Examining Leadership Approaches of Community College Administrators: Understanding Leadership and Change Processes

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EXAMINING LEADERSHIP APPROACHES OF COMMUNITY COLLEGE ADMINISTRATORS: UNDERSTANDING LEADERSHIP AND CHANGE PROCESSES

by

Jametoria Lynette Houston-Burton

A Dissertation submitted to the College of Education and Human Services
Department of Educational Leadership
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Educational Leadership
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Abstract

This purpose of the study was to explore the personal perspectives of three select state college administrators regarding their purpose, values, and beliefs they inherently espouse about leadership, developmental education and academic success. The researcher examined the ways in which community college administrators used communication strategies to lead change processes within their organizations. The researcher identified the administrators’ leadership approaches in leading a major redesign of a developmental education program at a large community college in Florida. The following primary research question was explored: What are the strategies adopted by the select state college administrators leading a major developmental education redesign initiative within a community college? Utilizing a qualitative approach, the methodology encompassed comparative case study including interviews, observations, and selected document analysis. The conceptual framework utilized Walumbwa, Avolio, Gardner, Wernsing, and Peterson’s (2008) authentic leadership model, adaptive communication from Heifetz, Linsky, and Grashow’s (2009) adaptive change model, agile leadership approaches based on elements of Eddy’s (2010a) multidimensional leadership model, and leadership competencies identified by the American Association of Community Colleges (2013). Results of the study included four primary considerations: (a) the influence of a leader’s past experiences contextualized the approach to leading change in developmental education redesign; (b) the leader’s intrinsic values and beliefs formed the foundation to conceptualize change in developmental education redesign; (c) the leader’s sensemaking and communication necessitated the understanding of complex change; (d) leadership qualities and approaches facilitated acceptance, adaptation, and management of leading change in developmental education redesign. Recommendations included processes for new employee orientation, educational advocacy,
professional development, strategic planning, mentorship, and collective bargaining.
Dedication

I dedicate this dissertation to my mother, the late Alma Jean Hodges-Houston, who believed in my dreams and inspired me to reach for the stars; my dad, Rev. James Houston, who says that I was born for this time; John A. Burton, my husband of 30 years, and Joya Burton, our daughter, both of whom faithfully stood by me with love, patience, encouragement, and sacrifice throughout this entire dissertation journey for the past six years. You are simply the best!

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With this accomplishment, I am the first person in my immediate family to earn a doctorate degree, a legacy that I hope to pass on to the next generation.

Keep reaching for your highest dreams wherever you find yourselves on life’s journey. Follow your dreams and honor God first in everything you do. We only have one life to live, so live life to the fullest! The race is not given to the swift but to those who endure to the very end.
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Chapter One: Introduction

Background

The community college system in America is more viable and relevant than ever, educating almost half of American undergraduate students (American Association of Community Colleges [AACC], 2015). Creation and growth of the local community college is a uniquely American phenomenon, one that arguably cannot be taken for granted given the plethora of choices available in every state (Brubacher & Rudy, 1997). Furthermore, the community/state college system is valuable and vigorous, particularly in the state of Florida with its 28 state colleges (Wattenbarger & Albertson, 2012). In Florida, community colleges offering workforce baccalaureate degrees are referred to as state colleges (Farmer, 2011). Given their enhanced mission, broad-based curriculum, and diverse student demographic, state colleges remain one of the most economical education options for all students, including first-generation students, adult learners, career changers, recent high school graduates, and people from many areas of society (AACC, 2015). More than ever, state colleges are playing an increasing role in educating individuals with varied life experiences and who hail from multiple sectors of society.

Previous federal initiatives, which set new targets for educational funding and the potential number of college graduates in 2025, have reinforced the need for community colleges to educate the citizenry and meet the demand for high-wage jobs as well as professional careers (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2015; The White House, 2009). In this study, the phrase, “state college(s)” will be used when referring to Florida, while community colleges will be used for other states where community colleges still exist. Additionally, the phrase, “community college(s)” will be used to reference articles...
already published on community colleges and listed in the bibliography section. Although “community college” is referenced in this study’s title, the Florida College System already shifted to “state college” during the planning phase in question for this study. Subsequently, “community college” and “state college” will be used interchangeably throughout the remainder of the study.

As a staple community college program, postsecondary developmental education plays an important role in the larger landscape of higher learning in the United States (Bettinger, Boatman, & Long, 2013). Since the beginning of the learning assistance movement, the evolution of postsecondary developmental education has grown to include students entering college from all walks of life with differing degrees of educational preparation. Students who started in developmental education successfully matriculated through a program of study, while other students who did not enroll in developmental education courses experienced less than desirable results (Arendale, 2000; 2002). However, discrepancies in student progress provided a backdrop to the current wave of initiatives as a response to more recent calls for program reform as redesign ensued from both national and state governmental levels (Lu, 2013). To appreciate the present programmatic structure, it is necessary to understand the origin and evolutionary of developmental education as well as the current educational context that framed the delivery of “developmental education” or “remediation” programs (Arendale, 2005).

**Developmental education: Factors and reform.** Individuals who oppose the cost of postsecondary developmental education also claim that these classes cost taxpayers double for competencies that should have been mastered at the secondary level (Saxon & Boylan, 2001). Critics also note that remediation detracts from academic
quality, undermines postsecondary credentials, and discourages faculty (Brothen & Wambach, 2004). College remediation or postsecondary developmental education has been touted as the culprit of wasting students’ time and squandering taxpayer money (Parker, 2007; Parker & Richardson, 2005). In 2008, the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation’s Strong American Schools conducted an analysis which estimated that states and students pay up to $2.3 billion annually for postsecondary developmental education (Strong American Schools, 2008). In public two-year colleges, the cost to remediate 995,077 students was calculated in the range of $1.88–$2.35 billion (Long, 2014). The cost to remediate 310,403 students in a public four-year institution totaled in the range of $435–$543 million. Together, these amounts reflected remediation of 1,305,480 students totaling in the range of $2.31–$2.89 billion (Long, 2014, p. 3).

Between 2007 and 2010, the federal government provided student subsidies through tax credits and deductions. Costs rose from $7.2 billion (in 2011 dollars) to $18.8 billion, which attributed to the emergence of the American Opportunity Tax Credit (Long, 2014). A recent report from Generation Progress and the Center for American Progress reveal developmental education currently costs students approximately $1.3 billion annually (Jimenez, Sargrad, Morales, & Thompson, 2016). Public institutions receive considerable assistance from state appropriations supplemented by private contributions to make up the gap. This cost is significant as most developmental education programs are provided in the context of the American community college system (Thelin, 2011).

In Florida, developmental education offered through the state colleges cost $118.3 million during the 2004-05 school year with just fewer than 54% of developmental
courses being paid by the state Office of Program Policy and Government Accountability (OPPAGA; 2006). However, Calcagno and Long (2009) asserted that legislators started questioning the need to fund academic preparation they felt should have occurred at the high school level. Subsequently, many states passed legislation to reduce postsecondary remedial courses or reduce pathways for these courses. Advocates for developmental education argued that additional costs could also be measured in lost earnings while students attend remediation courses (Calcagno & Long, 2009). At the same time, the need and demand for remedial courses increased in Florida and other states (Vandal, 2010).

A growing number of colleges were involved in designing and enhancing accelerated models of developmental education since the early 2000’s. These included fast-track courses and modularized instruction developmental education programs so that students may concentrate on specific topics (Complete College America, 2012). These approaches helped students progress through developmental education in a self-paced manner combined with dedicated support centers (Community College Week, 2015). In the early 2000s, the institutional research site launched the first of five such centers to focus on the needs of students to successfully transfer from college-preparatory math, reading, and English to college-level math and English.

As referenced in the previously mentioned college’s quality improvement plan, the goal was to increase fall-to-fall retention to shepherd these students towards degree completion or career certification. More than 28,400 students enrolled in the program from January 2009 to Fall 2011. In Fall 2011, between 92-97% of the students completed their remediation courses. Meanwhile, about 75% earned a C or higher grade in each of the reading and writing courses, which was the threshold for completion. Additionally,
about 60% of the math students reached the course completion threshold for that subject. The center's faculty and staff, who specialized in college preparatory instruction, utilized a combination of teaching methods including mini-lectures, group activities, textbooks, and time-on-task computer software. This diversified approach to instruction helped to ensure faculty reached as many students as possible. Students moved through the curriculum in a self-paced fashion. Student tutors and professional-level peer tutors augmented the instruction while faculty members provided additional help after class. Their offices were in proximity to the student lab area within the student assistance center. The faculty and staff worked diligently to encourage and motivate students to attain their educational goals while teaching them the skills necessary to do so, namely, to apply effective time management, study skills, and test-taking skills to each academic task. Also on hand were advisors assigned to the center to help students with personal problems or circumstances that might cause them to drop out. For the college’s outstanding efforts, this program was given an award. To the students, the student assistance center was the difference between passing and failing. However, it no longer exists due to the legislative mandate to restructure developmental education.

**Critical role of state colleges.** The changing landscape of higher education, standards of academic performance, and the assessment of learning outcomes have become the driving forces by which educational institutions are measured (Southern Association of Colleges & Schools [SACS], 2016). Budgetary pressures have led to what has been characterized as a commoditization or commercialization of knowledge (Fennel, Miller, & Howard, 2013). This idea gained traction given increased competition for funding support among public, independent, and for-profit universities, coupled with
expectations from the private sector around the provision of appropriately trained graduates (Gumport, 2000). The effect of these modifications was noted in discussions within higher education whereby the scholarly discourse of deans, students, and courses became increasingly replaced by a discourse of line managers, customers, and products (Geiger, 2005). Thus, higher education institutions are no longer protected entities whose legitimacy is taken for granted. Instead, colleges are expected to face the complexity of balancing the need to operate per market pressures, teach an increased number of students despite diminishing financial means, while struggling to maintain traditional academic and educational principles of quality (Van Ameijde, Nelson, Billsberry, & Van Meurs, 2009). The current higher education landscape warrants the need for focused leaders who can potentially foster positive organizational change, strategically navigate and manage enrollment, and maintain sustained institutional stability (Newman, Couturier, & Scurry, 2010). In Florida, the number of students completing degrees at higher education institutions has grown tremendously.

The state college selected as the study site is considered the region’s first state college. Given its history and competition from others colleges in the area, support from the surrounding community can no longer be taken for granted due to increased presence from niche colleges moving into the same geographical service area. As a state college, the accreditation status changed from a level II to a level III-institution, calling for increased public input and stricter operating guidelines to meet new accreditation standards as a baccalaureate degree-granting institution (Floyd, 2006; N. Remington & Remington, 2012). This state college now grants several bachelor degrees for potential students entering the upper college division, as well as a variety of technical and career
programs leading to immediate employment. Furthermore, these degrees offer a direct pathway for university transfer (Moltz, 2010).

During the past 10-12 years, the institution has undergone a number of systemic transitions involving general education assessment, institutional effectiveness, academic support services, advising, and related initiatives that support and verify the college’s efforts to comply with accreditation requirements (2016). Throughout these processes, leaders employed a combination of leadership strategies and reframing behaviors to select pivotal leaders, restructure processes, and empower employees chosen to lead these efforts, resulting in widespread participation and organizational change. With so many new programs, new modes of instructional delivery, new hires, and new accreditation expectations, the college made consistent and logical steps to position itself as an innovative state college with new ways of offering student services, while meeting the accountability expectations of accrediting bodies. As one of the most diverse state colleges in the U.S., the institution serves just over 50,000 students, due in part to visionary, entrepreneurial, and innovative leadership. Currently, the college ranks high in the nation in associate degree production (Community College Week, 2015). For the 2013-14 academic year, the college awarded almost 5000 associate degrees across all disciplines. This ranking also places the college high among state colleges in Florida (Community College Week, 2015).

Problem Statement

In 2013, the State of Florida Senate Bill 1720 (S.B. 1720, 2013) eliminated required developmental education and mandated a complete restructuring of developmental education in all community and state colleges in Florida. The legislation
removed placement testing requirements for exempted students which allowed students to bypass developmental education courses before enrolling into college-level courses. At the same time, state colleges aimed to provide developmental education options closely tailored to specific communication and computational skills students need to develop and become successful in performing college-level work. Exemptions were applied to prospective students who graduated from high school after 2003 in addition to military veterans. However, giving students the option to take placement tests as well as skip developmental education courses and enroll directly into college-level gateway courses without requisite skills might have led to some degree of student progression while possibly setting up other students for potential academic failure.

This shift in placement testing was one of the greatest challenges surrounding the S.B. 1720 legislation (Ordway, 2013). The legislation represented a great procedural change in Florida throughout the public community college and state college system. Nevertheless, administrators were tasked with leading developmental education redesign and designing a new institutional plan in which to implement elements of both the spirit and content of the law. These administrative leaders worked with faculty who directly help underprepared students move successfully from developmental education courses into college-level courses. Furthermore, S.B. 1720 (2013) required colleges to offer developmental education options that students may pursue while simultaneously enrolled in college-credit courses. Students who voluntarily took placement tests and whose test scores indicated the need for developmental education were advised of options to enroll in the developmental education courses of their choice. Because of this state legislative mandate, each institution in the Florida College System was charged by the Florida
Department of Education with creating a Developmental Education Implementation Plan detailing its comprehensive approach to fulfilling the requirements of the legislation. Implementation plans for the twenty-eight state colleges in Florida commenced in the fall of 2014 (Hu et al., 2014).

In light of the unintended consequences of mandatory redesigns of developmental education programs, more challenges were presented which were related to the leadership approaches and communication strategies that are needed to successfully reform developmental education. Thus, a study on the leadership approaches of administrators charged with leading the redesign of developmental education reform was warranted. Knowing the purpose, values, and beliefs leaders inherently espouse about developmental education, the role of state colleges, and leading change may provide insight to the role effective leadership plays in meeting the demands for developmental education in state colleges in the State of Florida.

Although aspects of education leadership approaches are utilized in business, government, and non-profit sectors, there is no one way to lead, particularly in the community college educational arena (Alban-Metcalfe & Alimo-Metcalfe, 2010; Eddy, 2010a). Even more, the values, beliefs, and ethical views of administrators serve as underlying factors in leading this change effort that have the potential to either enhance or hinder student success. State college leaders are called as stewards to lead their colleges, wrestle thoughtfully with the issues of the future, and reach consensus wherever possible on the tough choices they may face (Shugart, 2014). Administrators who oversee developmental education and lead faculty groups who teach developmental education courses are expected to lead the comprehensive restructuring of all developmental
education programs due to newly-mandated legislation in Florida (Travis, 2013). They must work in tandem with faculty, academic advisors, and support staff to provide accurate academic guidance for students.

The prevalence of developmental education research tends to focus on student success indicators such as student pass rates, retention, and completion (McCabe, 2003). However, less is known about the leadership approaches and communication styles of college administrators responsible for planning and leading major programmatic change, particularly developmental education reform. Thus, the rationale for this study posits that for community college leaders to succeed at developmental education reform and other legislative mandates that potentially impact student outcomes, it is necessary for leaders to employ a variety of leadership approaches and competencies to guide faculty and staff through complex unplanned and planned organizational change.

**Purpose Statement**

The purpose of this study was to explore the personal perspectives of select community college administrators regarding the purpose, values, and beliefs they inherently espouse about leadership, developmental education, and academic success. The second goal of the researcher was to examine the way these educational administrators used communication strategies to lead change with their stakeholders. The third goal was to identify professional leadership approaches and related management strategies during a major redesign of a developmental education program at a large community college in Florida.

