

President D is also strongly aware of the symbolic role of the president. In fact, his emphasis on personal discipline as a leadership prerequisite could be interpreted as an awareness of the symbolic role that the leader plays. In this sense, the inherent conservatism of the community would demand a leader who at least appeared to be orderly and self-disciplined. President D is also aware that he speaks not as an individual, but is rather seen as a symbol for the college. He alludes to this when he states that he wishes that sometimes he could "say what I thought and not be worried about the consequences" (President D, p.10).

President D also makes statements that parallel the servant leadership principles of Greenleaf (1996). For example, he stated that one of his basic leadership values is that he trusts people, and that he relies on them "without worrying about whether a person was worthwhile or capable" (President D, p. 6). He said, "I just feel privileged to have a job in the first place, and I found people in position, and began working with them" (President D, p. 6). President D's idea that a leader has to demonstrate "everything from basic communication skills to just self-discipline on a social and moral point" is an example of the kind of role modeling that is a part of the servant leadership strategy (President D, p. 3). The fact that President D is willing to take on the task of writing the Title III grant proposal in the absence of a grant writer shows that he does not consider himself too lofty to help out wherever it is needed. President D's willingness to allow others to take credit can also be seen as an example of the humility characteristic of a servant leader.

President D's statements about leadership also emphasize the importance of power and influence. The different types of power described by President D resemble the

categories established by French & Raven (1959). When President D refers to the concentration of power in the office of the president he is describing *legitimate* power. The power that is accorded to him by virtue of his long-standing relationship with the community is *referent* power. The respect that Faculty B gives the president for his ability to organize an initiative is an example of power that president has earned through his ability or talent, or *expert* power. The power that President D exerts over the faculty member who causes trouble in the community is probably an example of *coercive* power. Of course, it is not likely that President D labels or categorizes each form of power that he exercises, but it is clear from his comments that in his conception of leadership, he is keenly aware of the role that power plays and its dynamics.

Considered from the standpoint of formal leadership theory, President D's views on leadership are eclectic. He utilizes elements of a wide range of theories in his discussion of his leadership philosophy and behaviors. This in itself may represent a leadership theory in that President D takes a pragmatic approach that utilizes the parts of various theories that work best for him and the institution. It is, in effect, an extension of his theory of best practices in that he takes what he sees that is best from a variety of theories. It is plain, however, that President D, has made his leadership practices work at the institution. All strategic constituencies support him, and even though people recognize that he has shortcomings, he is respected and acknowledged as an effective leader.

Chapter Summary

This chapter has presented the results of four case studies of outstanding presidential leadership. A description of the leadership context of each of the four cases

was provided. The description included community, the college itself, and the president who preceded the existing president. The path that each president followed to the presidency was also described. The presidents' statements about leadership and evaluations of the presidents' leadership by strategic constituencies were presented. Finally a summary of each case was provided. Chapter Five presents a cross-case analysis and answers to questions that guided the research.

CHAPTER FIVE: ANALYSIS AND CONCLUSION

This chapter begins with a brief overview of the study. The overview is followed by a cross-case analysis that discusses themes or patterns that emerged among the institutions studied. Answers to the questions guiding the study are presented next, followed by the study's conclusion. Finally, recommendations are made for further research.

Overview of the Study

The purpose of this qualitative study was to discover how outstanding community college presidents conceptualize their leadership practices and behaviors and what experiences they believe have prepared them for the presidency. It also sought to learn how their strategic constituencies (Birnbaum, 1992) evaluated the presidents. Purposeful sampling (Patton, 1990) was used to select four community college presidents from a group of presidents identified as outstanding in a study conducted by McFarlin (1997). Personal interviews were conducted with each president and representatives of their strategic constituencies: faculty, administrators, and the governing board. In addition, at each institution, the president's administrative assistant, a student leader, and a community leader were also interviewed. The research was supplemented with analysis of relevant documents and with a visit to each institution.

The data were collected in the fall of 2000 and the spring of 2001 at community colleges in the Midwest region of the United States. Thirty-two formal interviews were conducted, and more than 300 pages of typed, single-spaced transcripts and summaries were generated from the interviews. Data analysis was conducted using the data reduction methods of Miles and Huberman (1994).

Cross-case Analysis

A multi-case, qualitative study attempts to identify themes and explanations that emerge across cases (Merriam, 1998). This section includes a cross-case analysis of the following: the presidents' discussion of leadership theories; constituent evaluations of the presidents including administrators, faculty, board and community leaders, and students; the president's statements about how to best prepare leaders for the community college; the peer nomination process for identifying outstanding presidents; and gender and the community college presidency.

Presidents' leadership theories

Each of the presidents spoke about their views on leadership. Transcripts of their interviews were analyzed to determine the leadership theories implicit in their statements. Four themes emerged from a cross-case analysis of the presidents' leadership theories. First, while each president's implicit leadership theory was different, each was appropriate for his or her specific leadership context. Second, despite the emphasis on transformational leadership among some community college leadership studies (Fryer & Lovas, 1991; Roueche, Baker, & Rose, 1989) and many authors writing for the popular audience (Bennis, 1989; Gardner, 1990; Kouzes & Posner, 1987; Nanus; 1992), only one of the presidents' leadership theories could be described as transformational based on the model of Burns (1978) and Bass (1985). Third, in contrast to the organized anarchy model of college and university governance set forth by Cohen and March (1986), the presidents interviewed for this study clearly believed that they had substantial control over decision-making in their organizations. Fourth, each of the presidents demonstrated

an awareness of the primary mechanisms used by leaders to influence culture (Schein, 1992).

Leadership and context

Each of the presidents interviewed for this study described a different theory of leadership, but each theory of leadership was appropriate within the context of that particular college. President A described an approach to leadership that emphasizes relationships and concern for the needs of followers:

> My philosophy of leadership is that in my job as a leader, I always use the metaphor of the leader of an orchestra. My job as the leader is to allow all of these wonderful musicians here--faculty, classified staff, student leaders, whatever--I have to provide them with the opportunity to perform to be able to do their best work in a way that suits the mission of the institution. So whatever that means, sometimes it means providing resources. Sometimes it means providing motivation. Sometimes it means providing them recognition or providing them the opportunity. (President A, p. 5)

This philosophy closely matches the leadership concepts of path-goal theory (House, 1996). Path-goal theory asserts that the leader's primary task is to address the needs of his or her followers. The leader must supply the resources necessary for followers to achieve their goals, although the needs of followers vary from person to person.

Within the context of College A, such an approach is appropriate. President A has placed a higher priority on relationships than tasks. The mistrust and hurt that lingers among the faculty as a result of their experiences with the past president requires healing. President A's patience and willingness to endure frustration in order to achieve consensus

before moving forward was identified by other participants as a factor that will enhance the healing process.

Clearly, the relationship-oriented approach of President A would not be acceptable at College B. Faculty B made it plain that she would find it strange if the college were not on the cutting edge of innovation. The board at College B expects innovation and high standards of performance from the president and the college. President B's philosophy emphasizes pushing followers for high achievement. President B is concerned for people and relationships as well, but emphasizes goals and task completion far more than President A. President B tries to combine high expectations with consideration for people: "What I've tried to do is to blend that can-do attitude and constantly pushing people but probably more diplomatic and with more input in giving them more voice in direction and decision than what I probably saw [the former president] doing" (President B, p. 1). This approach is closely parallels the leadership theory of Blake and Mouton (1978).

President C believes that she has a mandate for change. The board and community wanted a president who would move the college into more external relationships. She articulates a model of leadership that is congruent with transformational leadership (Burns, 1978; Bass, 1985). Her concept of decision-making follows the model of Vroom and Yetton (1974). Her approach limits the participation of faculty in the governance process depending on circumstances, "The goal to me of shared governance is having decisions made at the appropriate level" (President C, p. 2). The approach that she has taken must be considered relative to the context of College C where the board and

community want to see the college more involved in external relationships and expect President C to move the college in this direction.