The researcher aimed to examine leadership approaches, communication, and change strategies that were used among community college executive administrators.
The researcher premises that it is necessary for leaders to employ a variety of approaches as a means of facilitating complex issues encountered in leading state colleges through unplanned and planned organizational change (Eddy, 2005; Kotter, 1996). Recent policy reforms from the Florida legislature, mandating a restructured process for delivery of developmental education statewide, served as the catalyst for utilizing a range of leadership and communication approaches, particularly in leading frontline employees through the challenges in planning for broad-based change initiatives (S.B. 1720, 2013).

Because developmental education policy changes were also tied to funding legislative allocations in Florida in SB 1720, it was imperative that state colleges readily comply with legislative mandates (Florida College System, 2015). Nevertheless, state colleges endeavored to provide the best possible options to students in need of enhanced academic support to help students successfully matriculate through their academic programs of study and graduate.

This research represented an effort to explore ways in which a set of community college administrators led faculty and staff through the developmental education redesign initiative, and to gauge how their collective leadership strategies were utilized in leading unplanned programmatic change. The significance of a comparative case study with a focus on leadership, communication, and change holds potential to influence and support positive organizational change. It also helped faculty and staff respond productively to the legislative mandate in a constructive way while preparing for timely implementation of the redesign plan.
Rationale for Selection of Research Questions

As an employee of one of the state colleges in the Florida College System, the researcher was aware of questions from faculty and advisor colleagues related the process for redesigning developmental education programming. Colleagues requested clarity of content and explanations of the tasks, approaches, resources, and operations needed for compliance to the mandatory redesign (Florida’s S.B. 1720, 2013). The new law called for the elimination of traditional placement tests and mandated new pathways for matriculation in the student’s first year of study.

Serving in the role of Coordinator of General Education Assessment, the researcher provided studies that highlighted working models and practices of comparable institutions engaged in similar redesign work. Eventually, submission of a redesign plan was required by the Florida Department of Education, Division of Florida Colleges (Hu et al., 2014). Given the gravity of the law and the initial opposition from most of the state college faculty, it was evident that the success of this initiative might be dependent upon the way college administrators guided faculty and other student support staff through the planning process. It also became abundantly clear that their approach to leadership and communication of unplanned organizational change could serve as key indicators to successful planning, collaboration, and subsequent implementation of the new plan.

The redesign mandate necessitated an investigation of the leadership approaches among college administrators; several factors justified the need to examine the approaches as central to the successful planning of the developmental education redesign programs in the state college system, particularly in Florida. It was advantageous for higher education administrators to examine their personal core values in leading the
redesign process, given their strategic position in leading the organizational and academic efforts, to help the institutions comply with the new legislation. Self-reflection of their philosophical orientation towards education and the mission of the community college presented additional considerations in negotiating the task to lead the redesign initiative in the context of open-access admissions. Administrators in state colleges had to grapple with the complexities of programmatic practices employed in the state colleges, a notion inextricably tied to educational, ethical, and philosophical stances of promoting student achievement.

**Research Questions**

The researcher explored the ways in which state college administrators lead developmental education redesign, communicated with employees and responded to their concerns about facilitating student preparation and developing relevant program pathways. Administrators often experience pressure balancing such efforts while maintaining staff morale and engagement, all the while hoping to allay the anxiety and fears of the faculty who work directly with developmental education students. Administrators collaborate with faculty who teach college-level courses in order to address concerns about the reading abilities and writing deficiencies of students who lack the necessary skills to write effectively for assignments that require higher-level thinking and writing (Wyatt, 1992). Communicating change and hearing the concerns of general education faculty are equally important to administrators. Faculty in large state college systems may experience pressure to decrease the literacy requirements for gateway classes, particularly if students lack the requisite skills are permitted to register for courses (Richardson, 2005). Empathetic communication is needed to support faculty
facing such challenges and can facilitate organizational change (Greenleaf, 1970). In
consideration of these issues, the following research questions were developed to explore
how select state college administrators led developmental education redesign planning.

The primary research question was, what are the strategies adopted by the select
state college administrators leading a major developmental education redesign initiative
within a community college? To further explore the primary question, three sub-questions
are used as the prompts for discussions to the study participants.

Sub-research question 1. What influenced the leadership approaches adopted by
the select state college administrators in leading the new developmental educational
redesign initiative?

Sub-research question 2. What communication approaches were adopted by the
administrators in leading the new developmental education redesign initiative?

Sub-research question 3. How do the state college administrators reflect on their
approaches in leading organizational change with respect to the new developmental
education redesign initiative?

Given their strategic position in leading the change, it may benefit state college
administrators to examine their personal core values in leading a redesign process to help
the institution comply with external demands of the legislation that substantially
impacted processes. Ford (2013) demonstrated this connection by comparing the collegial
behaviors of administrators to the professional response behaviors of the faculty. Study
results showed participatory actions extended from administrators to faculty. A
supportive leadership approach exhibited by administrators was identified as a key factor
to obtaining consensus and compliance. Second, self-reflection of the leader’s
philosophical orientation towards education and the state college mission presented additional considerations in negotiating the task to lead redesign efforts, given the goal of open-access admissions. In summary, the overarching intentions of the research questions spotlighted the ethical values of the leader, leadership approaches, and the composite mission of the organization, all of which can lead to enhancing issues of equity and access (Palus & Horth, 2002).

**Significance of the Study**

This study on leadership holds potential to encourage positive organizational change by helping faculty and staff respond to new mandates in a constructive and creative manner, while preparing for timely implementation of a redesign plan. In general, state colleges are characterized as institutions that can level the playing field and provide access to affordable higher education and job preparation opportunities for those who otherwise would not be able to participate because of life circumstances (Vaughn, 2006). Many students face barriers that can prevent them from accessing higher education if not for access to state colleges. Barriers include economic restrictions, inadequate educational preparation, lack of family support, and the lack of a college-going culture (Bowen, Kurzweil, & Tobin, 2005). Cohen and Brawer (2003) asserted, "for most students in two-year institutions the choice is not between the state college and a senior residential institution. Rather, the choice is between the community college and nothing" (p. 53).

According to Kotter (1996), “leaders define what the future should look like, align people with that vision, and inspire them to make it happen despite the obstacles.” Consequently, decisions made by administrators that affect the mission of open access to
higher educational opportunities might have possible implications for student entry.

Decision-making is multifaceted, and although some decisions involve the consideration of right and wrong, many students depend on what is valued most by the administrator or other stakeholders.

Current trends reveal organizations are moving towards more complex entities (Uhl-Bien, Marion, & McKelvey, 2007). This phenomenon is particularly the case in the new age of information growth, technology dominance, and knowledge management, driven by an ever-expanding global society. Complexity is characterized by both internal and external forces which include people, organizations, globalization, socioeconomic, and geopolitical situations. These conditions have necessitated the need for a shift towards adaptive leadership (Uhl-Bien, 2006). Internal forces refer to the people within the college, while external forces refer to the legislators and organizations outside of the college setting. To meet organizational goals and external mandates successfully, leaders must be flexible and encourage adaptive practices amongst their members, including emerging leaders. Randall (2012) employed Heifetz’ Adaptive Leadership Model and demonstrated leaders focused intensely on the process of working with resistance, creating a sustainable, and continuously transforming institution.

Finally, given the advent of organizational failures in major multi-national corporations, adaptive leadership is giving way to newer forms of leadership that promote behaviors tied to moral and ethical foundations (Bohlman & Deal, 2008). Organizational failures have been tied directly to leadership failures. Thus, calls for moral, ethical, and authentic leadership orientations have begun to dominate the leadership landscape in an
overall shift towards a more values-based leadership direction. This idea is relevant for business, industry, and higher education.

**Delimitations of the Study**

Study participants were invited to reflect on a span of eight months during which planning for developmental education redesign occurred at a state college in Florida. The planning time of the redesign required leadership and articulation of the steps needed for program change. The planning process included participation and conversations from a wide variety of college-wide instructional personnel who formally met as a recognized committee before its dissolution once the redesign plan was submitted to the Florida Department of Education. Thus, the period of peak collaboration and change occurred during the planning phase. This planning period was chosen as the ideal range of time for which the three research participants reflected on their experience in leading organizational change. Investment of attention and time in this process by stakeholders precipitated the need for leaders to maintain quality while reconstructing a process previously recognized as a successful program model. In effect, the planning phase of the redesign provided both the ideal forum and mechanism for questioning, reflection, planning, and accepting change.

**Limitations**

Three administrators were chosen as the primary participants because of their role as the lead administrators responsible for guiding the entire planning process and ultimately responsible for the college’s developmental education plan. One of the participants retired in October 2015, and therefore, interviews and member checks were completed prior to that time. The researcher remained in close contact with that
participant to ensure full participation beyond October 2015. Because the study was conducted at one state college as opposed to several colleges, the results of this study may not be necessarily transferred to a different institution type or population. However, transferability could be considered under similar conditions and institutions types.

**Summary**

Chapter One presented the introduction, statement of the problem, research questions, significance of the study, definition of terms, and limitations of the study. Chapter Two contains the review of related literature and research related to the study problem. The methodology and procedures used to gather data for the study are presented in Chapter Three. Findings that emerged from the study, results of the analysis, and the conceptual framework are presented in Chapter Four. Finally, Chapter Five presents a summary of the study results, conclusions, implications for practice, and recommendations for further study.
Chapter Two: Literature Review

Chapter Two focuses on the relationship between three major elements of the study. These items include a deeper examination of the following components: (a) leadership theory and related approaches, (b) leadership and organizational change in state colleges, and (c) communication strategies. Deeper exploration of these topics formed the historical backdrop and current context of the study, while drawing from the scholarly literature.

The purpose of this study was to explore the personal perspectives of select state college administrative leaders regarding the purpose, values, and beliefs they inherently espouse about leadership, developmental education, and academic success. The second goal of the study was to examine the way these administrators led change through communication strategies from the leader to the stakeholders. The third goal of the study was to identify professional leadership approaches and describe related management strategies of administrators charged with leading the major redesign of a developmental education program at a large state college in Florida.

The research process included both primary and secondary sources. The breakdown of sources included 70% primary sources and 30% secondary sources. Primary sources consisted of participant interviews while secondary sources included studies and articles from peer-reviewed scholarly journal literature obtained through UNF library databases. Education and social science databases were included from Ebscohost, GALE, Dissertation Abstracts, ERIC Documents, ProQuest and Wilson. Specific databases referenced included Academic Search Premier, Education Source, Dissertation and Theses, Dissertation and Theses @ UNF, UNF e-book Collection, WorldCat,
Chronicle of Higher Education, JSTOR and ABI/Inform Complete. Peer-reviewed articles were high-quality content as reviewed by experts and other scholars in the same field. Search words included the following terms: leadership, change, higher education, state colleges, administrators, leadership qualities, values and strategies. These articles were given an extra level of academic scrutiny and rigorous review based on pre-determined standards prior to publishing. Books and other reports were also referenced in the UNF library catalog, UNF e-book database, Google Books, Google Scholar and Amazon searches, and relevant course textbooks with a focus on higher education, leadership and change.

**Leadership**

In the age of growing complexity within organizations and increasing external influences placed upon organizations, the advent of shared leadership has grown in popularity with growing influence across all types of organizations, especially educational institutions (Marion & Uhl-Bien, 2002). Today, leadership focuses not only on leaders but also on followers, peers, supervisors, work setting, context, and culture to include a much wider variety of people who represent the entire landscape of diversity in skill sets, expertise, and perspectives (Avolio, 2007). Emerging models of leadership are no longer simply described by their characteristics, but rather, they are categorized in various models as shared, relational, dyadic, global, and complex social dynamic (Uhl-Bien, 2011; Yukl, 2009). However, to appreciate the development of some newer forms of leadership, it is necessary to revisit how leadership evolved over time and the influences that led to current theories and models that emphasize collective forms of leadership and influence.
Collective, or shared, types of leadership differ from traditional models in that new models promote dependence on non-hierarchical ways to lead, while traditional leadership emanates from hierarchical structures or managerial approaches (Campbell, 1985). Leadership theories can be grouped into two major divisions and two categories. They include the following perspectives: (a) traditional (positivistic) leadership, or individual, transactional, and situational; and (b) contemporary (post-positivistic) or participatory, and shared theories of leadership. Kezar (2006) referred to contemporary positivism approaches as the best way to lead. The focus of this literature review is concentrated on shared forms of leadership.

**Leadership Trends in Higher Education**

**Participatory leadership.** Kurt Lewin’s (1997) participatory leadership model forms the foundation for many modern leadership approaches that rely on the contributions of teams and groups of people working together with the leader to accomplish a common goal. Gastil (1994) purported that characteristics of participatory leaders include being available, approachable, caring, motivating, creative, innovative, and empowering. Participatory leaders give constructive feedback, coach, mentor, promote teamwork and inter-professional collaboration, and resolve conflicts through effective negotiation (B. Bass & Bass, 2008). They give honest and complete information, and treat colleagues with respect and dignity in all interactions. Leadership characteristics are like the notions of authentic, ethical, distributive (democratic), collaborative, integrative, situational, adaptive, and multidimensional leadership approaches, all of which have become popularized in recent decades. This type of leadership style is considerate, democratic, consultative, participative, employee-
centered, concerned with people, concerned with the maintenance of good working relations, supportive, oriented toward facilitating interaction, relationship oriented, and oriented toward group decision-making (Bass & Stogdill, 1990).

**Transformational leadership.** Burke (2011) referenced the definition of transformational leadership from the original description coined by James McGregor Burns (2003). The term transformational leaders refers to leaders who bring about change. They never leave a situation the way they found it, and the situation (organization) will be different as a positive result of their leadership. The transformational leader is the one who raises the consciousness about higher considerations through articulation and role modeling (Bass, 2000). Transformational leaders raise the awareness of their constituencies by communicating what is important. Specifically, they increase concerns for achievement, self-actualization, and ideals, and move followers to go beyond their self-interests for the good of their group, organization, community, country, or society (Bass & Stogdill, 1990). In other words, transformational leaders focus on the self-concept of the employees and their sense of self-worth. Administrators can act as transformational leaders by (a) integrating a shared vision of change, (b) empowering voices in a collaborative community, and (c) reflecting on the vision value (Thoonen Sleegers, Oort, Peetsma, & Geijsel, 2011). Transformational leaders communicate change and tend to be more successful in driving change. Their ability to communicate appropriately and motivate others significantly influences their ability to effectively implement change and drive innovation (A. Gilley, Dixon, & Gilley, 2008). Other types of transformational leadership have emerged including servant
Adaptive leadership. Adaptive leadership is rooted in leadership theory but also has significant links to scientific theory. The focus on adaptation was drawn from biology and evolution where plants and animals evolve (or adapt) over time to survive and thrive (Heifetz, Linsky, & Grashow, 2009). Successful adaptation requires building on the past and observing what is expendable or extraneous as changes are made, while recognizing the heritage of an organization (p.13). Moreover, adaptation relies on experimentation and diversity in order to succeed. Successful adaptation also recognizes the need for loss and that such changes require time (p.14).

Adaptive leadership fundamentally differs from the traditional forms of leadership where the leader has the answers. Heifetz, Linsky, and Grashow (2009) defined adaptive leadership as, “the practice of mobilizing people to tackle tough challenges and thrive” (p. 123). Adaptive leaders facilitate organizational transformation and growth by asking questions (Heifetz et al., 2009). Adaptive challenge is a phrase describing the gap between the values people stand for that constitute thriving, and the reality that they face or their current lack of capacity to realize those values in their environment (p.303).

Heifetz (1994) defined technical leadership as the leadership practices needed to solve well-defined problems with known answers and conventional approaches. In contrast to this definition, non-technical leadership was defined as the leadership practices needed to resolve challenges absent of well-known or routine solutions. To illustrate, technical and non-technical aspects of adaptive leadership were explained by Kaminsky (2012), whereby the relevance and value of Heifetz’s adaptive leadership
framework of IT project management was analyzed. Kaminsky indicated that Heifetz’ adaptive leadership framework was consistent with non-technical leadership practices deemed necessary for the success of IT projects that included the following behaviors: (a) diagnosing the central challenge, (b) ensuring that significant issues are being faced and not hidden or avoided, (c) encouraging and supporting leadership from frontline people who are closest to specific problems, and (d) managing stress and conflict which lead stakeholders on a path to needed change (p.15). Thus, a common cause of leadership failure, even in higher education, can be attributed to the treatment of adaptive challenges as if they were technical problems.

When leaders manage as hierarchical authorities, they provide their constituents with direction, protection, answers, control of conflict, and maintenance of norms (Heifetz et al., 2009). Conversely, when leaders operate from an adaptive orientation, they differ from authorities in that they introduce disorientation, orchestrate conflict, raise difficult questions, and challenge norms (p. 79). Subsequently, practicing adaptive leadership requires constant learning on the part of the leader and everyone in the organization (p.105). The leader is placed in a position of asking tough questions, reflecting on experiences, and learning from failures. These steps are vital to developing adaptive leadership skills (Heifetz & Linsky, 2002).

Adaptive leadership emphasizes two components to problem solving - first diagnosing the problem, then acting on it. Heifetz and Linsky (2002) pointed out there is no roadmap for solving adaptive challenges. The process leading to solutions is usually made up along the way. At the heart of adaptive leadership practice lies the idea that if a system is broken, it must be diagnosed and remedied by taking risks and challenging the
status quo to provoke change (p.134). Thus, leaders act courageously and engage in continued reflection as they seek to become agents of change (p.137). In 1994, the theoretical frame that gave rise to Heifetz’s Adaptive Leadership model was introduced to the world of leadership studies. Heifetz et al. (2009) put forth a model of adaptive decision-making consisting of three elements: observation, interpretation, and intervention. This iterative process is designed to cycle through the three stages in order as the stages build on one another. The practice of reflection is integral to adaptive learning and leading. Heifetz et al. (2009) prescribed reflection as a necessary ingredient in learning and building adaptive capacity for people from all levels within the organization, including senior executives. Per Gladwell (2006), when reflecting, one considers an experience that happened and tries to understand or explain it, which often leads to insight and deep learning - or ideas to test on new experiences.

One of the most important framings of adaptive leadership is the idea that leadership is not positional, or based on authority, but rather a practice that can be pursued by anyone (Heifetz, 1994). While leadership is not based on authority, it is also radically different from doing your job well (p. 23). Adaptive leadership focuses on the need for change within organizations and encourages actions that disrupt the status-quo to incite forward momentum (Kezar & Eckel, 2002). The complex and fast changing conditions and social contexts that leaders face in their organizations require processes for sustained transformational learning and adaptive leadership across sectors (Nicolaides & McCallum, 2013). Dynamic leadership to meet today's challenges requires adaptability to change and the capacity to lead and manage change (Basham & Mathur, 2010).
Therefore, administrative leaders at state colleges should be flexible and adaptive in their everyday job roles and responsibilities.

Randall and Coakley (2007) provided evidence that application of adaptive leadership concepts can help colleges and universities stay competitive in the face of change. They utilized case studies to illustrate that the adaptive leadership framework offers greater potential for successful change initiatives in an academic environment. The researchers concluded that the adaptive leadership framework is valid in an collegiate environment (p. 330). Finally, Augustine, Payne, Sencindiver, and Woodcock (2005) purported adaptive leadership also requires that all stakeholders are motivated into becoming actively and creatively involved in the problem-solving process, thereby drawing out their best, authentic contributions.

**Authentic leadership.** The concept of authentic leadership was proposed as a root construct underlying all positive forms of leadership and its development (Avolio & Gardner, 2005). Authentic leadership focuses not on structures or relations of power, but on what makes leadership good, and is grounded in the humanistic psychology of Rogers and Maslow. Harter, Schmidt and Hayes (2002) described authenticity as owning one's personal experiences, including one's thoughts, emotions, needs, desires, or beliefs. Hence, it involves being self-aware and acting in accord with one's true self by expressing what one genuinely thinks and believes (Luthans & Avolio, 2003). While the attainment of complete authenticity is an ideal, Erickson (1995) cautioned that authenticity should not be conceived as an either/or condition, since people are never completely authentic or inauthentic (p.122). Thus, it is more realistic to describe a person as being more, or less, authentic. Furthermore, authentic leadership alludes to a pattern of
transparent and ethical leader behavior that encourages openness in sharing information needed to make decisions while accepting follower input (Duignan, 2014).

Luthans and Avolio (2003) also introduced the concept of authentic leadership development into the literature with the goal of integrating the work of Luthans’ (2002) positive organizational behavior with the life-span leadership development work of Avolio (1999). At the same time, several scholars (e.g., Cooper, Scandura, & Schriesheim, 2005; Sparrowe, 2005) expressed concerns with Luthans and Avolio’s initial definition of authentic leadership. However, there appears to be general agreement among scholars on four factors that cover the components of authentic leadership. Factors include: (a) balanced processing - objectively analyzing relevant data before making a decision; (b) internalized moral perspective - guided by internal moral standards; (c) relational transparency - presenting one’s authentic self through openly sharing information and feelings as appropriate; and (d) self-awareness - demonstrated understanding of one’s strengths, weaknesses, and the way one makes sense of the world (Avolio, 1999).

In a comparison study, authentic leadership was discriminately valid from measures of transformational leadership (Avolio, 2005) and ethical leadership (Burns, Trevino, & Harrison, 2005). Authentic leadership was also a significant and positive predictor of organizational citizenship behavior, organizational commitment, and satisfaction with supervisor and performance. Recent decades have seen a dramatic increase in scholarly interest in the topic of authenticity and values-based leadership, named authentic leadership (Avolio & Gardner, 2005; Gardner, Avolio, Luthans, May, & Walumbwa, 2005). Authentic leadership can be represented as a construct composed of

Self-awareness refers to how often the leader demonstrates that he or she is aware of his or her impact on other people (Covey, 2004). Relational transparency involves promoting trust through disclosures that include openly sharing information and expressions of leaders' true thoughts and feelings (H. Wang, Sui, Luthans, Wang, & Wu, 2014). Internalized moral perspective refers to leader behaviors that are guided by internal moral standards and values as opposed to those behaviors based on external forces such as peers, organizational, and societal pressures (p. 7). Balanced processing involves objectively analyzing all relevant information before coming up with a fair decision. Leaders who exhibit balanced processing solicit views from others, indicating the willingness to challenge their deeply held positions before coming to a decision (Gardner, Cogliser, Davis, & Dickens, 2011).

Finally, the concept of authentic leadership is an answer to the call for a new form of leadership that would suit the needs of employees in modern organizations. Authentic leadership researchers recognize that a lack of managers’ authenticity could harm employee outcomes (Walumbwa et al., 2008). Authentic leaders are capable of motivating people, stimulating activities, commitment, satisfaction, and participation for employees to constantly improve their performance (Avolio, Gardner, Walumbwa, Luthans, & May, 2004).

**Ethical leadership.** Diestler (2001) stated that ethics is sometimes referred to as morals and relates to an aspect of values involving standards of conduct that serve to
distinguish between right and wrong. Shapiro and Stefkovich (2005, 2016) noted that the word ethics comes from the Greek word ethos, meaning customs, but later evolved to mean character, or the norms of appropriate conduct. After reviewing various definitions of ethics, Wallin (2007) concluded that ethics "examines the rational justification for moral judgments" (p. 37).

When discussing ethics and leadership, MacIntyre (1966) categorized ethical theories into two domains: conduct (e.g., teleology and deontology) and character (i.e., virtue ethics). Virtue-ethics theory dates to Aristotle and conceptualizes virtue as comprising two parts: intellectual - a result of teaching, and moral, a result of habit (MacIntyre, 1966). The theory centers on virtuous living, and virtues are "admirable character trait[s], freely chosen and habitually acted out" to benefit self and others (Benner, 2007, p. 3). Examples of virtues are courage, temperance, self-control, sociability, honesty, and integrity, which can be learned and acquired through practice. Oliver and Hioco (2012) argued that the three cardinal virtues of an academic administrator are commitment to the good of the institution, good administrative judgment, and conscientiousness in discharging the duties of the office (p. 338). Aristotle conceptualized virtues as a golden mean, or midpoint, between the extremes of excess and deficiency (Robinson & Moulton, 2005). Thus, the idea of self-control and moderation is important; e.g., foolhardiness is excess, courage is the mean, and cowardice is deficient (Moore, 2006).

In recent years, increased attention has centered on the topic of ethical leadership in a variety of professional contexts. Given the number of examples of ethical violations documented in corporate business, medical, and government sectors, the need for
increased ethical and moral leadership has grown tremendously. Bass and Steidlmeier (1999) purported that the ethics of leadership rest upon three pillars: (a) the moral character of the leader; (b) the ethical legitimacy of the values embedded in the leader’s vision, articulation, and program which followers either embrace or reject; (c) and the morality of the process of social ethical choice and action that leaders and followers engage in and collectively pursue. Higham, Freathy, and Wegerif (2010) referred to this approach as responsible leadership, a phrase which draws on the models of distributed and authentic leadership and a dialogic understanding of responsible action, and includes an openness to learning from others on the part of the leader.

**Collaborative leadership.** For this study, collaborative leadership and distributed leadership were used in tandem as related terms. However, the term collaborative denotes an emerging and more contemporary reference to this leadership approach. In an Australian study of administrative leadership in higher education Jones, LeFoe, Harvey, and Ryland (2012) identified values and practices considered most effective in distributive leadership to encourage collaboration. The values included trust, respect, recognition, collaboration, and commitment to reflective practice, associated with personal behaviors that included the ability to consider self-in-relation to others, support social interactions, engage in dialogue through learning conversations, and the opportunity to grow as leaders through connecting with others (p. 72).

Through research on civic leadership and collaboration, Chrislip and Larson (1994) defined collaborative leadership as a mutually beneficial relationship between two or more parties who work toward common goals by sharing responsibility, authority, and accountability for achieving results. Their book, *Collaborative Leadership*, served as the
A seminal document highlighting collaborative leadership theory (Chrislip & Larson, 1994).

Collaborative leaders operate by trust because they engage all participants by designing constructive processes for working together (Archer & Cameron, 2009). In difficult times, these leaders know they can only succeed if they use collaborative skills to negotiate coalitions, deal with hostility, resolve conflict, and find win-win solutions. Furthermore, for many leaders in times of conflict, dealing with conflict requires new skills and strong self-awareness to understand how and why people react to situations. Archer and Cameron (2009) suggested five key leadership skills collaborative leaders need to manage conflict: (a) courage to act for the long term; (b) advanced preparation to handle conflict; (c) investment in strong relationships through the partnership and with stakeholders; (d) development of interpersonal leadership skills; and (e) an assured personal motive for collaborating. In a leadership context, the purpose of collaboration is to create a shared vision and joint strategies to address public concerns that go beyond the purview of any one party (Archer & Cameron, 2009). This idea is predicated by the broader construct of building collaborative communities; if the appropriate people get together in constructive ways with good information, they will create authentic visions and strategies for addressing the shared concerns of the organization or community (Born, 2012).

In order to apply collaborative leadership, Chrislip and Larson (1994) suggested successful collaborations must meet four conditions: (a) they are broadly inclusive of all stakeholders, including those who may be troublesome; (b) they provide a credible and open collaborative process that gives participants the confidence that their views will be
heard and considered without predetermined outcomes; (c) they have visible support from high-level, well-known, and trustworthy leaders in the community to provide the credibility necessary to assure participants that their efforts may lead to tangible results; (d) they gain the support or acquiescence of established authorities or institutions either at the beginning, or as a result of the collaborations’ success. (p. 35). Successful collaboration efforts can produce tangible results, empower participants, lead to revolutionary changes in civic culture, and create a renewed sense of community. Collaborative initiatives get results because participants take deliberate actions to achieve them with specific planning, finding champions, and switching from planning to implementation in a prescribed manner (Chrislip & Larson, 1994). Azzam (2009) concluded that original creative thinking comes through collaboration and the stimulation of other people’s ideas which drive individual tendencies to be visionary.

The concept of collaborative leadership has been gaining traction in the business community for years (Kanter, 1994). In its most basic form, collaborative leadership encompasses an emerging body of theory and management focused on leadership skills that deliver results across organizational boundaries. The president of Eastern Connecticut State University concluded that, “by giving faculty, staff, students, alumni, and other stakeholders a seat at the planning table, and then working together in a variety of settings, they have aligned planning and action across the campus for enhanced student engagement” (Núñez, 2013). The result was a culture of student engagement; data demonstrated that providing students with engagement opportunities increased retention and graduation rates (Núñez, 2013). In a study by Ng'ambi and Bozalek (2013) twenty-two public higher education institutions in South Africa involving 259 participants who
responded to an online survey, the role that informal leaders, and more particularly opinion leaders and change agents, can play in enabling wide-scale adoption of innovations in higher education institutions was highlighted. Many scholars have argued for the importance of the role of leadership styles in shaping the strategic direction of institutions (p. 940). Heifetz (1994) argued that the tendency to look to authority figures obscures the fact that people who are not in authority positions often provide leadership. Heifetz further argued that people often fail to recognize leadership when exercised by people who lack any authority.

Women’s leadership. As with many other sectors of our society, new forms of leadership are emerging in higher education, which can be cultivated among students, those employed by institutions of education (Humphreys, 2013), and especially emerging women leaders of higher education organizations. The literature on women's leadership suggests women practice more sharing of power and employ a participatory orientation to leading (Chliwniak, 1997). Townsend and Twombly (1998) argued, however, that a feminist orientation toward leadership at the community college should center attention on women's issues and needs versus general campus issues. In the book entitled, When Women Lead, Rosenthal (1998) suggested the presence of women demonstrates integrative forms of leadership emphasizing collaboration, shared problem-solving, and consensus rarely seen in a majority-male environment. Women also tend to employ motivations, tactics, and visions of leadership that differ from their male counterparts (p. 56). Rosenthal argued that women exercise leadership in an innovative and inclusive style that subtly redefines both the appearance and meaning of political leadership.
Leaders were perceived in a positive way when engaged in a leadership style consistent with their gender (Griffin, 1992).

Tedrow and Rhoads (1999) conducted an inductively-oriented analysis which revealed three patterns of leadership identity for women as leaders: adaptation leadership identity, communication style, and gender issues reconciliation and resistance. To transcend gendered leadership roles and expectations, leaders must blend both male (skills, traits) competencies with female generative norms (collaborative and participatory) styles (Eddy, 2005; Nidiffer, & Bradshaw, 2001). Leading in a way that integrates traditional gendered leadership styles is an important means of building one’s personal multidimensional leadership (Eddy, 2010a).