Finally, President D's cautious somewhat controlling approach to leadership fits the expectations of the conservative community the college serves. Risk taking behaviors and controversy would probably not be tolerated in this conservative setting. His emphasis on strategic planning and process improvement parallels the business process reengineering concepts of Hammer and Champy (1993) and Continuous Quality Improvement (Cornesky, 1993; Spanbauer, 1992). His linear, rational approach to leadership ensures that everyone knows and follows a clearly established set of priorities.

The common thread that runs through all of these approaches to leadership is that they are sensitive to context. Each of the presidents describes a different theory of leadership, but each leadership theory is appropriate for the context. Among the broader categories of leadership theory, contingency theory includes a variety of leadership theories all of which have in common the idea that the success of leadership behaviors depends on the organizational context (Northouse, 1997). Each of the theories within the general category of contingency theory emphasizes the importance of a different leadership variable, but all contingency theories recognize that there is no universal set of leadership behaviors that are successful in every situation. This study lends support to this premise.

Some theorists assert that leaders have a dominant style that cannot be changed (Blake & Mouton, 1978; Fiedler, 1967). In their view successful leadership depends on matching leaders with the appropriate situation. If this is true, then the board and others involved in the presidential selection process must consider the college's leadership

needs carefully before selecting a president. A single model of presidential leadership will not be successful at all institutions.

Transformational leadership

In comparing the leadership models of the presidents, it is also noteworthy that only one of the leadership approaches could genuinely be described as transformational according to the model described by Burns (1978) and Bass (1985). Popular books on leadership would lead one to expect that nearly all outstanding leaders would follow the transformational model (Bennis, 1989; Gardner, 1990; Kouzes & Posner, 1987; Nanus; 1992; Nanus, 1992; Kouzes & Posner, 1991; Senge, 1990).

President B's vision of the future paralleled that of his strategic constituencies. Participants shared a belief in innovation and community service and saw the college continuing in this direction, getting bigger and better. At College B, the president encouraged and maintained values of innovation and community service, but it is not accurate to describe President B's leadership as transformational. It is clear from interviews with other participants that far from transforming the basic values of his followers, President B is simply reinforcing values that existed before he became president, values that are supported and sustained in substantial measure by the board of trustees.

President A's leadership is slow and patient and designed to heal the hurt and mistrust left from the previous president. Although the healing process will result in a change in faculty members' beliefs and attitudes towards administration, the steady use of influence to change basic assumptions is closer to a model of cultural leadership (Schein, 1992) rather than transformational (Burns, 1978; Bass, 1985). President D's

cautious leadership is designed not to make dramatic transformations but to provide a steady succession of initiatives without failures. The conservative attitudes of the community limit the types of leadership that could be successful in this setting.

Transformational leadership describes a leader who undertakes fundamental organizational change whereas transactional leadership tends to maintain the status quo (Burns, 1978; Bass, 1985). From this perspective, only President C could be construed as a transformational leader. Her attempts to change a traditional junior college into a comprehensive community college are substantive and fundamental and can be considered transformational.

The creation of a shared vision of the future that elevates both leader and follower to a higher moral plane is a necessary condition, the sine qua non, of transformational leadership. The shared vision unites people around a common purpose. There are indications at College C that a shared vision of the future may not exist. The recent controversy over the per-credit tuition model is an example. It is important to point out, though, that the controversy over the per-credit tuition model which evoked such a vociferous reaction from the faculty was only one issue, and because it had taken place relatively recently (within one year of the campus visit), it may have assumed more importance to interviewees than it merits in the long term perspective. However, it is also possible that transformational change at a college cannot be achieved without a degree of backlash and turmoil. In Burns (1978) text on transformational leadership he illustrates this point citing Chairman Mao's sardonic comment about the disruption and loss of life that accompanied the Cultural Revolution, "a revolution is not the same as inviting people to dinner" (p. 233).

Birnbaum (1992) argues that Burns (1978) model of leadership creates a duality of transactional and transformational leadership that turns out to be "a distinction without any real meaning for colleges and universities" (p. 29). Birnbaum (1992) asserts that because the "enduring purposes of academic institutions are likely to be shaped by its history, its culture, and the socialization of its participants, rather than by an omnipotent leader," transformational leadership is likely to lead to "disruption and conflict" rather than to "desirable outcomes" (p. 29). The faculty uproar that accompanied the transformational leadership of President C may be an instance of the disruption and conflict described by Birnbaum (1992). However, it is important to realize that within the context of the community college, the emphasis placed on workforce development and external activities represents an historical force that shapes its purposes. For an institution like College C, with a tradition as a junior college, it is inevitable that there is tension as President C attempts to reshape the institution to meet the changing expectations of the board and the community. Whether workforce development and other changes in the institutional direction are desirable depends on one's perspective and values.

Leadership and influence

Cohen and March (1986) argue that colleges and universities represent a special type of organization characterized by "organized anarchy." Cohen and March (1986) use garbage can theory to explain how decisions are made in organizations operating under conditions that are so ambiguous as to make decision-making in the traditional sense impossible. Decisions are "de-coupled" from outcomes because outcomes result from the intersection of independent problems, solutions, and choices. Cohen and March's (1986)

view of organizations, however, does not match the perceptions of the presidents described in this study.

President A makes it clear that while he does not feel that he has the same degree of control in the external arena, "There are so many issues floating around out there that you have no control over," he does believe that he influences the internal operation of the college, "I like to come back because I can see what we're doing here" (President A, p. 9). Moreover, he believes that he is able to delegate authority, "I think I'm a participative manager where I try to delegate the authority for running the various operations of this campus to all of my administrators and to faculty" (President A, p. 9). Implicit in the assumption that he can delegate authority for decision-making is the belief that he controls the decision by controlling who makes the decision. He does not believe that decisions are made randomly.

President B also makes clear his belief that he controls who makes decisions. He states that his philosophy is based on allowing others "more voice in direction and decision" (President B, p. 1). He states that he tries not to make decisions that the CAO "knows nothing about," and explains that they "make decisions together on staffing" (President B, p. 2). President B also emphasizes structure in describing College B, "Our organization is very, very flat. . . . Our decision was however we structure, there can't be more than four reporting levels from the employee to my office" (President B, p. 3). Clearly, President B sees himself at the top of a hierarchical reporting system with significant control over decision-making.

President C described a carefully considered decision-making process in her interview. She stated that the goal is "having decisions made at the appropriate level in

the institution" (President C, p. 2). Her model closely matches the decision-making model of Vroom and Yetton (1974). She discussed the revenue generated from the decision to implement the per-credit tuition model, explaining, "this is the cause, and this is the effect" (President C, p. 2). Her model of decision-making and the strong linkage of cause and effect is not characteristic of the garbage can model of decision-making described by Cohen and March (1986).

President D believes his most important job is to run processes, and "to the extent that I run those processes well, the institution seems to thrive" (President D, p. 3). President D relies heavily on strategic planning and stated that he believed that he has "enormous centralized authority" (President D, p. 7). The fact that President D sees his role as running processes, his reliance on strategic planning, and the perception that he has enormous centralized authority all indicate that President D sees the institution and decision-making as under his control.

All of the presidents interviewed for this study believed that they had the authority to make decisions or to delegate decision-making to others. Presidents in this study assume the existence of a structure to facilitate the coordination and control of the actions of individuals within the organization. The centralized authority and the ability of the president to control decision-making is at variance with the garbage can theory of decision-making described by Cohen and March (1986). The explanation for this difference may lie in the culture of the community college. With its managerial culture (Bergquist, 1992), its origins in the secondary school system, and its traditional hierarchical structure dating to the founding presidents (Vaughan, 1986), community

colleges are markedly different than universities, and the concept of organized anarchy and the garbage can theory of decision-making may not apply.

The chaos, ambiguity, and randomly intersecting streams of activity described by Cohen and March (1986) are not evident in the transcripts of the participants of this study. In the minds of the participants, structure, control, and order exist. Cohen and March (1986) offer organized anarchy as a theory to explain the apparent randomness and chaos in decision-making that appears to exist in some organizations. The perceptions of the presidents in this study portray an institution that does not fit the model.

Cultural leadership

Schein (1992) argues that leaders effect change in organizations and influence their followers through actions that affect the beliefs and assumptions people hold about institutional reality. According to Schein (1992), some of the primary mechanisms used by leaders to influence culture are: what leaders pay attention to, how leaders react to critical incidents; the criteria used to allocate resources; and the criteria used for selection, promotion, and excommunication. Each of the leaders demonstrated significant awareness of the importance of some of these mechanisms for influencing institutional culture.

Leaders choose to focus on some issues and ignore others. This is a powerful way to communicate values and beliefs. For example, maintaining institutional quality and integrity is an important value to the presidents interviewed. President B demonstrated his concern for quality and communicated this value when he reacted strongly to a burned out light over the basket in the gymnasium. President B acknowledged that he was upset

when he confronted the person responsible, but as he stated, "If a president is willing to ignore that kind of sloppy thing, it will go on forever" (President B, p. 7). Schein (1992) asserts that a leader's emotional reactions are very powerful, "especially the emotional outbursts that occur when leaders feel that an important assumption is being violated" (p. 233). President A demonstrated his understanding of this principle when he remarked on his reticence to give vent to his emotions. He stated that in some areas he believes that he knows how to do things better than his subordinates. His first impulse is to jump in and say, "Why are you doing this? This is nuts!" but he checks that impulse because "it has a rippling effect all the way down through the organization" (President A, p. 11).

A leader's reaction to critical events helps create new norms and values and reveals important underlying assumptions; critical events or crises create anxiety, a powerful motivator for new learning (Schein, 1992). What constitutes a crisis or a critical incident is a matter of personal perception, but the per-credit tuition controversy at College C was identified as a crisis by all interviewed including President C who stated that if the initiative failed, she might lose her job. Her discussion of the issue demonstrates a conscious awareness of the importance of this incident in communicating her underlying assumptions and beliefs about governance:

> We worked very hard to share with this campus what the additional income was going to mean. . . . We were real careful to share with them that this is the cause and this is the effect. . . . So the message to this campus was the board has voted . . . We are going to do this. This is not debatable. Now where we need your input and help is what this model is going to look like. (President C, p. 2)

This incident was critical to her presidency because she believed that she had been given a mandate for institutional change, and the issue of governance was critical to the changes she was attempting to implement. She was asserting her views about the role of the faculty in institutional governance. The message was that she will do what she believes is best for the institution, and while the faculty have a voice in how changes will be made, she will have the authority to make the final call. The fact that she was willing to risk losing her job is a powerful statement about her level of commitment to this principle.

Whether new norms were established in the per-credit tuition issue is difficult to ascertain, but there are indications that administrators at College C altered their views substantially as a result of the controversy. Most stated that she had demonstrated remarkable tenacity and perseverance:

> She's not afraid to say this is what we need to do. . . . When I say every cost, it's not necessarily financial, but if it means knocking down policies or laws or whatever, we're going to go in there and try to get a change. (CAO C, p. 1)

In the years to come, the per-credit controversy may become a story that helps transmit not merely the legend of President C's tenacity, but also the underlying statement about the degree of authority accorded to the faculty.

Budgeting and resource allocation communicate what leaders believe is important. The process for deciding budgets, the programs that are supported with resources, and who has authority all communicate important values and beliefs. President A sent a clear statement about his values when he discontinued intercollegiate athletics in favor of intramural sports. He stated that it was more important to serve a greater number

of students with the same resources. An important part of President B's management strategy is to allow the division deans complete latitude with their annual budget. The fact that they have so much autonomy with their budgets communicates to them that they have the authority and the responsibility for their programs, "That's what keeps their motivational level high" (President B, p. 3).

A critical statement made by President D concerns his symbolic role in the budgeting process. One of President D's core beliefs is that all of the initiatives at the college should attain a high standard of excellence, illustrated by the metaphor of the Olympic silver medal. But President B is not willing to expend the resources that he believes are necessary to attain national prominence in any one field. In this instance, the allocation of resources reflects his core belief about the level of quality attainable by the institution. This value has been communicated and internalized by the organization to the extent that within the established parameters, the budget allocation process is virtually automatic. Consider President D's comment on resource allocation:

> I make a lot of resource allocation decisions but if you look below that surface, you'll see that what I'm really doing is announcing the conclusions and decisions that some of those processes have made. I'm not really doing that personally. (President D, p. 8)

In this instance, President D has been so successful in inculcating his beliefs about what resource allocation is appropriate, that the results seem to be an inevitable outcome of the process itself.

Schein (1992) listed two other primary mechanisms for influencing organizational beliefs and assumptions: role modeling, teaching, and coaching; and the criteria used for

selection, promotion, and excommunication. When President B states "I'm particular, as people will tell you," it is plain that he is aware that others in the institution know that he pays attention to detail, and he wants others to be "particular" as well. This is clearly an example of role modeling. In the same way, although the presidents did not discuss the potential impact on institutional culture that result from personnel changes, it is clear that they are aware of its significance. For example, President A commented at length on the effect on the institutional climate of a person who was rude to students, concluding that "maybe they're not just appropriate for the job" (President A, p. 12). President A also mentioned that he saw the wave of retirements sweeping through his institution as an opportunity to change the institution:

> What this means is that those pioneers—those originators of this institution—have moved on, and now we have a whole new group of faculty coming in with different perspectives and different ideas. What we want to do is hire, first of all, people that are looking at the same values and image of the future that we are. . . . so that the institution will be able to naturally transform. So the hiring and who we hire and how we hire is going to be our major opportunity here to shape this place for not just the next five years but probably for the next twenty years. (President A, p. 6)

In this statement President A demonstrates that he understands the cultural ramifications of hiring new faculty.

In their discussions of leadership, each of the presidents interviewed emphasized a different leadership theory. None of the presidents described their leadership theory as cultural; however, a cross-case analysis revealed that each president's discussion of

leadership theory also contained elements of cultural leadership and demonstrated an awareness of the importance of at least some of the mechanisms critical to cultural leadership.

Constituent support

This section consists of a cross-case analysis of the evaluations of the president made by the three strategic constituencies--administrators, faculty, and board members--identified by Birnbaum (1992). An additional section analyzes student evaluations of the president.

Administration

Because the chief academic officer is the primary point of contact between the administration and the faculty, the person who holds this office has tremendous influence on the internal operation of the college and is critical to the president's success (Birnbaum, 1992; Vaughan, 1990). The fact that the majority of community college presidents hold the position of CAO prior to assuming the president (Vaughan & Weisman, 1998; Ross & Green, 1998), and the fact that presidents consistently cite the importance of mentoring and prior experience on the job in preparing for the presidency (Vaughan, 1986; McFarlin, 1997), further emphasize the importance of this position. In all four cases researched for this study, the presidents demonstrated their understanding of the importance of this critical position, and in every case the CAOs were positive in their evaluations and supportive of the presidents.

Because of the CAO's close working relationship with the faculty and the president's heavy external role, the position of CAO is critical to the president's relations with the faculty. At College A, the President created the CAO's position shortly after he

assumed the presidency. The CAO is able to work closely with the faculty; the president is involved only when major issues arise. There was no CAO position under the former president at College A. The former president chose to work directly with a group of deans. Both Faculty A and CAO A stated that the deans did a remarkable job under the previous president even though the deans were in a very difficult situation. Faculty A stated that under the former president the deans were not a part of the decision-making process. They were forced to implement many unpopular directives of the president.

The creation of the CAO's position at College A was considered to be a positive move by the faculty. Faculty A recognizes that the president cannot devote the necessary time to work directly with the faculty on academic issues and believes, moreover, that the creation of the CAO's position has led to greater participation in college governance since it gives the faculty more opportunity to have their voice heard. The faculty believes that the president could never devote the necessary time to work through the issues important to them without an intermediary to help carry the load. Allowing the CAO to carry the load of the detail work has freed the president to concentrate on critical issues with the faculty. At College A, the CAO supports and admires the president. He expressed his view most eloquently when he stated, "If I ever become a president, I would try to emulate [President A]. He embodies all the things that I see as important: a wealth of experience, wonderful personal relations, and the ability to tolerate an awful lot" (CAO A, p. 9).