Similarly, another aspect of women’s leadership related to gendered leadership is the notion of care. Care theory describes two different groups of people: the care-rs, or the people who provide care, and the cared-for, or those receiving the care (Noddings, 2012). Applying the care concept to ethical leaders infers that ethical leaders (care-rs) care for their employees (the cared-for). Through general modeling, Noddings (2012) explained that leaders need to demonstrate in their own behavior what it means to care. Leaders do not merely tell others to care and give them texts to read on the subject, but rather, demonstrate caring in relationships with employees (Noddings, 1995). Therefore, caring is inextricably tied to the leader’s purpose for working in higher education. “Education is not just preparation for economic life and citizenship. It is, as Dewey insisted, life itself” (Katz, Strike & Noddings, 1999, p. 14).

In comparison, the ethic-of-care (relationship focus) extends the gendered idea of leadership often attributed to female leaders (Noddings, 2003). Campbell (2010) and
Gilligan (1993) argued that the ethic-of-care is characterized by theme, not gender. Moreover, most men and women can reason using both justice and care. Begley and Stefkovich (2007) asserted that some male educators have been supportive of the ethic-of-care paradigm. However, if the ethic-of-care is to be used to resolve dilemmas, the way that educational leaders are prepared will need revision. Northouse (2007) asserted that stereotypical gender bias that is based on the conception that women take care and men take charge has been changing as leadership styles have morphed from a traditional masculine and autocratic style to the more feminine and androgynous styles of democratic and transformational leaders (pp. 357-358). Moreover, an ethical leader who uses a transformational, or servant-leader lens, factors in the perspectives of all group members and is attentive to the interests of the community and the culture. Such a leader demonstrates an ethic of caring toward others (Schaubroeck, Simon, & Peng, 2016).

**Multidimensional leadership.** Helgesen (1995) conceptualized multidimensional leadership as a web of inclusion where there is structure but also an ever-evolving shape. The leader at the center of the web works on building consensus and valuing the parts of the web - parts that are built on relationships. Similarly, multidimensional leadership is likely to be the result of a team effort or of participation at differing levels rather than the capacity of a single individual (Peterson, Dill, & Metz, 1997). Unlike traditional leadership, the concept of multidimensional leadership affords flexibility based on the individuals’ core beliefs or inner values, capabilities, and life experiences (Eddy, 2010b). A newer multidimensional leadership approach considers the idea that aspects of the leader’s dimensions may evolve over time, and therefore, should be viewed through a continuum of leadership-shaped, and leader-refined process in a continuous, dynamic,
and changing manner (p.31). Both Senge (1990) and Amey (2006) agreed that today’s knowledge-based world requires leaders to question traditional institutional assumptions and past practices. Given the newness of multidimensional leadership as developed by Eddy (2010a), the quantity of studies using this model are relatively limited. A similar situation existed regarding the availability of studies on leadership and developmental education. Together, a strong rationale existed for the need to add to the literature in this area of topical concentration. A study by Raich (2013) involving six rural community college presidents, was conducted with the purpose of understanding dimensions of leadership that emerge from rural community college presidents during times of sustained financial distress, using Eddy’s multidimensional competencies. The researcher discovered five roles of leadership used by the president to lead in complex times which included: discerning speculators, impassioned advocates, hope-builders, decisive action-makers, and relationship-architects.

In a related construct, Van Engen (2012) explored the relationship between listening and leadership, asserting that listening is a multidimensional construct that required further integration within leadership studies. Van Engen’s study aimed to seek the validity of focusing on listening within the study of leadership, and found results indicating that leadership settings incorporate certain verbal and nonverbal behaviors. Van Engen’s findings were related to Kousez and Posner’s (2003) commitments of leadership, and Greenleaf’s (1977) model of servant-leadership. These studies underscored the premise of the main proposition of multidimensional leadership in that
there is no universal model of leadership. It is a multitude of approaches working
together to address complex issues.

**Change leadership.** In recent years, state colleges have been at the mercy of
external environments while plagued with a multitude of economic challenges (Ma &
Baum, 2012). Bleak state appropriation revenue forecasts are juxtaposed against an
escalating need for highly-skilled employees in a new and shifting global economy, once
solely grounded to locally-based training needs of a surrounding community (Thomsen,
2014). New fiscal realities paint a somewhat disturbing portrait for state colleges where
the open-access policy continues at the forefront for those seeking workforce
development training or academic transfer opportunities (Wang, 2013).

Institutional leaders and stakeholders, whose intentions are to move their
institutions forward, are placed in the middle of these unique challenges. These
challenges can potentially hamper any community college's best efforts to keep pace with
demands and move forward with new services to meet the new student needs (S.B. 1720,
2013). These challenges may be characterized as opportunities which require new and
visionary college leadership to navigate through the waters of change in an era of
increasing accountability and standards (Dougherty & Natow, 2010, 2015). Organizations
such as colleges potentially experience change in several ways. Two dimensions of
change are described as planned and unplanned (Burke, 2010).

Planned change is defined as a deliberate, conscious decision to improve the
organization in some manner, or change the system in a deeper, more fundamental way
(p. 144). Examples of planned change are the focus of several new initiatives recently
undertaken by community/state colleges including the development of the student
assistance centers dedicated to developmental education, evolution of the library learning commons, and development of new four-year baccalaureate programs (Sullivan, 2010). The types of planned change in organizations may also include, but are not limited to, new technologies, programs, policies, and processes. More specifically, these planned change activities might include the formation of implementation teams, transformational management, software installation, restructuring financial/accounting procedures, consolidation of regional offices, mergers, and reallocation of staff (Lewis, 1999).

Overall, the leader’s role in change can be characterized by executive leadership (Zaccaro & DeChurch, 2011) and all members (Gladwell, 2006). The leader’s role and function in planned organizational change includes four phases: pre-launch, launch, post-launch, and sustaining change (Burke, 2013). Pre-launch includes identifying the need for change, leader self-awareness, vision, considering the external environment, and identifying surrogates or other leaders within the group (p. 271). Launch phase includes communicating the message, finalizing the change or redesign plan, and dealing with resistance and conflict (p. 282). Post-launch phase includes reporting the message, piloting, and multiple leveraging (pp. 285-291). Sustaining change phase involves maintaining momentum, acting on the change, collecting data, and reporting results of the change (p. 291). Myatt (2013) emphasized this idea by explaining that “real leaders are always looking beyond what is, thinking about the possibilities of what if, and acting to ensure what is next” (p. 11).

Finally, as a prelude to the next section on leading higher education communication, change requires leadership in state colleges. Leaders should anticipate the future, analyze the internal and external environment, act by means of appropriate and
timely data to ensure accountability, build on the strengths of the teams, and affirm and sustain change (Wallin, 2010). Internal forces refer to the people within the college, while external forces refer to the legislators and organizations outside of the college. In a time of limited resources and an uncertain economy, community colleges are more important than ever to meet the employment and educational needs of citizens in their communities (Riggs, 2009). Visionary change leadership that sees beyond current dilemmas to a positive future will make the difference between those mediocre institutions that remain wedded to the old ways of managing and leading and those new stars that see opportunity in adversity, and challenge and excitement in creating a culture of change in tomorrow’s community colleges (AACC, 2008; Wallin, 2010).

In Leading Change, Kotter (1996) included the importance of communicating the change vision as part of an eight-stage process for leading change. The stages are: (a) establishing a sense of urgency; (b) forming a powerful, guiding coalition; (c) creating a vision to help direct the change effort; (d) communicating the vision by using every vehicle possible to communicate the new vision and strategies; (e) empowering others to act on the vision; (f) planning for and creating short-term wins; (g) consolidating improvements and producing still more change; and (h) institutionalizing new approaches. Similarly, Duck (2001) provided a set of sequenced action steps in dealing with what he coined as the “change monster” (p. 1). Actions included stagnation, preparation, implementation, and determination. In the preparation phase, leaders considered planning and communication as essential for managing change (p. 9). Duck recommended going slow initially, and then faster as change evolves. Burke (2013) also indicated the heightened need to understand more about the timing of communication and
the amount to communicate at any given time. To be effective, Gardner (2004) concluded that a requirement of leadership is “interpersonal intelligence” (p. 39), which includes understanding of how to communicate with others and build on those relationships within the collaborative culture.

**Leader credibility in communicating planned change.** According to Lewis (1999), the college president is the chief communication officer and the primary spokesperson on the most important matters of the college’s organizational matters, particularly when communicating with followers or internal audiences. Good communication inspires trust and credibility, and affects relationships between leaders and followers (Kouzes & Posner, 1990). Trust is also linked to the willingness of followers to tell the truth, and to perceive the leader as credible. Gordon, Gilley, Avery, Gilley, and Barber (2014) concluded that employee perceptions of their managers’ trustworthiness were more related to the employees’ communication satisfaction than the managers’ qualifications or dynamism. Stein (2001) claimed that almost 30% of a leader’s credibility results from an impression that the leader is telling the truth, while 50% of a leader’s credibility is derived from the leader’s perceived expertise in the field. Grensing-Pophal (2000) reported that significant relationships were found between employees’ perceptions of their managers’ credibility and their perceptions of their managers’ communication behaviors. A significant relationship was also found between employees’ perceptions of their managers’ communication behaviors and their satisfaction with their managers’ communication, employees’ perceptions of their managers’ credibility, and their satisfaction with their managers’ credibility. Credibility, trust, and expertise related to better communication and greater satisfaction among
followers (Grensing-Pophal, 2000, p. 39). Thus, trust, credibility, and perceptions of the leader play an important communicative role in how followers respond to, and participate in, the process of planned change (Grensing-Pophal, 2000, p. 40).

**Framing the message in planned organizational change.** Several studies have illustrated the impact communication has on planned change implementation including creating and articulating vision (Fairhurst & Sarr, 1996), and channelling feedback (Lewis, 2006). How leaders communicate and frame information is linked to their underlying schema and their approach to leadership (Fairhurst, 2005). Some leaders act in transactional ways with their followers, while other leaders have a more transformational style in which leadership stems from ongoing dialogue. Crum and Sherman (2008) further reiterated that “clearly communicating the purpose and rationale behind decisions facilitates success” (p. 11). *Leadership approaches and communication styles seem to be closely linked, and the preferences of college presidents and other college leaders affect the ways in which they frame new information to campus constituents* (Eddy, 2003).

Symbolizing, visualizing and connective framing as communication tools. Leaders can use a variety of framing tools to get their message across during the implementation of planned organizational change (Fairhurst & Sarr, 1996). However, two powerful mechanisms include the use of symbols and stories (Harris, 1994; Weick, 1995). Specifically, leaders use symbols and stories to help frame and communicate a message by drawing attention to specific versions of a campus story they are creating (Bohlman & Deal, 2008). For example, the college adopts a new logo and everyone is required to recite the logo at least once a day. By using certain symbols, either literal or metaphorical, presidents can provide faculty and staff with a particular lens for
understanding the president’s vision, an interpretation of the campus vision, or ideas for organizational change (Eddy, 2010b). Goia, Thomas, Clark, and Chittipeddi (1994) found that several determinants emerged when they explored the power of symbols. Symbols not only captured the thoughts and feelings of organization members, but spurred on action from the organization. Symbols serve as the medium for both sensemaking and influence and are associated with the instigation of change (p. 380).

Campus stories are a central component to symbolizing the frame (Eddy, 2010b). Stories told by the president, and from campus members to one another, provide the means for passing along information on campus as well as sharing institutional memory as a context for impending change (McArdle, 2009). When presidents communicate through stories, they are more likely to be judged positively by campus constituents (p. 157). Another facet of storytelling focuses on the art of utilizing scenarios to facilitate change. Bowman, MacKay, Masrani, and McKiernan (2013) found that the stories, and particularly prospective stories, about an unknown future, are necessary for meaning-making to take place (p. 745). From the perspective of the leader, the intrinsic appeal of a scenario - an emotive and meaningful story - may often trump a well-reasoned and written report (p. 746). Bowman et al. concluded that sensitivity needs to be given to “designing strategic interventions so that conversations, participation, and ultimately, integration around common objectives are enabled through collective-meaning making” (p. 746).

Mills (2003) found that stories tend to be viewed as plausible when they tap into an ongoing sense of current climate, are consistent with other data, facilitate ongoing projects, reduce equivocality, provide an aura of accuracy, and offer a potentially exciting
Some leaders focus attention on the college’s future and possibilities rather than the current state of the campus. Thus, visionary framing requires college leaders to operate on the cusp of uncertainty (Eddy, 2010b). However, it may be especially useful in turbulent and uncertain times because it allows followers to focus on the college’s possibilities rather than its realities (p. 85).

When leaders frame information in a connective manner, they create a climate and a reality in which the campus learns and grows together (Fairhurst, 2005). The president, along with key leaders, works closely with campus members to develop and communicate a shared vision for the institution while undergoing change (Fulton-Calkins & Milling, 2005). From this perspective of knowing, leaders emphasize the qualities of empathy, understanding, acceptance, and collaboration through transformational and targeted dialogue, or the language of change (Love & Guthrie, 1999). Framing information in a connective way means providing forums for interaction in which negotiations can be accepted and carried out, while giving power to certain activities and processes that can serve as powerful cues for others in the institution to buy-in to the change (p. 23). Thus, connective framing provides opportunities for dialogue and allows leaders and followers to together determine what assumptions they bring to the table and discuss how they can help or hinder the forward movement of the college (p. 26). Leaders must also exercise transparency while making information accessible across the college (Eddy, 2010b). Leaders who portray transparent communication encourage individual campus members to feel a part of the process (p. 89).

Sensemaking and planning. Horton (2003) pointed out the importance of communicating information to the group as a component of successful leadership. He
stated, “to communicate information is not a contribution. But to communicate information which helps people’s problems or work through organizational change, helps the people do what they want. And what they want is a tremendous contribution” (p. 106). Relating this idea to developmental education redesign, once everyone understands the mission and acts upon shared vision, the followers then possess the power freedom to express their ideas for change from a bottom-up approach rather than a top-down approach. The prelaunch phase of the planning process opens the opportunity for the leader to communicate the need for change regardless of the origin (Burke, 2011). In this case, there is freedom within the structure to utilize creativity, skills, and expertise to help bring about the changes required of the institution, particularly in the age of increased state and federal accountability. This perspective directly applies to leaders of organizations whereby the expectation of change rests upon the success of their leadership through the effective communication of information. Before leaders can frame information for others, they must first make sense of it for themselves. The process of enacting planned change can provide ideal opportunities for college leaders to help campus members make sense of new initiatives and to connect new information with past experiences (Senge, 1990).

**Weick’s sensemaking properties.** Sensemaking begins with the sensemaker and employs seven properties (Weick, 1995). The first property, idea construction, relates to the way individual leaders make sense of a situation in a personal way. When presented with new information, the leader tries to make sense of it by drawing upon his or her underlying schemas and mental maps of how the world works. Gioia and Thomas (1996) indicated that under conditions of change, perceptions of the leader are key to the
sensemaking process, and serve as important links between the organization’s internal context and interpretation of team members. During this time, leaders identify the new information in ways that make sense in context to the organization. Leaders draw upon their own personal ways of interpreting and creating knowledge (Gioia & Thomas, 1996). A study of female leaders illustrated the power of narratives as a sensemaking device for members of a women's resource network in a large corporation during a time of significant organizational change (Bird, 2007). The researcher concluded that the influence of storytelling on the networking practices of its members from an analysis of the members' stories suggested three key conclusions: reliance on collectively constructing stories, use of stories to deal with ambiguity and anxiety, and use of stories to construct and regulate identity (p. 331).