The CAO at College B was identified by a number of those interviewed including the board member as a leader. The CAO has been at the college for over 30 years and provides tremendous continuity. Faculty B remarked that it was important for her to be

able to go directly to the CAO with problems. At College B, the president made it clear that the day-to-day operation of the instructional programs is the responsibility of the CAO. The CAO and president at College B maintain a very close relationship. CAO B keeps the president informed about internal affairs and the president kept the CAO informed about external issues. At College B, the CAO said that his personality and the president's did not overlap by five percent, but he was supportive of the president and stated, "I think we've got presidents . . . who are more like me, and therefore less successful. They need to be like [President B]" (CAO B, p. 5).

At College C, the CAO is new to the position. The former CAO was asked to step down shortly after President C started when it became apparent that the CAO would be an obstacle to change. The fact that President C found it necessary to replace the CAO demonstrates that she considers this a critical position. In order to implement her agenda for change she needed someone in this key role who was supportive. The new CAO is enthusiastic and supportive of her initiatives, "She's not been wrong yet. She's hit the mark every time. . . . She sees it out there. She sees an area that can be tapped, and she goes after it. She takes her leadership team and gives us a lot of room to make decisions and go do it" (CAO C, p. 2). He is anxious to see changes and was disappointed in the previous president's attitude towards new programs and pedagogy. He is of the same mind as the president especially with regard to exploring new methods of educational delivery.

President D praised CAO D and stated that he did not want to interfere with the vice president's oversight of instructional programs. President D demonstrated the high level of confidence that he has in CAO D when he commented, "From a practical point of

view, we have probably have as close to a co-presidency as you could have" (President D, p. 7). President D stated that he goes out of his way "to give him the autonomy and recognition that I think he deserves" (President D, p. 7). For his part, CAO D demonstrated his regard for the president by describing him as "a leader of the highest caliber" (CAO D, p. 4).

It is clear that the presidents in this study understand the importance of the CAO to their success. The fact that President A believed that he needed to create the position of CAO in order to expand the role of the faculty in governance shows how critical this position is in a community college. The leadership of the CAO at College B provides continuity and satisfies the need for faculty to have someone that they can consult with directly on issues that they believe are important. The fact that the CAO was replaced at College C in order to facilitate change illustrates the magnitude of the CAO's influence with the faculty. The importance of this role to presidential success was apparent in all cases. In each situation, the president enjoyed the support of her or his respective CAO.

Faculty

From the faculty vantage point, the issue of governance is critical to their satisfaction with the president. Other issues are important, but all faculty considered the degree to which the president supported shared governance as a criterion in their evaluation. Faculty A was pleased with the president because he was helping move the institution closer to the type of structure in which faculty could play a more significant role in decision-making. His primary criticism of the previous president was that he was too authoritarian and dictatorial. It is plain that President A was scrutinized carefully when he first became president to determine his position on the role of faculty

governance. Faculty A stated that President A had quickly veered away from a course of action early in his presidency that would have offended the faculty's sense of what their role in governance should be.

Governance was not in tension at College B, but Faculty B made it plain in her very positive evaluation of the president that his efforts to achieve consensus were a central part of why she believed that he was a good leader for the college. At College C, the faculty were not pleased with the degree to which they were allowed to participate in decision-making, and the uproar over the per-credit tuition model is evidence that they were willing to go to extraordinary lengths to have their voice heard. At College D, the faculty's expectations for shared governance were met, and this was a factor in their positive evaluation of the president.

Although faculty expectations for a share in the governance of the institution varied, in general, they were very modest. Faculty A was pleased with the degree of participation in governance achieved by the faculty although he looked forward to an expanded voice in the future. He stated that, "ultimately everyone realizes that he [the president] is the person who is going to make the decision. Sometimes we feel better about it than others. It seems obvious to me that he's not just listening but processing that information" (Faculty A, p. 5). Likewise, Faculty B was pleased with the efforts of the president to achieve consensus. At College C, where governance was most in dispute, President C believed that she gave the faculty an adequate voice in the decision-making process. She pointed to the fact that in the per-credit tuition controversy, the original proposal was modified as a result of faculty suggestions. Clearly, Faculty C did not agree. The vice president for operations offered a useful insight when he opined that decisions

needed to be allowed to percolate through the academic channels, even if it took longer. He understood that sometimes the way in which the decision is made is as important as the outcome. Finally, Faculty D also recognizes that the president makes the final decision, but is impressed that the faculty is at least asked their opinion stating "at least they don't just institute it like some despot" (Faculty D, p. 4).

The data in this study suggest that presidents who wish to enjoy the support of the faculty will need to consider the faculty expectations for shared governance. From the foregoing, it is clear that faculty at these institutions are not asking for broad authority in running the institution, they simply want to have the opportunity to have their voice heard and their opinion taken seriously. Given that faculty are the most crucial of the president's strategic constituencies (Birnbaum, 1992), community college leaders should work to ensure that their expectations are met.

Board members and community leaders

Each of the presidents enjoyed the support of her or his governing board. This is not a surprising finding especially for presidents with lengthy tenure since without the support of the board, it is doubtful that the president would be able to retain her or his position for an extended period. What is significant is that in their evaluation of the president, all board members included the expectation for serving community needs.

In describing President A's strengths, Board Member A cited the fact that, "He's worked with me and has begun work on dealing with underserved populations such as African-American men and others where there are untapped resources to strengthen our local and regional economy" (Board A, p. 2). Board Member B stated that serving the community was the most important part of the college's mission and added that the

college needed to reach "every nook and cranny" of the service area so that it was not "just that college downtown" (Board B, p. 1). In his evaluation of the president, Board Member C pointed out "her ability to really have a grasp and relate very well and make a very concerted effort to understand and to work with business leaders and political leaders in the community. It's very important, and she's done that very well" (Board C, p. 1). Board Member D cites the president's "great relationships with our community partners" and the fact that "he's been a leader in the community like in economic development" as the president's strongest qualities (Board D, p. 3). From their comments, board members make clear the expectation that the president will have a significant external role in addressing community needs.

Community leaders also emphasized the external role of the president, especially in economic and workforce development. For example, Community Leader A stated that the most critical issue facing the community was workforce development. He does not believe that the college or anyone else can solve the problem, "frankly, it's unsolvable," but he admires the president's willingness to work at it: "That is not a disappointment; I'm saying that I think that they're there when most people would say that we couldn't solve this or say let's do something easier. They're not afraid to take on a big project" (Community Leader A, p. 3). In his evaluation of the president, Community Leader A states that "he has an unusual ability to sort of reach out in the community, to do a lot of partnering and collaborating with a lot of entities" (Community Leader A, p. 1).

Community Leader B emphasizes the college's responsiveness and cites industry partnerships as a signal achievement of the president. Similarly, in his evaluation of the president, Community Leader C praises her for her efforts in workforce development,

"One of the focal points that [President C] has really brought to bear for the benefit of the community is that she has attempted to develop programs that train young people to support the businesses that work here or that employ people here" (Community Leader C, p. 2). Community Leader D also focused on the president's role in economic and workforce development in her evaluation of the president.

It is clear that the board members and community leaders in this study expected the president to develop relationships with the community in order to serve its needs, especially in the area of economic and workforce development. The board members and community leaders evaluated the presidents based on their perception of her or his success in meeting this criterion.

Students

Students are not identified by Birnbaum (1992) as a constituency that is strategic for presidential success, but students were interviewed for this study, and their views on leadership are revealing. At each college, student leaders were interviewed following the same protocol as the other participants. Their philosophies of leadership tended to be oriented towards providing leadership through modeling, inspiring, or serving others. Given the fact that most of their leadership roles (student senate, clubs, and so forth) involved positions with very little actual authority, this is not surprising.

All of the students were supportive of the presidents, although none had extensive contact with them. Their beliefs about the president's leadership were formed indirectly and were shaped by their individual experiences at the college. In every case they believed that the president was responsible for the college's successes, crediting the president with new buildings, ongoing funding, and a positive campus climate. In this

sense, their theory of leadership is attribution based. They may erroneously attribute successes or failures to the president that she or he may not be responsible for (Bass, 1990).

Leadership preparation

Since the presidents' beliefs about what shaped their leadership development was one of the key research questions, they were encouraged to speak at length on this point. Three of the four presidents stated that they had gravitated towards leadership roles at an early age. However, President D remarked dryly, "Outside of my mother, no one saw me as a particularly dynamic leader" (President D, p. 2). Early life experiences were not cited as a significant factor in their leadership development. Instead, the presidents emphasized the role that previous jobs and mentors had played in preparing them for the presidency. None of the interviewees set out to become a college president.

President A had been both a counselor and Dean of Students. He cited these two positions as his best preparation experiences for the job of president:

> I learned so much there about being a good listener and diagnosing a situation before you make a decision, and understanding that there are always more sides to a story than what first appears, but also to be somewhat creative in problem solving. I had to do a lot of that as Dean of Students by helping students work through different issues and helping faculty work through issues with students. (President A, p. 2)

President A also stated that two presidents that he worked for had provided mentoring that helped in his leadership development. One of the presidents he worked for told him flatly that he needed to get more education and that he should prepare for a presidency,

"If it hadn't been for her encouragement, I'm not sure that I would have ever really taken the step" (President A, p. 2).

President B stated that mentors were the most significant influence in his leadership development. It was a superintendent that he worked for who encouraged him to go back to graduate school. By far the most important mentor was the first community college president he worked for:

> The real influence is when I got an opportunity to come to [College B] to work with [the former president]. I got very, very close to [him]. I learned a lot. I could never manage a large organization without the experience from [the former president] because he knew how to delegate. His traits in how to delegate and how to establish expectations, how to establish direction, how to not ever be satisfied with where we are today, I learned from him. That's what I'll be forever. (President B, p. 1)

President B spoke with the greatest respect for his mentor, the former president, but, significantly, he also understood his mentor's weaknesses. Several administrators who worked with the former president described him as blunt, dictatorial, and aggressive. President B made a conscious effort to avoid those aspects of the former president's leadership style that tended to alienate people: "What I've tried to do is to blend that can-do attitude and constantly pushing people but with more diplomacy and with more input. I give people more voice and direction in decisions than what I probably saw [the former president] doing" (President B, p. 1).

President C stated that while she did have several people who acted as mentors, she did not have any one particular mentor that was of more significance than the rest.

President C stated that she learned 85% of what she needed to know for the job of president from work experience. She developed a comprehensive view of the community college as a result of holding a wide variety of positions. She stated that her background in nursing was excellent preparation for the presidency because it taught her communications skills, problem solving, ethics, and accountability. From the grant writing position, she learned politics and public relations. Her job in student services was also helpful.

All of the presidents interviewed hold doctorates in education. Two of the presidents believed that their graduate programs were a significant factor in their leadership development. President A stated that his doctoral program "had a tremendous impact" (President A, p. 3). He began the program with a cohort made up of people from a variety of backgrounds, not just education. The program gave him the opportunity to consider organizational and leadership theory in light of his work experiences:

> It was a great reflecting time where I could step back from my career and think about those things. I could look at it from the perspectives of these theorists. I could take the best of the ones that seem to fit me best and internalize it. And it became a part of my approach. (President A, p. 3)

President A believes that the doctorate is an important credential for people he hires as administrators. He believes that it demonstrates discipline and commitment, and it also adds stature to the institution.

President D also cited the doctoral program as an important preparation experience for the presidency. He stated that he had attended graduate school during a very dynamic period in the development of vocational education. One of the most

important benefits of the program was the opportunity to meet and work with some of the national leaders in the field. The network of contacts that he developed during his graduate work was instrumental in achieving his first presidency.

Of the two presidents who did not cite their graduate work as a significant factor in their leadership development, one was noncommittal, and one believed that while she learned some things from the doctoral program, it was essentially "a union card." Both of these presidents, however, did feel that formal leadership development programs can be useful. President C attended the National Institute for Leadership Development and found the guidance and networking gained in that program was very helpful in taking the final step into the presidency. President B strongly recommended the League for Innovation's Executive Leadership Institute to aspiring administrators and identified a number of current presidents who had attended the institute prior to obtaining their first presidency.

All of the presidents had suggestions about how to prepare future community college leaders. For those seeking to advance to a higher administrative post, President A suggested work in a community organization, internships, or even a leave of absence to work in a different organization. Experience in a different setting, he explained, will help them have a broader view. President B stated that graduate programs in education should focus more on leadership than management. His approach would be to allow people to spend time with people recognized as outstanding leaders in their field.

President C criticized graduate programs for their internal focus. She stated that the programs did an admirable job teaching what goes on within the college, but that they typically failed to emphasize the external dimensions. Politics and media relations are especially important to the president of a community college, yet she believed that these

areas receive little emphasis in most programs. Finally, President D suggested a case study approach that gives students a feel for the dynamic nature of the president's role. For example, what do you do when you are putting on your tie on Sunday morning and you receive an emergency call from the dorm? What do you do first when you are informed that a student drowned in the college pond?

Work experience is the common theme that runs through the presidents' ideas about preparing for top administrative roles. None of the presidents cited significant childhood experiences. The graduate degree program was a significant factor for two of the presidents interviewed, but all believed that mentoring and previous job experience were significant factors in their preparation for their leadership role. Mentors were important not merely for what they taught the aspiring leaders, but for the encouragement that they provided.

As a qualitative study, the findings of this research are not intended to generate generalizations that can be extended to larger populations. However, the data collected in this study does parallel some of the findings of Fisher, Tack, and Wheeler (1988) who asked 18 "effective" college and university presidents what they believed had helped them prepare for leadership roles. The presidents interviewed in Fisher, Tack, and Wheeler (1988) preferred the case study method of leadership training, but favored general education and interdisciplinary courses over "how-to" courses in educational administration. They also emphasized the importance of mentoring and internship programs.

"Outstanding" presidents

Peer nomination has been used in a number of studies of college presidents (Crittenden, 1997; Fisher, Tack, and Wheeler, 1988; McFarlin, 1997; Roueche, Baker, and Rose, 1989; Vaughan, 1986). Birnbaum (1992) argues that when peers identify a president as an exceptional leader they are "presumably responding to some visible aspect of the president's accomplishments" (p. 53). He believes that other presidents can have only a superficial understanding of another's leadership within the institution where much of what is significant in leadership takes place.

To some extent, this study can be seen as an explication of what is meant by an "outstanding" president in the study conducted by McFarlin (1997). McFarlin (1997) used a peer nomination method to identify outstanding presidents. The survey did not include a definition of "outstanding" or criteria to be used by the presidents who participated in the survey. This study provided an in-depth look at four of the presidents who were identified in McFarlin (1997). It provides a richer picture of who the people were that were chosen as outstanding and how they perceive their role as well as how they are perceived by their strategic constituencies.

From these case studies, it is possible to identify some commonalities that might suggest why these particular presidents were identified rather than other presidents within their states. For example, in each case considered for this study, the president maintains a high profile in the state. President A is president of the state association of community college presidents. President B is not only active in state organizations and legislative work but is also visible on the national level. Both President C and President D are active in the state legislature and in state organizations.

In addition, each college has building projects under way or has recently completed building projects. All of the presidents are active in the area of workforce and economic development. While the initiatives are at very different stages in each of the colleges, running the gamut from very mature and successful at College B to the nascent efforts at College A and College C, each president is active, visible, and vocal about the importance of economic and workforce development. All have recently completed successful capital campaigns.

There are several factors that might have influenced people to select a particular president that are not common to all the colleges. One of the colleges is the largest in its home state, but one is among the smaller colleges in the state. Only one of the colleges boasted high-profile athletic teams. The presidents' tenure varied: President A, 10 years; President B, 16 years; President C, 6 years, and President D, 20 years. Three of the presidents are longtime residents of their states, but one is not.