Weick’s (1995) second property deals with the retrospective, or reflective, nature of sensemaking. In this stage, people use their past experiences and interactions to make sense of the new situation. As in educational psychology, sensemaking is key to the construction of new knowledge whereby learners create or construct their own knowledge and understanding of information based upon prior knowledge and past experiences. The act of reflecting gives the individual the ability to look at the intended goal, consider institutional needs or mission values, and professionally deconstruct what may be needed to shape or create a more efficient vision in the future (Maitlis & Sonenshein, 2010). Reflection allows for awareness of what functioned well in the process as well as how to improve results for times ahead (p.101). In a sense, the retrospective component of sensemaking mirrors the constructivist approach with respect to communication messages leading to organizational change (Hyslop-Margison &
Eddy (2005) reported study results of nine university presidents to gain understanding on how these leaders constructed their own leadership. The author concluded that presidents: (a) used underlying mental maps to guide their decision-making; (b) considered environmental factors and connected with prior experiences to make way for new learning opportunities; and (c) the foundation of this learning journey was based on each president's core schema. Schema influenced the processing of new incoming information and ultimately, impacted how the leaders made sense of it (Eddy, 2005, p. 719).

Weick’s (1995) third property is enactment. After having made sense of the situation for himself, the leader then begins to frame information and communicate it to others on campus (Weick, 1995). Smerek (2010) examined the first year in office of newcomer college and university presidents to understand how they made sense of the ongoing stream of experience (sensemaking) while they simultaneously articulated a desired future image (sensegiving) in setting forth new strategic initiatives. Four empirically grounded processes emerged: (a) speaking in broad, ambiguous goals and safe harbors; (b) holding knowledge cautiously - knowing you do not know everything; (c) relying on social interactions to help make sense of the organization and to give more certainty in judgments; and (d) reducing equivocality through priority setting (Smerek, 2010).

Weick’s (1995) fourth element of sensemaking deals with social ways in which individuals begin to make sense of information communicated by their leader. The fifth property of ongoing sensemaking is concerned with the continuous nature of sensemaking. The process of trying to make sense of a situation never has a definite
beginning or end-point. Continuous filtering and processing of information leads to greater understanding. The sixth property refers to extracted cues, which serve as the point of reference to help with sensemaking, identify points of change, and guide interpretations. Lastly, Weick’s seventh property pertains to the notion that situations are interpreted as being plausible as opposed to being accurate. Plausibility is grounded in expected and credible outcomes. When a leader anticipates the outcomes of a situation, the details of the actual reality are overshadowed by the expected reality. As leaders become adept at making sense of a new situation for themselves and then communicate that understanding to others, they begin to serve as sense-givers (Eddy, 2010b).

**Summary**

Bryman (2007) focused on desired leadership behaviors in a study of department head leaders. Results yielded ten attributes associated with leadership behaviors to lead change within colleges and universities. The ten characteristics were identified: (a) providing vision - Desjardins and Huff (2001) found that a feature of these departmental leaders is that they establish a collective departmental vision or focus. (b) Clear direction - Lindholm-Leary (2005) found that high levels of structure and direction are associated with higher levels of subordinate performance. (c) Consideration - Australian academics found consideration to be positively related to commitment (Winter & Sarros, 2002). (d) Treating faculty with fairness and respect - Murry and Stauffacher (2001) found that departmental leaders who treat members of staff equally and fairly were more likely to be able to build and maintain morale. (e) Trustworthiness (Creswell, 2012); (f) participation in key decision-making - open communication between and among faculty and staff was attributed to department chair administrative effectiveness (Brown & Moshavi, 2002). (g)
Communication and credibility - Benoit and Graham (2005) found good communication about major issues was strongly associated with productivity. (h) Creating a positive atmosphere (Johnsrud & Rosser, 2002). Brown and Moshavi’s (2002) results suggested the importance for administrative leaders to have credibility as academics as well as in terms of being leaders. (i) Advocacy and providing feedback (Trocchia & Andrus, 2003). Benoit and Graham’s (2005) research results indicated that administrators should lead by example. This element was one of four prominent aspects of effective college leaders. (j) Providing resources and enhancing the reputation of the department or institution - Ambrose, Houston, and Norman (2005) pointed to the importance of administrators who allocate resources of time, information, and assignments to encourage and cultivate the vision.
CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this study was to explore the personal perspectives of select community college administrators regarding the purpose, values, and beliefs they inherently espouse about leadership, developmental education, and academic success. The second goal of the study was to examine the way select state college administrators lead change through communication strategies from the leader to the stakeholders. The third goal of the study was to identify professional leadership approaches and describe related management strategies of select state college administrators charged with leading the major redesign of a developmental education program at a large community college in Florida. The methodology section encompasses a description of the research design for data collection, limitations of the study, data analysis, and data interpretation (Patton, 2005). Research methodology considers the study population, instrumentation, sampling procedures (if applicable), and validation of the findings (Salkind, 2010). Given the nature of the research, the qualitative paradigm was chosen to deeply examine individual factors that characterized administrators’ distinguishable approaches in a holistic and comprehensive manner (Patton, 2005).

Qualitative Paradigm

This study used qualitative research to explore the why and how of a phenomenon and provided opportunities to go beyond the quantitative questions of how many, and to what extent, an experience may occur (Patton, 2005). A qualitative research project enables the researcher to depart from the value neutrality usually associated with scientific research and delve into the variant factors surrounding a phenomenon, natural setting characteristics of participants, interactions, thoughts, and discoveries that are
brought to light through interaction with the research participants themselves (Patton, 2005).

Characteristically, qualitative methodology allows the researcher to collect data through participation, observation, interviews, and analysis of artifacts and documents (Creswell, 2003). With this information, the researcher then interprets, or makes sense of the phenomenon through the meanings that the participants bring to the data (Patton, 2005). Reporting of findings is most frequently done in a more literary form rather than being graphed, charted, or put forth in mathematical terms (Patton, 2005). However, selected tables may be used to illustrate the qualitative data in a concise manner.

Moreover, qualitative research methodology provides a mechanism of obtaining deeper comprehension of human behaviors and the related indicators which impact those actions by using rich and thick descriptions of the phenomenon being researched (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). It also provides a way of establishing inquiry in multiple ways, while offering flexibility and adaptability within a more fluid research protocol (Patton, 2005). For example, instead of presenting a typical hypothesis at the beginning of the study, the researcher initially developed open-ended research questions and inserted related follow-up questions while conducting the study (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). Thus, as the researcher investigated and collected data for the research, the follow-up questions were tailored to the responses from a singular question (Marshall & Rossman, 2011).

**Research question alignment.** The quality of leadership exhibited by the college administrators played a substantial role in the way the message of change was communicated to faculty and staff. Therefore, the way administrators engaged these groups with planning may have had a direct connection to the success of the new
redesign plan (Ferren & Stanton, 2004). A major influence regarding leadership approaches centered on the core values, principles, and worldviews of the leaders guiding this redesign effort. Furthermore, developmental education served as a pathway to college access for a variety of students representing different degrees of college preparedness and readiness (Boylan, 1988; Boylan & White, 1987; N. Remington & Remington, 2012). Thus, decisions made by administrators in the planning phase of redesign ultimately determined how successfully students matriculated through required gateway courses (Fincher, 2003; Perin, 2005). These programmatic decisions struck at the heart of the leaders’ philosophies regarding the college mission and potential for students to succeed, juxtaposed against the legislative mandates primarily based on cost matters rather than educational theory and practice (Farnsworth, 2007).

In relation, Block (2014) acknowledged that although they are educators by training, college administrators must navigate the political landscape, opposition from internal constituents, and conflict to enact change that is just and manageable, given legislative parameters such as in Florida’s S.B. 1720 (2013) – i.e., no placement testing. Constructing the plan that considered this major change required a range of leadership competencies, skills, approaches, expertise, and interactions from other stakeholders to serve a vulnerable student population (Ferren & Stanton, 2004; Palmer, 2013). Thus, the qualitative research approach was utilized to explore these questions by delving deeply in the minds of the administrators, upon whose shoulders the new plan was developed and implemented. The researcher sought to understand what the leaders brought to bear to lead this change effort.
The primary research question was, what are the strategies adopted by the select state college administrators leading a major developmental education redesign initiative within a community college? To further explore the primary question, three sub-questions are used as the prompts for discussions to the study participants.

**Sub-research question 1.** What influenced the leadership approaches adopted by the select state college administrators in leading the new developmental educational redesign initiative?

**Sub-research question 2.** What communication approaches were adopted by the administrators in leading the new developmental education redesign initiative?

**Sub-research question 3.** How do the college administrators reflect on their approaches in leading organizational change with respect to the new developmental education redesign initiative?

The sub-questions followed a continuum of thought by reflecting on different dimensions of change. Thus, the questions began with exploring the internal qualities, influences, and communication of the leaders as individuals followed by their approach in leading planning efforts for broader organizational change. The rationale for sequencing the questions in this manner rested in the notion of building a foundational context as a means of scaffolding additional ideas in which to identify or build a supportive framework.

The utilization of an in-depth qualitative study on the leadership perspectives of higher education administrators leading developmental education redesign underscored the need for further research given the lack of formal analysis studies in this topic in the scholarly literature. The quality of leadership exhibited by the college administrators
played a significant role in the way in which the message of change was facilitated and communicated to faculty and staff, given how administrators engaged these groups to assist with the planning of the new redesign plan. Finally, revealing leadership competencies that reflected how faculty and staff were shepherded, respected, and acknowledged through the redesign process ultimately laid the foundation for the new redesign plan considering past program success. Discovering the leadership approaches of these leaders set the stage for future implementation amid uncertainty of student success once the new plan became fully operationalized.

**Qualitative Method**

**Case study.** For this project, the comparative case study method was utilized to obtain a well-rounded, content-rich, and in-depth view into the world of high level administrators leading a college-wide developmental education redesign effort. The goal was to explore leaders’ values and worldviews as they pertained to their leadership approaches in guiding the redesign planning process (Merriam, 1998). A comparative case study is a kind of narrative study which describes the meaning for several individuals of their lived experiences of a concept or a phenomenon (Creswell, 2009; Patton, 2005). The focus of this approach was aimed at describing what participants had in common, and where they differed as they experienced the phenomenon of leading complex change. The researcher explored, described, and analyzed how they felt about it, judged it, made sense of it, described it, and communicated the experience with others (Marshall & Rossman, 2011, 2014). The description of the cases consisted of what the leaders experienced and how they experienced it while the researcher developed a composite description of the experience for all individuals. As a result, participant
experiences were analyzed as both unique expressions and holistic perceptions (Marshall & Rossman, 2011).

Overall, the case studies entailed immersion in the setting and rested upon the researcher’s and participants’ worldviews (Marshall & Rossman, 2011). Individually, the case studies emphasized experiences of the leaders in such a manner to show how each leader made sense of the world and developed her paradigm or worldview. Collectively, the comparative case study method was utilized to obtain a well-rounded, content-rich, and in-depth view into the world of administrators leading systemic change through the developmental education redesign planning period. Each case study provided a descriptive account of the participant’s experiences and/or behaviors kept by the researcher through interview notes (formal and conversational), and observation (Patton, 2005). The participants’ values, beliefs, and educational philosophy also emerged, and served as the underpinnings to their leadership orientations.

**Site Selection: Context and Access**

There are five campuses and seven centers located in the city, offering courses during the day, evening and weekends. Although one institution, each campus and center has its own specialties, nuances, and attributes that make each a little different than the others. Students may select to attend one or more campuses/centers of their choice. However, some of the foundational courses may be offered only at select locations for specific degree programs. All campus locations offer classes needed to earn an Associate of Arts degree for university transfer while numerous campuses offer bachelor’s degree courses. The college serves over 50,000 students through a variety of delivery methods including face-to-face, hybrid and online options.
Participant Profiles

Dr. Anne Hornyak was the most senior administrator. Dr. Catalina Rivera, an executive administrator, reported to Dr. Hornyak, while Dr. Pat Burns collaborated with Dr. Rivera as a faculty member and part-time program manager assigned to work on special projects for the college. Dr. Burns formally reported to a separate dean at one of the campus locations.

**Dr. Anne Hornyak.** Dr. Hornyak retired in October 2015. Dr. Hornyak is an experienced educator, having spent the entirety of her long-term professional career in the state of Florida. Her professional career spans K-12 where she taught high school for ten years; she worked in the community college student services arena before advancing into administration. Given Dr. Hornyak’s expertise and level of authority at the institution and the state, it seemed appropriate to commence this research study by conducting her interview first. Another logistical reason lay in the eminency of her retirement. The researcher wanted to conduct the interview while Dr. Hornyak remained employed with the college and while the events of the developmental education reorganization initiative were still fresh in her mind. Although Dr. Hornyak previously worked at the statewide level, her experience as a campus-based administrator offered a high degree of value to the quality of data collected.

For the interview, Dr. Hornyak permitted the researcher to audiotape the one-on-one interview from a secured location on campus to ensure privacy. She chose the interview location, date, and time to occur before her last official work day prior to the start of her retirement. However, Dr. Hornyak was given a few minutes to read over the questions and gather her preliminary thoughts approximately two to three minutes prior
to asking the first question. She asked to do so because it helped to form a visual path of
topics in her mind to begin organizing her thoughts. Because of tight scheduling needs,
Dr. Hornyak allotted exactly ninety minutes for the entire session, which provided her
ample opportunity to respond to each structured question and follow-up questions as
needed.

Dr. Hornyak’s role in the planning process began shortly after the passage of S.B. 1720 (2013). Here, discussions ensued with other executive community college
administrators throughout Florida regarding the way to address the new legislation
statewide. At the college level, Dr. Hornyak secured a Title III grant to use in support of
the creation of the college’s developmental education plan. Although planted at a college,
she had the benefit of being a former statewide administrator. In short, this connection
gave her the advantage to receive the latest developments at any time to gauge options.
At any time, Dr. Hornyak could pick up the phone gain inside information that allowed
her to immediately discern what was going to work or what was not going to work.

**Dr. Pat Burns.** Dr. Pat Burns currently served as a professor and part-time
administrator. She spent over 34 years in higher education within one community college
in Florida. Her academic journey began as a former graduate of the community college
system and subsequently, she began teaching writing at the same community college for
the rest of her professional career, with a special focus on helping non-traditional
students.

During her career, Dr. Burns was frequently tapped to lead special projects,
develop professional training, and provide academic coaching to faculty both within and
outside the college. As a faculty/administrative leader, she was also afforded numerous
opportunities to receive advanced professional development such as certifications in development education, including a previous developmental education redesign initiative.

When the Florida Legislature passed S.B. 1720 in Spring 2013, Dr. Pat Burns found herself squarely at the forefront of the national debate over legislative changes in developmental education redesign and different approaches promoted by new organizations. Because of her national position after the passing of Florida’s S.B. 1720, developmental educators across the nation were tuned to Florida regarding the developmental education redesign to see how the state would address this change.

Although Dr. Pat Burn’s contribution to educational redesign was secondary, she worked with the lead administrator to develop certain sections of the final plan. In doing so, she contributed to the literature review by evaluating the research on developmental education. She also reviewed course models other colleges were using around the country to make changes in developmental education curriculum. To help develop strategies, Dr. Burns met with many stakeholder groups, including faculty groups, advisors, librarians, and tutors to brainstorm and gather ideas. She noted, “I think that I had a perspective, maybe, that some of them didn't have, because I was served on a national organization, but Dr. Rivera was certainly the master of that plan” (Dr. Burns, Interview, October 1, 2015).