Clearly all of these presidents were involved in highly visible external activities, and this may have been the reason why their peers nominated them. However, with the exception of President C, all receive the support of the strategic constituencies of administration, board, and faculty (Birnbaum, 1992). Even President C is strongly supported by her administrative team and her board, and the participants' view of her relationship with the faculty may have been influenced by the fact that the per-credit tuition conflict had taken place so recently. But this is only one issue, and with the passage of time, it may be viewed differently. This study was not intended to provide validity for the peer nomination method of identifying outstanding presidents used by McFarlin (1997). However, if one measures the effectiveness of leadership by the degree

of support received from strategic constituencies (Birnbaum, 1992), then this study lends support to the peer nomination method.

Gender and leadership

It is not possible to make generalizations about gender and leadership from this study. Gender was not the focus of the project. However, in this particular instance, there did not appear to be any support for gender-based distinctions among the presidents regarding leadership style or theory. Each articulated a different theory of leadership. There was nothing in the interview with President C, the only female president in the study, which indicated that her leadership theory emphasized connectedness or relationships more than the other presidents in the way suggested by DiCroce (1995). It is possible, however, that women are selected for leadership roles based on the degree to which they possess leadership traits and behaviors that are considered traditionally masculine (Birnbaum, 1992; Amey & Twombly, 1995).

It is important to realize that men still dominate the top leadership positions in community colleges (Ross & Green, 1998). Women in executive positions in community colleges are isolated. President C mentioned the fact that she had had only one female role model. The women who work in the institutions included in this study have few female role models in executive leadership. All of the academic vice presidents were male, although the vice president for student services at two of the colleges were female. Community Leader C commented on the fact that as a female, President C provided a role model in what was a "traditional" region. Without regard to their leadership style, women who aspire to leadership roles at the community colleges in this study generally lack role models and female mentors.

Answers to Questions Guiding the Study

This section provides a summary of findings to the questions that guided the study.

1. What leadership concepts, theories, and practices are employed by presidents identified as outstanding by McFarlin (1997)?

Presidents interviewed for this study described a wide range of leadership theories. They did not identify their approach with a formal leadership theory, but it was possible to find a pattern of evidence in the presidents' statements that suggested a general leadership theory that they used to inform their leadership actions. President A's approach was relationship oriented and most closely fit the path-goal model (House, 1996). President B's statements paralleled the high task, high consideration model of the Managerial Grid proposed by Blake and Mouton (1978). President C utilized a transformational approach (Burns, 1978; Bass, 1985) but also described a model of decision-making that was similar in concept to the Vroom and Yetton (1974) model. President D's concept of leadership was significantly trait oriented but also incorporated elements of servant leadership (Greenleaf, 1996) and Continuous Quality Improvement (Cornesky, 1993; Spanbaur, 1992). In addition, President D emphasized the relationship of power and influence to leadership (French & Raven, 1959).

2. What are the differences among the leadership theories, concepts, and practices employed by the presidents identified as outstanding by McFarlin (1997)?

Four themes emerged from the cross-case analysis of the presidents' leadership theories. First, while each of the president's leadership theories was different, each was appropriate for the specific organizational context. Second, despite the emphasis on transformational leadership in popular leadership (Bennis, 1989; Gardner, 1990; Kouzes

& Posner, 1987; Nanus; 1992; Senge 1990) and the prevalence of the model in studies of community college leadership (Fryer & Lovas, 1991; Roueche, Baker, & Rose, 1989), only one of the presidents interviewed in this study could be considered transformational following the model of Burns (1978) and Bass (1985). Third, in contrast to the organized anarchy model of college and university governance set forth by Cohen and March (1986), the presidents interviewed for this study clearly believed that they had substantial influence and control over their organizations. Fourth, each of the presidents demonstrated an awareness of some of the primary mechanisms used by leaders to influence culture (Schein, 1992).

3. Are the presidents identified by their peers as outstanding in McFarlin (1997) viewed positively by strategic constituencies within their own institution?

Birnbaum (1992) found that of the three strategic constituencies, the faculty's support is the most important. Presidents who had strong faculty support always had the support of the board and administration, but those who failed to gain the support of the faculty often did not receive support from the others.

This study lends support to the idea that those community college presidents identified as outstanding by their peers are viewed positively by their strategic constituencies. The possible exception is President C who faces considerable faculty unrest within her institution, but the timing of the campus visit shortly after the controversy over the implementation of the per-credit tuition model may have affected their response, and from the vantage point of her board and her community, she is regarded highly. In addition, at the time that McFarlin (1997) conducted his study, the per-credit tuition controversy had not yet taken place.

Internal constituencies in this study--administration, and particularly faculty--tended to evaluate the president on the basis of her or his willingness to delegate authority and to achieve consensus. External constituencies--the board and community leaders--evaluated the president on responsiveness to community needs. Assuring the financial stability and procurement of resources was a common concern for all constituencies. The evaluation of the president, however, was generally dependent on context. The president of College A was valued for his patience, listening skills and the creation of an administrative structure that allowed for greater enfranchisement of the faculty. President B was valued for his willingness to seek consensus, but also for the fact that he created a climate that supported innovation. By contrast, President D was evaluated positively for not taking too many risks.

Like the leadership theories employed by the presidents, the evaluation of their success depends to a great extent on the institutional context. A common criterion in the evaluation all presidents in the study was their ability to form external partnerships in response to community needs. A common criterion among internal constituencies was their perceived success or failure in sharing governance of the institution or at least giving people an opportunity to have their voices heard.

4. How do presidents identified as outstanding perceive that they were prepared for the presidency?

The presidents interviewed for this study identified experience on the job and mentoring as the most important preparation experiences for the presidency. The mentors were described as providing both valuable opportunities for leadership and encouragement to pursue executive leadership roles. Experience gained from previous

jobs included the ability to delegate, an understanding of the importance of listening, and an understanding of the various departments within the college.

In addition, two of the presidents cited the doctoral degree as a significant preparation experience. The two presidents who did not emphasize the doctoral program as a significant preparation experience did, however, cite formal leadership development activities as important factors in their leadership development.

Significantly, none of the presidents believed that there were any early life experiences that helped prepare them for their role. All stated that they gravitated toward leadership roles early, but did not cite these experiences as critical.

5. How do outstanding community college presidents believe that we should prepare future community college leaders?

The fact that presidents interviewed for this study emphasized the role of experience in preparing them for their role as president implies that those who aspire to the presidency ought to hold several administrative positions in order to prepare them for the presidency. In addition, President B stated that internships could be a valuable preparation experience, but also acknowledged that good internship experiences were difficult to arrange. President A suggested that leadership roles in organizations outside the college would provide boundary spanning experiences that would help prepare people for the presidency.

According to President C, graduate programs should include more emphasis on the external aspects of the presidency including politics and media relations. President D believes that case studies and "in basket" exercises are effective strategies for teaching

executive leadership skills. President B and President C recommended leadership institutes as a practical way to develop leadership skills.

The recommendations made by the presidents in this study parallel those made by the effective presidents in Fisher, Tack, and Wheeler (1988). While this study is qualitative and it is not its intent to generalize its findings to the larger universe of community college presidents, these findings do tend to support the general conclusion that presidents believe that mentors, internships, and the experience of successive administrative posts within an academic setting are key preparation experiences. They also favor graduate programs that emphasize the practical or applied aspects of leadership.

Conclusions

In addition to the answers to the questions guiding the study, the data collected for this research project suggest the following:

1. The success of a given leadership theory depends on context. Presidents use a variety of leadership theories to inform their behavior and decision-making. Each president interviewed for this study used a different theory to explain her or his leadership. While these theories were appropriate within the context of a given institution, some theories would not be appropriate for other contexts.

The clearest example is President B. He is the logical successor to a series of aggressive, innovative presidents all of whom were supported by the board. The board plainly wants the college to be an innovative cutting edge institution, and the president must be someone who has the same philosophy. President B's idea that no matter what the college achieves he wants it better and bigger tomorrow fits their expectation. The

faculty expects this kind of leadership and made it clear that anything else would be an anomaly.

In the same manner, President A is the person needed at College A at this time. He is pursuing the workforce development that the board and community seek; at the same time he is helping heal the wounds of his predecessor. It is hard to imagine either President B or President C enjoying success at College A. President B is markedly impatient and would undoubtedly be as frustrated with the pace of change that is possible at College A. However, it is also doubtful that the board of trustees at College B would hire a president who did not aggressively push change.

A clear example of the way in which the president fits the institution can be found at College D. President D demonstrated a high degree of awareness of how the culture of the college would reject a leader who attempted to disrupt the course set by the previous president who was perceived so positively. When he began as president, he was circumspect and "earned a spot on the team" before attempting any initiatives. Even now, 20 years later, every new initiative is carefully researched and tested before he implements it. The community would not support the risk taking of President B, and certainly not the open rift between the faculty and the president that manifested itself in the newspapers at college C.

Transformational leadership was appropriate at College C because of the board's desire to see the institution transformed into a comprehensive community college. Transformational leadership may not be the modal leadership philosophy because it is not necessary or desirable in all instances. Other institutions within the study did not feel the same need for change as College C.

In consideration of the importance of institutional context, it is noteworthy that in three of the four cases in this study, the previous presidents were viewed negatively as a result of their autocratic behaviors. Founding presidents of community colleges tended to be autocratic and dictatorial (Vaughan, 1986; Cohen & Brawer, 1996). The fact that the organizations bristled against a style of leadership that was once acceptable is paradoxical in light of Schein's (1992) assertions about the primacy of founder values in an organization's culture. Weber (1947) may offer an explanation for this finding.

Weber (1947) asserted that as organizations mature and become more bureaucratic they require a different kind of leader. As the organization becomes more bureaucratic, the leader does not so much make decisions about the direction of the organization, but rather tends to engage in bargaining, coalition building, and compromise to get movement among deadlocked power blocs. The maturing of community colleges may reflect just such a change. As the colleges matured, a different kind of leadership context developed.

In a similar vein, Kerr and Jermier (1978) argue that with the formalization of an organization substitutes for leadership develop. The substitutes for leadership include the subordinates' ability, professional orientation, and the desire for autonomy. Task direction from formal leaders was actually found to be counterproductive. Bensimon, Neumann, and Birnbaum (1989) suggest that under these conditions "it may be more fruitful for administrators to assume the role of facilitator than controller" (p. 46).

The fact that the early presidents were unable to adapt to changing expectations lends support to Fiedler (1967) who argued that leaders are essentially unable to change their basic behaviors and must therefore be matched to situations that are appropriate for

them. The closeness of the match between presidents in this study and the context supports Fiedler's (1967) contention that leaders must be chosen for the situation. Fiedler also argues that there is no such thing as either effective or ineffective leadership; there are only leaders who are well or poorly matched for a given situation.

The leadership theories of the presidents and their leadership practices are dependent on context for success. What works in one college would most certainly fail in another. This study supports the idea that successful leadership among community college presidents is context dependent. In this respect, this study lends support to the broad concept of contingency theory which states that leader behaviors must be appropriate for the organizational context in which the leader and followers work (Northouse, 1997).

One conclusion that we can draw is that leaders need to select a theory that is appropriate for the setting in which they lead, or, conversely, leaders may need to be selected based upon their philosophical compatibility with the leadership context. It is also apparent that there is no single leadership theory that is appropriate for all settings.

2. Board members and community leaders tend to evaluate the president based upon the president's success in developing relationships outside the college, especially in the area of workforce development. Board members and community leaders were positive in their evaluations of the presidents in this study. Of importance in their evaluation of the presidents was the heavy emphasis they placed on external activities, especially workforce development. President A's statements indicate that he believes the movement into external activities to be part of the natural evolution of the community college:

> In the early days of our development--and it wasn't just this institution; I think it was all community colleges—we were so busy building our campus, our curriculum, our culture, and our reputation. . . . it was all internalized, we weren't looking at the world outside. . . . Now we've reached a maturity and a leveling. . . . Now it's time to look outside and say, "How can we better serve?" (President A, p. 6)

President A stated that he believes that it is time to "throw open the doors and the windows and the shutters of this place to the outside world," but he is frustrated that the resources are not there to support the activities (President A, p. 6). He complained that while he would like to do more, external groups simply do not understand the community college's capacity to respond:

> So the legislators are complaining about why these colleges aren't more responsive and why they aren't doing this. . . . I'm saying it's because you're not giving us the resources. We just can't turn it around. I can become very impassioned about my frustration because it is a true dilemma. (President A, p. 7)

President A elaborated on the lack of resources stating, "We're really limited here. We have a very lean administrative staff. . . . To expect somebody to stop what they're doing to take on a new venture is just not realistic. I've done it, and it just doesn't work" (President A, p. 7). For President A, the will to expand the activities is there, but he experiences frustration because of the lack of resources.

College C has strong roots as a traditional junior college. The board and community want the college to become a comprehensive community college with a substantial workforce and economic development mission. Although President C has

been successful in implementing the change, and while she has received praise from the board and community leaders for her efforts, it is also at the root of many of the problems she has with faculty. They believe that she expends too much energy on external activities, "If you talk to any of the business people in the community, they're going to tell you that she's the best thing that ever happened to the college. . . . lot's of what [President C] does is external. I'm not sure that's good" (Faculty C, p. 6).

Commentators have emphasized the importance of community colleges in supporting the economic well being of the country through their economic and workforce development efforts (Drucker, 1999; McCabe, 1999). Workforce development has been a traditional component of the community college mission since its inception (Cohen & Brawer, 1996), and was reaffirmed by the Commission on the Future of Community Colleges (1988) more than a decade ago. Yet, some commentators argue that the emphasis on workforce development has come at the expense of other critical components of the community college mission (Raisman, 1996; Dougherty, 1994). Presidents interviewed for this study embraced workforce development as an important part of their mission, but it is apparent that the potential exists for tension between the external and internal activities that causes conflict for some presidents in their leadership role.

3. Faculty members tend to emphasize the president's support for shared governance in their evaluation of her or his effectiveness. Faculty interviewed for this study used a variety of criteria to evaluate the president, but the president's support for shared governance was the most important. The faculty's expectations for shared governance were modest. They were not seeking broad authority for running the campus.

All recognized that the final authority for decision-making rested with the president, but they wanted to have their voice heard and their views taken seriously.

The fact that the faculty evaluates the president using different criterion than the board and the community has the potential for conflict. Conflict may result when the board and community call for changes in direction that are not supported by the faculty. When the board and community are anxious for rapid and dramatic change, presidents may have to choose between rapid transformation of the institution and alienation of the faculty on the one hand, and forgoing change until consensus is reached on the other.

4) Culture is important to an understanding of leadership in a community college setting. Culture consists of the expectations, assumptions, and beliefs that people use to interpret and make meaning out of experiences and events (Schein, 1992). Some striking examples of the importance of culture to leadership emerged from this research. For example, it is remarkable that each of the leaders was compared to their predecessor without regard to how long the current president had held the presidency. In every case, at least some members of the president's strategic constituencies used their perception of the previous president as a basis of comparison in their evaluation without having actually known the previous president. This suggests that beliefs about the previous president are communicated to newcomers, accepted, and used as the basis of evaluation of presidential leadership.

Culture also affected the ability of the presidents to effect change. At College A, faculty still harbor hurt and resentment from the previous president to a remarkable degree. They resist changes that the president tries to implement, even though these changes would increase their own voice in governance, something that they desire. The

faculty opposes change because they are suspicious of the administration as a result of experiences with the previous president who left nearly ten years ago. At College B, the culture of innovation that was established by the two former presidents helps President B make changes because the expectation already exists that the college will play a leading role in change. At College C, the transformation that the institution is undergoing is essentially a shift in values and beliefs, a cultural transformation from the paradigm of the traditional junior college to a comprehensive community college. Finally, at College D, the conservative, risk averse culture of the community dictates that a successful president plan and research new initiatives thoroughly and only undertake projects that are certain to succeed.