**Dr. Catalina Rivera.** Dr. Rivera currently serves as an executive administrator at her institution. Like the other participants, Dr. Rivera enjoyed teaching in a community college and eventually rose to administration through the nurturing of mentors and colleagues who identified her leadership, motivation, and drive. Like Dr. Hornyak, Dr. Rivera initially planned to pursue a career in high school teaching. However, she
followed a path to community college through the influence of a professor who noted her interest in the community college mission and working with diverse student populations. This idea was also reflected in her doctoral study. After beginning her teaching career, she gradually moved into mid-level administration, leading program development initiatives and other departments. A large focus of her work was centered on academic/student support in curriculum development, postsecondary readiness, and developmental education redesign both at the college and state levels.

Through the successful outcomes of these and other initiatives, Dr. Rivera was previously tapped as to lead the development of a center dedicated to developmental education students. Dr. Pat Burns worked with Dr. Rivera for this project. As project leader, Dr. Rivera collaborated with many internal stakeholders including faculty, librarians, academic tutors, advisors, and deans to conceptualize, plan, and implement the center. This model was based on the comprehensive emporium model using a variety of innovative instructional strategies to help students gain needed requisite skills at higher success rates in preparation for general education.

For the current project, Dr. Rivera was again the lead administrator overseeing the redesign, and reported to Dr. Hornyak. The Developmental Education Plan had five major tenets and Dr. Rivera was given a template to flesh out the details. There was a pre-established timeline for implementation between May 2013 and December 2013. Dr. Rivera gathered input from a wide variety of faculty and staff across disciplines and departments. Additionally, she planned and facilitated numerous college-wide and regional meetings to present research and exchange ideas. Furthermore, she served as lead author of the college’s plan.
**Participant Selection**

Participants in the study were comprised of key administrative or executive leaders responsible for leading the redesign efforts at the college. There were two primary criteria for inclusion in the study. They included (a) scope of job responsibility, and (b) substantial involvement in leading either program or policy planning related to development and implementation of the developmental education redesign plan for the college. All interview participants were identified as leaders who had direct responsibility over aspects of the planning for, and creation of, the developmental education redesign plan. It is only by coincidence they worked at the same institution. Second, the participants had management over a significant college-wide department or program that was directly impacted by the implementation plan changes. Participants’ formal titles reflected that of director or higher, per the job classification list from the college’s human resources department.

Even though all three participants were employees of the same institution, they were unique in that they also served as state and national leaders in the higher education field. Of the three participants, two participants were housed in the college’s central district administration building. The researcher is also worked at the same institution, but in a separate department. In coordinating general education assessment, the researcher was highly interested in how the changes in developmental education curriculum might impact student success in general education courses. However, what made the participant selection unique at this institution compared to other state colleges in Florida, was their collective span of leadership in the region, the state of Florida, and the United States, especially during this time. One participant was a former leading education officer at the
state-level. Another participant was a faculty member, based at both a campus location and the central district due to additional administrative responsibilities. This person was also served on a national organization at the time of the redesign planning and shared administrative responsibility of redesign planning with the executive administrator in charge of the college-wide developmental program. The third executive administrator was known regionally and statewide for the success of the current developmental education program.

**Research Protocols/Instrumentation**

Participants were formally invited by letter to participate in the study (Appendix C), followed by a short follow-up meeting to confirm their understanding of the project and to secure signed permission. After verification of participation, observations were conducted first, depending on the work schedule of the participants. Next, observations were followed by the document analysis. The rationale for this design was that by starting with observations, a mental picture was formed which helped to provide a context for the study. Observation allowed the researcher to document each leader’s style by listening to voice tone, inflection, and points of emphasis. It also allowed the researcher to see facial expressions, body language, and use of physical movement during local and regional meeting facilitation and to witness reactions and responses from faculty and staff. Each participant was observed in a natural work setting. During observations, the researcher functioned as a participant-observer during the meeting and group exercises. In this role, the group was unaware of the observer's status as a researcher to maintain the naturalistic essence of the event and group interaction.
Second, participants engaged in an approximately 90-120 minute, semi-structured interview consisting of 10-12 open-ended questions, follow-up questions, and responses to glean the internal thoughts and viewpoints of the participants regarding their role as executive administrators. Questions were used to record biographical information, while highlighting background influences that contributed to the leadership development of each administrator. Collectively, all sources of data provided a means in which to triangulate data collected from the observation and content analysis, while providing additional insight regarding emerging themes of leadership approaches (Patton, 2005).

The individual interview sessions took place at a location of the participant’s choice for a confidential discussion. Each participant chose a non-public and secure location on campus. The interviewer took copious field notes and conducted audio recordings to glean similar themes from the interviews. Participants had the freedom to engage in the discussion, opt out or decline from answering any questions as they chose.

Data from each source was coded and triangulated to identify common themes, make comparisons, and draw conclusions. After initial interpretation of data and identification of emerging themes, a second round of interviews was conducted with the participants in a secure location to confirm themes and provide additional feedback for member checking to determine the researcher’s accuracy in summarizing interview data prior to writing up the study (Marshall & Rossman, 2011). In this stage, the researcher asked interviewees for reactions, corrections, and further insights to increase data reliability. As a form of peer-debriefing, arrangements were made available to obtain feedback from the coding, and case summaries during data analysis phase (Marshall & Rossman, 2011).
A two-hour follow-up interview was conducted with two of the three interviewees after data analysis to enhance the information and key themes identified by the participant interviews. The third participant was unable to participate in the follow-up interview due to her retirement. Rather, an extra individual member check was conducted alongside the other individual member checks. Questions were developed based on leadership and emerging themes from the interviews. In the follow-up interviews, participants had the opportunity to share aspects of their leadership contribution to the redesign process to better highlight and understand how their collective leadership played a role in the redesign planning efforts. Emerging themes and triangulation of data were confirmed because of direct interaction between participants. These follow-up sessions were audio-recorded and stored on a secure server for subsequent access.

Lastly, content analysis of selected documents was conducted to identify evidence for recurring themes, categories, and groups of information across documents. Analysis of the document sources included meeting agendas, meeting minutes, white papers, redesign plan, newsletters, presentations, grant report, and selected parts of dissertations. This approach was important because the documents told an underlying story, captured the planning process of the leader, and revealed program priorities as they occurred naturally during the planning period. Analysis of the content text also provided a way to research language and contextual meaning of redesign as communicated by the leaders both individually and collectively in some instances.

**Data Sources**

As a comparative case study, the primary data sources for this project were gathered from interviews, observations, and content analysis. For reliability and
objectivity, use of follow-up interviews and member checks with the interviewees served as added reliability for enhanced data collection. However, if additional data sources deemed relevant to the study were suggested and discovered in the process of data collection, or recommended by the interviewees, those items were also included in the study for further analysis and interpretation.

**Case 1.** Although Dr. Hornyak retired in October 2015, the researcher remained in contact with her as an ongoing subject in the study as she continued to work in a consultative role. To address dependability, documentation of the participant’s job transition can be verified through several documents including (a) a printed retirement program, (b) interviews and observations, (c) internal email marketing blasts announcing her retirement celebration, (d) newsletters, (e) speaker notes, and (f) video of the actual retirement gathering and celebration. The retirement celebration included previous colleagues with whom she worked in Florida.

**Case 2.** In August 2015, Dr. Pat Burns concluded her role with a national organization. However, she continued to serve as an advisor to the organization. Selected documents and artifacts used to support this participant included (a) the college’s Developmental Education Plan, (b) statements from organizational newsletters and articles, (c) minutes from planning meetings, (d) dissertation introduction and abstract, and (e) interviews and observations.

**Case 3.** Dr. Rivera continued to serve in her role as an executive leader. Documents referenced as evidence included, but were not limited to (a) the institution’s Developmental Education Plan, (b) newsletter, (c) meeting agenda and minutes from
developmental education planning committee meetings, (e) dissertation introduction and abstract, (f) TEDX presentation, and (g) interviews and observations.

**Project Timeline**

The following timeline was used during the research period:

- **August 2015**: Obtained IRB approval, recruited participants and began data collection
- **September - December 2015**: Conducted study interviews, observations, and content analysis
- **January – June 2016**: Conducted data analysis, member checking, narrative writing and review
- **July - August 2016**: Conducted cross-case analysis, interpretive writing and review
- **August 2016 – September 2017**: Finished draft and revised final writing for committee
- **October - November 2017**: Completed dissertation defense and incorporated committee revisions

**Quality of Study**

The study quality represents Lincoln’s (1995) Four Criteria for Assessing the Soundness of a Qualitative Study. Credibility refers to the notion of ensuring that, "the data speak to the findings” (Lincoln, 1995, p.59). As the qualitative researcher, the intention was to provide enough rich, thick description regarding the setting, program, subjects, procedures, and interactions so that the boundaries and parameters of that study were well specified (Lincoln, 1995). This information included background information
about the college, including relevant historical data and key demographics. Information on the study participants included mini-biographies and current roles/responsibilities within the college. Methodological procedures for all phases of the study were thoroughly explained, including assumptions and scope of the study (Seale, 1999). Interactions and working relationships between the participants and the researcher, as well as interactions among study participants, were clearly stated as part of the study context.

**Transferability** implies generalizability of the findings and results of the study to other settings, situations, populations, and circumstances which also refers to external validity (Lincoln & Guba, 2002). The idea also refers to obtaining a greater depth, richness, detail, and understanding of the phenomenon. First, an initial check was included to determine if the developed model aligned with the data for content accuracy. Next, the primary way transferability was addressed was through the process of triangulation of the data. Triangulation includes using multi-method procedures in the design and/or analysis of the qualitative data (Patton, 2005). Data were analyzed by using the case-and-theme method and cross-case analysis aligned with the research questions. Triangulating, or comparing, the different paths or results to determine if they converged upon the same findings, common themes and similar results, served to enhance the believability and robustness of the results more so than if a single method was used (p.306). Collectively, all sources of data provided a means by which to triangulate data collected from the interviews, observations, and content analysis, while providing additional insight regarding relevant leadership styles, philosophical values, and communication approaches characterizing each leader (p. 546). However, while study
findings indicated potential for generalization, the idea of transferability might not be fully substantiated due to some of the unique characteristics of the participants and limited scope of the study context. Yet, study might be done at a similar institution type.

**Dependability**: Lincoln and Guba (2002) advised the researcher to provide clear and sufficient documentation of modifications, and unexpected events in the phenomenon being examined to evaluate the extent of dependability contained in the results. Therefore, it was the researcher’s intention to address these criteria by documenting any job shifts such as changes in title, job responsibilities, reporting structure, or changes in participants in the study. In addition, an audit trail was utilized to document open description detailing the research decisions made during the full progression of the research project, including topic development through the reporting of findings (Lincoln & Guba, 2002, p. 53). This data included an observation log and raw data, including interview transcripts, data reduction products including summaries, charts, and/or reflection notes.

**Confirmability** is synonymous with objectivity (Lincoln & Guba, 2002). The indicators for confirmability are referenced in the logical flow of the narrative or internal logic as well as evidence of researcher bias. In this study, the researcher addressed this criterion by using member checks with participants in initial follow-up meetings to review interview summaries provided by the researcher as a heuristic for data reduction and a check for accuracy of the summarized interviews. A summary of each interview was provided to each participant to obtain their feedback. The researcher hosted follow-up interviews among the interviewees to cross-reference themes (Creswell, 2009; Patton, 2005). Furthermore, member checking was employed after data analysis for each
participant to review and give input regarding common themes and emerging trends of information gleaned from the researcher’s analysis to determine if the researcher provided accurate data interpretation (Lincoln, 1995). Participants were also given the opportunity to review and comment on the conceptual framework model. In summary, multiple sources of evidence, an established chain of evidence, pattern-matching, replication logic in multiple-case studies, use of proper case study protocol, and member checks contributed to the validity and reliability of this study (Creswell, 2009; Creswell & Miller, 2000).

**Warrant and Transparency**

The intent to justify the usefulness and the need for research on core values and leadership were key factors in determining the rationale for conducting this study. Thus, warrant was addressed through the building of a critical argument regarding the type of leadership approaches used in leading complex change, which served as the primary reason for the research focus of the study (Lincoln & Guba, 2002). As the argument led to claims made, a series of justification statements supported by the data followed to support these claims (Freeman, Preissle, Roulston, & Pierre, 2007). The importance of justification supports the reasons why any claim is deemed important or integral to the purpose for which the study is being conducted. The justification serves as evidence which gives validity to the claims (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005).

Transparency was addressed by identifying the motivations of the researcher to conduct this study, the selection of the participants, and rationale supporting their inclusion, or reasons supporting the exclusion of other possible participants (Lincoln, 1995; Lincoln & Guba, 2002). Transparency was acknowledged in relation to the
selection and utilization of the instruments and methodology employed. This included any changes made in the duration of the study period (Lincoln, 1995, p. 45). Transparency was exercised regarding the strategy of data collection, data analysis, data interpretation, and data reduction techniques (Peshkin, 1993). All results of the data and study outcomes were included in the narrative to include explanations of data results regardless of the scope of the results, to maintain rigor and consistency (Peshkin, 2000). Attributions to authors were properly notated as required by the American Psychological Association Publication Manual, 6e (American Psychological Association, 2013).

**Confidentiality**

Participant data and institutional descriptors were anonymous. Certain descriptors related to the participants were changed to maintain anonymity throughout the study. The data were kept anonymous using pseudonyms in the data collection, data analysis, and the final report. Data were not shared with anyone other than the dissertation chair and committee during review of the study. Subsequently, data were stored on a secure, password protected, and cloud-based server managed by the University of North Florida.

In relation to data security and reporting, all consent forms, interview transcripts, recordings, summaries, and observation logs were also stored on a password-protected, secure server. No video recordings were used in this project. Audio recordings were immediately uploaded and stored in a secure, password-protected, and cloud-based server under the auspices of UNF. Use of the audio recording was restricted to the participants and the researcher conducting the project. Data were transcribed by the principal investigator and by utilization of TranscribeMe, a professionally-hired transcription service for structured interviews. The original audio recordings remained in the cloud.
only for the duration of the project. Due to pseudonyms, data were not readily identifiable in the data collection phase, data analysis, and the final report.

Finally, data from the project will be destroyed at the end of the project or upon conclusion of the dissertation. A draft of the written narrative was provided for the participants to review before finalization of the report because it is important that participants felt confident with the interpretation and accuracy of the data and the written report. The review of information by the participants promoted trust in the process and transparency between the researcher (student) and the professor (subject), a step that also ensured quality. All information collected from the participants including field notes, logs, and interview transcriptions will be destroyed upon conclusion of the dissertation. Participants did not receive compensation.

Researcher’s Positionality Statement

Researcher interest. As a mid-level administrator, the researcher collaborated with a variety of institutional leaders working in support of developmental education. Within the last six years, the researcher’s role has morphed from a campus-based department head to a college-wide administrative position. The journey from departmental leadership to administration encompassed leadership experiences comprised of both professional accomplishments coupled with personal challenges and triumphs. However, the combination of professional and personal considerations was not unique to the researcher’s formal trajectory to leadership. Rather, it was indicative of her life journey encapsulated within the variety of other experiences that impacted her leadership ability and approach.
**Research Subject.** Leadership issues run close the researcher’s heart and align with her core mission as an educator and as a college-wide coordinator of general education assessment. The process of identifying personal core values, educational philosophy, and leadership orientation in the context of the researcher’s position and responsibilities has revolutionized the way the researcher reflects on her approach to supporting the provision of developmental education and the way she views other administrators leading similar kinds of redesign work. Specifically, the researcher holds deep respect for the administrators tasked with leading the total redesign and piloting of the developmental education model of embedded instruction as a co-requisite model (Nicolaides & McCallum, 2013). This new redesign was recently mandated by the Florida State Legislature to improve student progression and increase student completion rates in a cost-effective manner. The college won an award for an exemplary program due to the measured effectiveness of the program over the past three years. Unfortunately, those results had no bearing on the change in the law.

Part of the motivation for conducting research on these three individuals also stems back to the researcher’s own notions of dealing with change, or the lack thereof, as an academic mid-level administrator. In pursuing the path of leadership, the researcher has come to realize that change is inevitable, and that leaders must learn how to manage change well to survive and thrive in higher education as community college leaders, given the complex challenges faced. Thus, the researcher’s personal leadership aspirations warranted this research interest in that if these recognized leaders could manage complex and unwanted change successfully, then perhaps the researcher could learn from their example.
**Research participants.** As a mid-level administrator at the college, the researcher was especially interested in the leadership approach of the administrators charged with leading this redesign effort at a specific community college in Florida. Those three individuals were Dr. Anne Hornyak, Dr. Pat Burns, and Dr. Catalina Rivera. These individuals seemed to exhibit leadership orientations to which the researcher aspires as she leads change in her professional career. The researcher’s work relationship was varied and different with all three participants; she had no direct reporting relationship to any of the participants. Dr. Hornyak served as the senior academic administrative leader of the college and was three levels above the researcher in organizational management structure. Dr. Burns was a faculty member on a different campus. Dr. Rivera oversaw the developmental education program. The researcher worked primarily with articulation/transfer agreements and reported to a different senior administration officer in a separate department altogether.

**Research process and context.** The case study method was employed by conducting interviews, observations and review of selected documents. Communication with the participants was limited to designated data collection appointments for interviews and member checks. Observation sessions were done as participants led meetings and trainings on the redesign. Despite the frustration felt by most people regarding this sea of change in developmental education, these three individuals embraced the redesign work, and viewed it as an opportunity to serve the students in a more efficient manner. Moreover, they proceeded to tackle this process with attributes of excitement, enthusiasm, and optimism, despite the dismantling of the currently successful program.
Possible influences/biases. Given the relevance to the quality improvement plan which focused on early and strategic academic planning for students, it was the researcher’s desire to further explore the leaders’ personal mission, practical theorizing views, and beliefs. However, it was also important to be aware of any biases or tendencies to see the leaders as a monolith just because they were female college administrators working at the college. Therefore, the researcher sought to delve deeper and explore the participants’ philosophical and leadership orientations in greater detail, while approaching each subject with an open mind and encouraging them to fully express themselves without conditions during their interview sessions.

To minimize bias, interviews were conducted in a confidential location of the participants’ choice to provide a naturalistic setting, with the researcher acting as a field researcher, documenting data as it occurred. To remain objective and maintain a neutral approach, each participant reviewed all interview narratives, summaries, and charts for accurate interpretation. If any discrepancy was found after review by the participant, the information was immediately corrected as needed.

As the interviewer, the researcher developed a set of open-ended questions planned for use in the study (Chenail, 2011). Minimizing bias was accomplished by asking probing and clarifying questions of the participants rather than taking the first answer at face value to filter out any assumptions of preconceived notions on the part of the researcher. To manage potential duplication, the question, “is there anything else you would like to add or suggest about this particular question?” was asked.

Participants were asked to elaborate on certain points to potentially disconfirm any initial agreement, allowing the researcher to maintain an open mind and gather
subsequent data. Equally as important, the researcher restrained from offering opinion or input on any response to avoid injecting her perspective on the participants or skewing the responses in a specific direction. The researcher’s focus remained on asking questions rather than making comment. To minimize question-order bias, the participants could continue talking without overemphasizing order to maintain their natural flow of thought and idea formation. Information that was out of order was later aligned during the analysis phase, as this method produced a more organic and participant-driven way of organizing the data. This organizational approach also helped to minimize questioning bias (Patton, 2005).

**Data Analysis**

Three criteria for data evaluation encompassed the following elements: (a) objectivity of the inquirer, (b) contributions to theory, and (3) triangulation of data across the data sources (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Following traditional research criteria, objectivity was paramount to obtain authentic information from the participants with no filtering of data. The participants were given free rein to respond to the questions with honesty without fear of confidentiality breach. Following the interviews, data transcription of all interviews was completed, detailing all responses to questions and inquiries (Patton, 2005). The researcher noted recurring concepts and ideas for comparison and contrast. During this phase, categories were established based on the themes that emanated from raw data. Coding was used to maintain consistency to establish validity. Leadership theory, communication theory, and organizational theory were referenced depending on the results of the pattern analysis (Patton, 2005).
Triangulation is defined to be a validity procedure where researchers search for convergence among multiple and different sources of information to form themes or categories in a study (Creswell & Miller, 2000). More specifically, triangulation methods from all sources were cross-referenced to connect related ideas and concepts (p. 126). Methods of triangulation incorporated the process of further exploring the extent to which findings were consistent as generated by various methods of collecting qualitative data (Creswell, 2009; Patton, 2002). In this case, the two methods included (a) the interview, including observation, and document analysis of the developmental education redesign plan and other relevant documents; (b) follow-up interviews, to enhance the data emanated from themes drawn from the initial interviews (Patton, 2005, p.556). To complete triangulation, notes from the professional observation, a type of verification of themes, were utilized to enrich data extracted from each initial interview and follow-up interviews conducted by the researcher (pp. 287-288). Professional analysis software was not used to identify patterns (descriptive findings) and themes (emergent categories) (Wiltshier, 2011). Using triangulation promoted credibility and reliability of the data (Marshall & Rossman, 2011).

A summary of each interview served as a heuristic to condense interviews into a manageable format for review. Subsequently, each participant was provided a copy of her individual summary for the researcher to obtain feedback as means of member-checking the data obtained by the individual interviews. Collectively, all sources of data provided a means by which to triangulate data obtained through interviews, observation and content analysis, and follow-up interviews, while providing additional confirmation regarding relevant leadership styles, philosophical values, and communication approaches that
characterized each leader (Patton, 2005). Furthermore, member checking was employed after data analysis to determine if the researcher provided accurate data interpretation (Marshall & Rossman, 2011).

**Framework Analysis**

Coding represents the process of merging data for themes, identifying ideas, and formulating categories. To aid in the coding process by participants for the structured interviews, a case- and theme-based framework was used to organize the key ideas by participant and emerging themes and patterns, given the nature of the comparative case study (Smith & Firth, 2011). Interview summaries and self-memos aided the researcher in gleaning broader meanings from the raw data. This approach represented the inductive part of the data analysis phase. Categories were labeled with specific codes to align with related themes (Marshall & Rossman, 2011). Advantages of this framework facilitated organization and reduction of the data into meaningful chunks of information, provided the ability to look horizontally across themes for case analysis, vertically at themes for thematic analysis, and combine both approaches for a holistic view (Patton, 2005). The primary emphasis of this effort was to garner explanations, rationale, hunches, motivation, relationships between categories, and subcategories, or other reasons that emerged when connecting themes prior to the data interpretation phase (Creswell, 2012).

Finally, charts (matrices) were created using the headings from thematic framework (case and/or theme) depending on how the cases and themes emerged. Matrices were developed by searching for patterns and associations, concepts, theories, and explanations of the data (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). Advantages of the matrices were that data were already ordered in descriptive chunks (columns) which aided question-
focused analysis (Ryan & Bernard, 2003). Lastly, matrices maintained the context of the data and aided the search for explanations by looking across rows (pp. 88-91). Matrices encouraged display of diversity and avoidance of bias (p. 99). These efforts were done to show the analytical process was systemic, comprehensive, and transparent.

**Risks**

The potential risks for the study were limited, yet, were also required to recognize the importance of maintaining a positive professional reputation. All the potential participants were considered to represent either middle or senior management of the college. Minimal risk was based on the notion that all participants had enjoyed successful professional careers in higher education. All participants believed in identifying emerging leaders, cultivating new talent, and promoting leadership development. In a related note, all the participants regarded the opportunity to participate in this study as a way of fulfilling those aims.

Therefore, the participants were given the opportunity to participate in the study to the extent they felt comfortable aided by pseudonyms. They were also given the right to opt-out of answering certain questions, or to fully withdraw from the study if they felt that their participation in the research no longer met their professional needs or goals. Upon invitation to join the study, participants were given the opportunity to respond to informed consent.

This study did not involve topics that broached on social, physical, or psychological elements that could cause personal or legal harm to the participant. Participants were not classified as part of a vulnerable population such as minors, prisoners, pregnant women, disabled, or persons deemed vulnerable due to incapacitation,
coercion, supervisory relationship with the student or a variable of interest. Specifically, 
the following topics and procedures played no part in the project study: (a) use of 
deception, (b) invasive data collection methods, (c) administration of illicit or licit drugs, 
(d) administration of shock or other forms of punishment, (e) sexually explicit materials or questions, and (f) taking samples of blood, saliva and other bodily fluids.

**Informed Consent**

Participants were given opportunity to ask questions prior to the study, during the study, and after the study to discuss their views, pose questions, and address their concerns. The research participants were given free rein to voluntarily respond to the questions with honesty without fear of obligation. The participants had the right to withdraw from the study for any reason at any time, and discontinue participation without affecting future care at this institution. Proper informed consent forms were provided to the participant to read and use to decide if the individual wanted to participate per Institutional Review Board (IRB) requirements of both participating institutions. All participants were classified as adults over the age of 18 years old and were not deceived in any portion of the study protocol. The researcher adhered to investigator assurances as indicated on the appropriate UNF IRB documentation as well as the institutional site where research was performed. These assurances included the following items. The project was performed by qualified personnel per UNF approved protocol. No changes were made in the protocol or consent form until approved by UNF and the research site. Legally effective informed consent was obtained by letter. Participants were informed that documentation of informed consent would be retained on a secure environment for three years after termination of the project. Adverse and or unexpected events would be
reported to the UNF IRB and the research site promptly. All protocols were approved for a maximum period of one year. Research stopped at the end of that approval period unless the protocol was re-approved for another term by the IRB at both institutions.

**Anticipated Benefits to Participants**

By engaging in the study, the participants actively contributed to much needed qualitative research focusing on leadership with an emphasis on developmental education. Most literature of developmental education addresses matters related to instructional strategies for student learning and student retention. Thus, a gap exists in the scholarship dedicated to leadership in this area as indicated in the scholarly databases. Perhaps continued, in-depth qualitative study on the leadership perspectives of higher education administrators leading developmental education redesign will underscore the need for further research, given the lack of formal analytical studies on this topic in the scholarly literature. Collectively, all the participants benefitted from the study in knowing that their professional experiences, values, and leadership practices were studied in a manner from which other practitioners and scholars can learn in years to come.

Additionally, participants benefitted from participating in the study as their experiences in leading developmental education redesign will contribute to the historical and archival record of the college. Lastly, the participant benefits included knowing that this research will contribute to both their individual and combined leadership legacies.

**Anticipated Benefits to Society**

Another benefit points to the importance that community college leaders hold in the broader landscape of academia, both in Florida and beyond. The voices and views of the community college administrators are critical to how these colleges are regarded by
broader communities, industry stakeholders, and politicians who decide on funding allocations for community colleges. Therefore, a focused study about communication practices and content messaging on the part of executive leaders to their institutions should not be understated, given implications for responsive action and potential for advocacy in protecting the historical open-access mission of community colleges.

Considering the redesign mandate, several factors that point to the need to know and study leadership approaches among higher educational administrators are central to successful redesign planning, implementation, and maintenance of developmental education programs in the community and state college system, particularly in Florida. Utilizing multiple modes of leadership and approaches, coupled with sensemaking, may prove essential in confronting unplanned mandates to constructively facilitate the eventually planned organizational change. Traditional models of leadership give way to more contemporary models, such as authentic and collaborative strategies, to fully engage followers, peers, and other interested stakeholders in the change process.

Summary

Chapters 1-3 provided a comprehensive description of the problem statement, literature review, and methodology to set the stage for the actual study to commence. Chapters 4 and 5 offer a detailed documentation of study findings supported by the researcher’s interpretation of the findings for each of the major themes and related subthemes from participant interviews, observations, and selected documents. An extensive analysis, in the form of the cross-case analysis, was included to compare common themes and contrast unique characteristics and approaches between each leader. The final analysis was supported by charts and tables for visual representation, while also
providing a segue to the forthcoming conceptual framework in Chapter 5. A topical summary, implications for practice and recommendations further research concluded the study.
Chapter Four: Findings

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to explore the personal perspectives of select community college administrators regarding the purpose, values, and beliefs they inherently espouse about leadership, developmental education, and academic success. The second goal of the study was to examine the way select state college administrators lead change through communication strategies from the leader to the stakeholders. The third goal of the study was to identify professional leadership approaches and describe related management strategies of select state college administrators charged with leading the major redesign of a developmental education program at a large community college in Florida.

This chapter presents the findings of participant interviews from the three case studies. Interview questions were created to examine the participants’ leadership philosophy and role, thus obtaining answers to the primary research question and three sub-questions developed for exploration in this study. The questions began with exploring the internal qualities and influences of the leaders as individuals then expanded to their approach in leading planning efforts for broader organizational change. The rationale for sequencing the questions in this manner rested in the notion of building a foundational context as a means of scaffolding additional ideas in which to build or identify a supportive framework. The primary research question was, what are the strategies adopted by the select state college administrators leading a major developmental education redesign initiative within a community college? To further elicit
the answer to this question, three sub-questions were designed and used as the research questions for the study.

**Sub-research question 1.** What influenced the leadership approaches adopted by the select state college administrators in leading the new developmental educational redesign initiative?

**Sub-research question 2.** What communication approaches were adopted by the select state college administrators in leading the new developmental education redesign initiative?

**Sub-research question 3.** How do the select state college administrators reflect on their own approaches in leading organizational change with respect to the new developmental education redesign initiative?

Chapter Four is comprised of five parts. First, a narrative presentation of the case study findings includes a case summary, followed by the researcher’s interpretation of each identified theme and cluster. Second, as a visual categorization, themes are presented in a table created after identification of main ideas, comparing thematic patterns that emerged from the raw data. Third, a cross-case analysis of both common and unique themes among all participants serves as a transition into deeper theme analysis. Fourth, a brief topical summary is presented, highlighting key ideas from the findings. Lastly, the conceptual framework developed from the findings, is presented with explanation. Together, these five elements serve as a segue to the study recommendations in Chapter Five.
Study Findings

To address the research questions, participants were asked open-ended questions which allowed them to reflect on their formative educational and early career experiences. Participants could consider influential people in their lives who made an impact on the development of each leader’s educational perspective or educational worldview. Each leader reflected on methods of communication used to inform, educate, and distribute vital information to vested stakeholders. Lastly, each leader discussed leadership qualities, elements, and competencies which characterized their leadership style to facilitate change that was expected to occur in a short timeframe. The responses of the participants were instrumental in forming the identification of their inner values, communication strategies, and leadership qualities used to lead change.

Identification and analysis of themes. The researcher employed Creswell’s (2009) six steps for analyzing qualitative data: (a) organize the data, (b) read through data and reflect on its overall meaning, (c) conduct detailed analysis with a coding, (d) generate themes and descriptions for major findings and show connections across cases, (e) use narratives to convey findings of the analysis, including visual representations of the data and or process model, and (f) make interpretation or meaning of the data and asked additional questions (p. 185). Evidence from artifacts included published articles, meeting agendas, minutes, videos, reports, selected introductions of dissertations, as documents suggested by participants. Thus, the process of data analysis and interpretation was based on a systematic structure per established research protocols to produce sound qualitative research.
First, the researcher had the interviews transcribed by using TranscribeMe, a paid transcription service. Once the transcriptions were received, the researcher read the interviews while re-playing the audio interviews to compare the data to ensure accuracy. Once confirmation of accuracy was established, the researcher again re-read the transcriptions and listened to the audio interviews multiple times, searching for the key ideas from each question response by highlighting repetitive and demonstrative word and phrases.