This study suggests that founding presidents and the values and beliefs that they have helped establish have enormous influence on the evaluation of community college presidents and on the ability of presidents to implement change. This phenomenon implies that institutional culture is critical to an understanding of presidential leadership. and lends support to the idea that "leadership and culture are two sides of the same coin" (Schein, 1992, p. 15). One can conclude that those who seek leadership roles in community colleges would be well advised to develop an awareness of the role of culture in determining the success or failure of leadership.

Recommendations for Further Research

This study raised questions that suggest opportunities for further research. The first series of questions is based on the fact that only presidents who had been identified as outstanding by their peers were considered for this study.

1. What leadership theories do presidents who are not identified as outstanding by their peers employ?
2. How do their strategic constituencies evaluate them?
3. Do their leadership theories fit the context?

The second series of questions was based on the fact that no ethnic minority presidents were included in the study.

1. What leadership theories do ethnic minority presidents employ?
2. How do their strategic constituencies evaluate ethnic minority presidents?
3. What is the nature of the interaction of the leadership theories of ethnic minority presidents with the culture of a predominantly white institution?

In order to provide answers to these questions, the following research is recommended:

1. A qualitative, multiple-case study in which community college presidents identified as outstanding using a peer identification method are compared with normative presidents.
2. A qualitative, multiple-case study of ethnic minority community college presidents that would identify the special cultural issues that they encounter as leaders.

In addition, research should be conducted to examine the unique experiences of female community college presidents including a qualitative, multi-case study of outstanding female community college presidents identified from the research conducted by McFarlin (1997). The research should focus on the evaluation of the presidents by their strategic constituencies (Birnbaum, 1992) and also attempt to identify experiences unique to female community college presidents.

The fact that the presidents interviewed for this study described leadership theories that matched the institutional context strongly suggests the need for governing boards and others involved in the presidential selection process to understand the importance of context and culture to leadership. Additional research should be conducted to determine the extent to which those who are responsible for hiring community college presidents understand the importance of finding the appropriate match between the president's leadership theories and the institutional context. Moreover, research should be conducted to determine the degree to which those who hire community college presidents understand the institution's culture, especially the faculty's expectation for shared governance and the board and community's expectation for economic and workforce development.

Finally, while this study examined the presidents' perception of the experiences which they believed were important to their leadership development, the issue of appropriate preparation for the community college presidency should be explored further. Bass (1990) found that leaders rate themselves more positively on leadership assessment instruments than either their subordinates or their bosses, and Birnbaum (1992) argues that leaders' self-assessments may be a reflection of what they think they should do rather than what how they actually behave. Given the natural human revisionist tendencies and self-serving biases, a study that focuses exclusively on preparation experiences should include more than just interviews with the presidents themselves. Interviews that focus on preparation experiences should also be conducted with the president's mentors, graduate program professors, colleagues, and family members.

APPENDIX A. PARTICIPATION LETTER

Dear _____

A 1997 study conducted by Charles McFarlin at Iowa State University utilized a peer selection method to identify 96 community college presidents as "outstanding" from the entire population of community college presidents in the United States. You were identified by your peers as one of the outstanding community college presidents. With the help of Dr. Larry Ebbers, Professor of Educational Leadership and Policy Studies at Iowa State University, I am conducting research into the preparation experiences of outstanding community college presidents.

In order to conduct this research, I would like to interview four of the outstanding presidents along with a member of their board of trustees, selected members of their staff, faculty, and students. Interviews with the presidents will require one to two hours. Other interviews would take about one hour. All information will be kept strictly confidential, and the results of the study will identify interviewees only by an alphanumeric code.

If you agree to participate in the study, I will spend several days visiting your campus learning as much as possible about the leadership environment and context. I would like the opportunity to attend a board meeting and participate in any other activities you deem appropriate to further my understanding of the uniqueness of your college.

The results of this study will help search committees and boards identify excellent candidates for the office of president and guide those who seek the office of president. In addition, it will help universities develop more effective leadership preparation programs and help current presidents be more successful.

Please contact me by telephone or e-mail if you agree to participate or if you have questions about the study. I recognize the pressures of your schedule, and I am grateful for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Stan Vittetoe
Executive Dean, Technologies
Indian Hills Community College
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APPENDIX B. INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR PRESIDENTS

Preparation:

Describe the career path that led you to the presidency.

How do you feel that prior positions helped to develop your leadership skills?

Did you have a role model or mentor that was influential in your career?

How did formal educational experiences contribute to your development as a leader?

How do you feel that work experiences outside education have influenced your development as a leader?

What personal barriers have you had to overcome to be successful?

What values or beliefs sustain you in times of crisis?

Leadership:

Do you have a personal philosophy of leadership?

What are the most important attributes of a leader?

How do leaders accomplish their purposes?

What are your strengths as a leader?

In what areas do you feel that you would like to improve?

Has your leadership style changed over time?

Who are other leaders in the college?

The Presidency:

What is the president's most important job?

To what extent does the president serve as a symbol for the institution?

What is most gratifying about the presidency? Most frustrating?

What are the major challenges that you have faced as a president?

What accomplishment are you most proud of?

What is your biggest disappointment?

Mission and Vision:

What is the most important part of your college's mission?

Do you have a vision for the future of your institution?

How did you arrive at that vision?

To what extent do others share this same vision?

How do you communicate that vision to others?

Is there a set of shared values held by those who work at the college?

What are the major challenges that you feel face the institution at the present?

What would you include in a graduate program to prepare future leaders for the community college?

What advice would you give to future community college leaders?

APPENDIX C. QUESTIONS FOR OTHER PARTICIPANTS

Mission, Vision, Values:

What is the most important part of the college's mission?

What vision do you have for the future of this institution?

How did you arrive at that vision?

Do others share that vision?

What values do those who work in and with the college share?

What challenges has this institution had to overcome?

How was this managed?

What are you most proud of at this college?

What are the most significant challenges facing this institution?

Is there anything that the college has failed to do or that is a disappointment to you?

Leadership:

How do you think people become leaders?

What are a leader's most important qualities?

How do leaders accomplish their purposes?

Who are the other leaders in the institution?

What experiences do you think will help people become leaders?

Presidency:

Is this president a good fit for this institution? Why?

What are the president's strengths?

Are there areas where he or she could improve?

What has this president been able to accomplish?

What is the president's most important job?

To what extent does the president serve as a symbol for the institution?

How often do you see the president?

APPENDIX D. CONSENT FORM

You are requested to participate in a research project designed to help further understanding of:

a) the preparation experiences of college presidents who have been identified as outstanding by their peers, and
b) the way in which those presidents identified as outstanding create a shared vision of their institution's future.

1. This research will be conducted through a series of interviews and observations.
2. No risks to participants are foreseen. All participants will remain anonymous.
3. The results of this research should improve our understanding of leadership preparation and visioning. It should be valuable to those who aspire to the community college presidency, to those who develop graduate programs to prepare community college leaders, and to boards of trustees involved in the presidential selection process.
4. Please feel free to ask any questions about the proposed research either before or after it is conducted.
5. Be advised that you are free to withdraw your consent to participate at any time without prejudice.
6. Your name will not be used in this study. You will be identified by a code (P1, S1, etc.). You will be given the opportunity to review any transcriptions or summaries of interviews to verify their accuracy.
7. Your participation in the study should require about two hours, and a shorter, follow-up interview may be necessary to insure accuracy and completeness.
8. Interviews will be tape-recorded.

Your signature on this document indicates your willingness to participate in the research project described above.

Signature_____ Date_____

Principal Investigator:

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Major Professor:

Dr. Larry Ebbers
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APPENDIX E. SUMMARY LETTER

Dear _____,

At last I have finished my college visits, generated transcripts, and am now able to sit down and prepare summaries. I have attached a summary of our interview and enclosed a self-addressed stamped envelope if you wish to make corrections or comments. Alternatively, you can send me e-mail at: stanv@netins.net. Even if you have no corrections or additions to make, I would appreciate a note or e-mail to insure that you've reviewed the summary. I'm grateful for your help. It was a pleasure meeting you.

Thank you once again for your cooperation. I hope all is well with you.

Sincerely,

Stan Vittetoe

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