Second, emerging themes were identified by the researcher by employing an inductive method approach to analyzing the interview data. The researcher included emergent ideas and thoughts in the margins of the interview transcripts to capture initial impressions that could serve as subsequent interpretations. These key ideas were then used in the process of data reduction for writing interview summaries. Prominent themes and subthemes for each case were also identified based on the accumulation of repeated ideas. These ideas were subsequently finalized as major themes.

Third, interview summaries were created to prepare the data for subsequent member checking by the participants as recommended by Lincoln and Guba (2002). Once the interview summaries were completed, the researcher conducted member checks and follow-up interviews with each participant to review their individual interview summaries and solicit feedback for accuracy of transcription and clarification of emerging ideas and potential themes. Member checking also allowed participants to include new information not mentioned in the interviews and to offer recommendations based on their own insights and conclusions (Lincoln & Guba, 2002; Patton, 2005).
The researcher reviewed the interview transcripts again for key words and associated phrases within the text of both the raw interview transcripts and interview summaries. Further analysis was conducted by coding the major themes and emerging ideas in preparation for writing the three case narratives (Creswell, 2003). Open coding was the first step as the researcher compared frequency of words and behaviors until conceptual properties of categories were generated (Marshall & Rossman, 2011). After initial coding, the researcher performed axial coding by grouping the codes into conceptual categories that reflected commonalities and connections amongst the codes (p. 215).

Together, these combined methods developed the codes as common themes and descriptions, which yielded insight into the respondents’ perspectives. The researcher then labeled the key themes and chronologically aligned the themes with the sequence of the sub-questions. Additional explanations of the themes were delineated from the questions where relevant. Theme clusters were also formed from the frequency by which themes were referenced, both as individual words and word associations, from the raw data generated from each interview transcript.

After identification of theme clusters, the researcher developed categories to classify themes based on similarity type and function for each individual case. The interview data were used as a guide in developing the category labels in a theme chart. Four distinct categories were identified: gender, values, communication, and leadership qualities. Philosophy was used as an overarching theme. To illustrate these categories in detail, an individualized theme chart was developed for each case illustrating theme
identification after the initial interview, followed by an updated theme chart developed after the peer debriefing session.

Organized by the four major themes, the researcher then developed three narrative case reports and interpretations based on data from interviews, observations, and documents utilized in the data collection process on each participant. Case reports were constructed to offer both a thematic explanation and an interpretation by the researcher, with evidence cited from the various forms of collected data. In the second half of Chapter Four, a summary of common themes gleaned from each individual case analysis narrative is presented. The purpose of the cross-case analysis allowed the researcher to build an additional layer of scrutiny (Creswell, 2012). The cross-case analysis was completed to compare common themes and contrast unique themes between the cases as another form of data interpretation. Evidence from participant narratives, member checks, or other sources was used to substantiate common themes as well as contrast unique themes. Lincoln (1995) described this idea as warrant as evidence for the researcher’s interpretation.

Finally, this section linked additional cross-referencing from the literature to illustrate how the thematic patterns coalesced to form the hybrid leadership model (Figure 1). Themes were analyzed for each individual case and across different cases, which served as a pathway for developing a conceptual framework reflective of the literature and the findings from this qualitative study. Thus, cross-case analysis provided a natural segue for the researcher to draw current conclusions, implications for practice, and ideas to explore new questions for further study.
**Explanation of tables.** Tables 1, 2, and 3 were generated from each participant’s initial interview, data analysis, and member checks. Educational philosophy represents the participant’s central belief, serves as the overarching construct about education, and listed under the table title for that reason. Interview data were used as a guide in developing the category labels in a theme chart. Thus, category labels were defined in the following manner: (a) *background influences* describe influences of family and mentors in the development of philosophy and mentors in leadership development, (b) *values/beliefs* refer to guiding beliefs or principles espoused by the participant, (c) *sensemaking* relates to the process used to clarify issues for oneself, (d) *communication* refers to the process of messaging information to others, (e) *leadership qualities* illustrates concepts that typified attributes used by participant in leading others, (f) *gender* is represented in the participant’s response by the way gender was referenced in the leadership approach. However, the researcher did not focus on this attribute because only one participant commented on this area. Ordering of chart labels were aligned with the four major themes of the study which remained consistent between each participant, as well as in the summary of the major themes.

The major themes listed under each category label were explicated through the interview process. Themes listed at the top of each column represent the prominent ideas identified by key word searches of the interview summaries, Microsoft Word counts, and concentration of the ideas as discussed in the interviews, subsequent member checks, multiple readings, and analysis of the text. The remainder of the ideas listed in each column were supportive ideas to clarify the major themes after brief mentions in the interview narratives. Supporting ideas represented secondary constructs to clarify the
primary themes. These supportive ideas originated from the researcher’s reflections on the data, formed from the interpretation of the data, and were used to illustrate primary themes identified in the accompanying theme chart. Thus, inclusion of supportive ideas on the chart paint a streamlined, yet complete, picture for each participant as a leader. Although related to the primary themes, supportive ideas are not listed in any order or hierarchy; however, all were present, as confirmed in the member checks (Tables 1, 2, and 3). Table 4 provides a comparative overview illustrating frequency of the primary themes.

**Case Report 1: Dr. Anne Hornyak**

**Educational Philosophy.** Dr. Hornyak enjoyed a long career as a higher education administrator in Florida. Over 40 years, she played a central role in effectively operationalizing many of the major educational initiatives mandated by the Florida legislature based on her role in each phase of her career. She believed in the three key points in her educational philosophy: (a) the pursuit of lifelong learning, (b) taking advantage of available opportunities, and (c) keeping the doors to education open and accessible, particularly regarding community colleges.

For Dr. Hornyak, the dual concepts of lifelong learning and taking advantage of opportunities to use one’s education go hand in hand. She also possessed a sense of possibility and potential of what education can do to enhance or change peoples’ lives. Her advice to others about the power of lifelong learning was neatly encapsulated in the following assertion:

I think my educational philosophy would be that we need to be lifelong learners, all of us. I like to think of myself as an example of a lifelong learner. I got my
bachelor's degree in the 70s. I got my master's degree in the early 90s. I got my doctorate in the year 2000. I would say I'm a poster child for lifelong learning. I hear people say, ‘I'm too old to do that, or too old to start this, or to change careers,’ or whatever. I think my educational philosophy is, you never stop learning, but also, I would like to take advantage of opportunities (Interview, September 30, 2015).

**Interpretation.** These collective experiences, coupled with the lessons she learned from her parents in her formative years, formed the backdrop of Dr. Hornyak’s style of leadership and manner of decision-making. Furthermore, the idea of lifelong learning stands as a natural pathway for a belief in accessible education. This idea is directly related to the purpose for which community colleges were developed given the history of community colleges in Florida. Dr. Walter Smith (1994) and Dr. James Wattenbarger (1953) published histories of the Florida College System. The formation of these institutions was a direct result of the need to provide widespread access to educational opportunities to African-American students (Smith, 1994; Wattenbarger, 1953). As a younger professional and former doctoral student, Dr. Hornyak was privileged to meet Dr. Wattenbarger, and study under Dr. Smith. Together, the influence of these two prominent figures in Florida education was widespread in that their entire careers were solely dedicated to providing educational access and opportunities to citizens who were otherwise excluded from obtaining a college education (Dr. Hornyak Interview, September 30, 2015).

Participant data from Dr. Anne Hornyak revealed several connected qualities and characteristics grouped into four major themes: (a) background influences, (b)
core values, (c) sensemaking/communication, and (d) leadership qualities. Each theme consists of several sub-themes that draw attention to the forces that shaped Dr. Hornyak’s journey into leadership. Dr. Hornyak’s background influences were divided between two subthemes: (a) family, and (b) mentors. Background influences included family expectations that shaped the leader’s derived educational philosophy and worldview. Community college leaders served as professional mentors and key supporters of Dr. Hornyak’s ascent into advanced education and community college administrative leadership. Together, these two influences helped Dr. Hornyak establish a context for leading change. Core values included honesty, fairness/equality, and caring, and characterized Dr. Hornyak’s ability to conceptualize change. Sensemaking, or reflection, and open dialogue with ongoing communication were key strategies Dr. Hornyak used to facilitate understanding of change and planning for impending change. Dr. Hornyak’s leadership qualities included genuineness/authenticity, empathy and practicability, adaptability, and collaboration. These qualities combined to allow her to effectively lead and manage the planning of processes prior to the implementation of change. The following section provides further detail on each of the characteristics, and includes analysis regarding the cluster choices by theme. For a visual representation of the themes and subthemes related to Dr. Hornyak’s case report, refer to Table 1.

**Theme 1. Background influences.**

**Theme 1a. Family background and expectations provided the strongest influence on the leader’s derived educational philosophy and worldview.** One of the
earliest recollections of Dr. Hornyak’s upbringing was the influence of her parents who were first-generation Americans from Austria-Hungary. They heavily influenced her philosophical view and leadership perspective. Her response to this question highlights how strongly she viewed their influence on her life as a person and as an educator. She referred to them as her first role models. The following excerpt give greater insight to the depth in which she regarded the role her parents played in her formative years regarding the value of obtaining an education.

Absolutely my parents! I must say that I'm talking about significant role models moving forward. There was never any doubt. My parents were first generation Americans or the first generation in my family born in this country. English was their second language for both, but there was never any doubt in my mind as I was setting up from the messages I got at home, I was expected to do well in school, go to college, have a professional life, and do good things in society (Interview, September 30, 2015).

Dr. Hornyak noted the impact of her father’s influence and expectations in her life, which emphasized the indelible impression he made on her as child. However, she also highlighted the different, yet, complementary role her mother played in her life. She noted their distinctive roles in this manner:

I think both contributed. There was never any doubt, but I think that my father was the one who strengthened that message in my head. My mother was the one, I think, who made it possible, because my father died at a young age. I did all my graduate work as a single parent while my mother took on the role of helping me
with my children, being literally the second mom to them so I could work full time and go to school (Interview, September 30, 2015).

**Interpretation.** The importance and significance of family as the primary influence in her development is noteworthy in the formation of Dr. Hornyak’s values and expectations of what it means to be a contributing citizen in America. Recollection of her father’s influence clearly showed a heightened awareness that education was not only needed to succeed, but an expectation to fulfill one’s life role. Related to that comment was the idea of honoring her parents as first-generation Americans who made great sacrifices to live as free American citizens, as she noted in the interview. In her introductory comments at Convocation, Dr. Hornyak shared the story of her family’s migration to the United States from Austria-Hungary just prior to World War I. “They came to America with very little means, but they instilled great hope in giving their children a chance for a better life” (Observation, August 20, 2015).

**Theme 1b:** Community college leaders served as professional mentors and key supporters of her ascent into advanced education and administrative leadership.

**Community College Mentors and Path to Leadership.** In responding to the way this leader came to base her professional career in a community/state college, Dr. Hornyak commented how she had, “always been in education in some way” (Interview, September 30, 2015). In fact, she began her career as a high school history teacher but discovered the community college to work closer to home and be near her children as a single mother. While working at the community college, she began to clearly understand and embrace its mission, allowing her career to flourish in that setting. For Dr. Hornyak, it was a practical decision to continue her career at the community college. It was not
only practical, but convenient, aided by the support of her colleagues. In the introduction of her dissertation, Dr. Hornyak noted their influence on her decision to remain in the community college noting, “Gratitude is extended to Dr. Thomas E. Gamble for supporting me in the completion of this degree while I undertook essential college responsibilities. Appreciation is also extended to Dr. Peter Berlin for urging me on and unselfishly sharing his resources and guidance” (Dissertation). She also thanked Dr. Greg Anderson, whom she referred to as a mentor and friend, and “as the person who made me see the light and go for it!” (Dissertation). Dr. Hornyak noted his encouragement throughout the years had an immeasurable impact on her life. Dr. Campbell, her doctoral program chair, instilled in her the understanding of the world and the community by creating an educational cohort that provided individual support essential to her doctoral pursuit and subsequent professional development.

Together, these individual leaders noticed Dr. Hornyak’s leadership abilities and eventually nurtured her leadership potential. Interestingly, when reflecting on her years as a high school teacher, recognition of her leadership was absent from her discourse. The level of support she received from other leaders at the community college served as the key factor that influenced her decision to pursue college administrative leadership. She noted her superiors would often say, “We’ve been watching your work and we think you are capable of doing our jobs” (Interview, September 30, 2015). The dean and provost became supportive mentors who recognized her talent early in her career in the community college. They created an environment whereby she was strongly encouraged to pursue both the masters and doctorate degree, while simultaneously being promoted to higher levels of administrative responsibility. Upon entering a doctoral program with a
strong focus in community college leadership, Dr. Hornyak’s career was solidified and firmly planted in the community college system from that point forward.

Dr. Hornyak’s career shifted from working with students to college administrative leadership. She subsequently served as a former dean, campus vice president, and Vice Chancellor in the state education department. There, her role was much more policy-oriented where she was responsible for analyzing and operationalizing legislative policy for the community colleges. At her retirement ceremony, her effectiveness in policy work was echoed by a former government relations liaison colleague. This person noted Dr. Hornyak’s keen comprehension of policy and the effectiveness with which she made compelling arguments to the Florida legislature to pass policies that contributed to student success based on sound evidence, critical evaluation, and common sense (Observation, October 23, 2015).

Dr. Hornyak further elaborated on the combined influence of these mentors, emphasizing the degree to which they played such an influential role in her development as a community college administrator as well as her educational philosophy. She again credited Dr. Greg Anderson, who hired her, and Dr. Peter Berlin, a mentor, as super-educators when she began working at that institution in the early 1980’s. Like Dr. Hornyak, both men were graduates of the same doctoral program, the same program where she eventually earned a doctorate in higher education with a concentration in community college leadership. Furthermore, she credited a coworker (non-supervisor) for having given her the most valuable leadership advice early in her community college career prior to becoming an administrator. She noted this advice as a key construct in her development as an administrative leader:
If you want to be successful at this institution and this job, he said you need to remember that every single employee at the college has an important role in the success or retention of the students. He also said, you need to have the same respect and good relationship with the people of maintenance, the janitorial services, and the administrative staff as you have with those who report to your colleagues, your peers. Everybody has an important role in making the student experience here successful. I really believe this was some of the most valuable advice I received (Interview, September 30, 2015).

**Interpretation.** This perspective revealed the realization and development of Dr. Hornyak’s sense for respect, fairness, and equality as an educator. The notion of everyone being given respect for their role aligns with civic ideas similar to what Dewey (1939) purported as a purpose of education. Indeed, the role of a democracy lies at the heart of this idea, very much like the perspective shared by Dr. Hornyak’s father with the expectation of contributing to society. Interestingly, the concept of fairness came into clearer view as a key leadership quality. Comparatively, the related concept of respect held a similar place, as fairness is dependent on respect for other people, whether referring to the educational arena or society.

Furthermore, the concept of respect lies at the heart of the community college mission relative to open-access for all students, regardless of race or academic background (Thelin, 2011). Treating everyone with respect relates to the idea of equality regardless of one’s position, whereby everyone is equal in importance and human value. This idea was also brought to bear in the mission statement of Dr. Hornyak’s college, especially from the perspective of providing opportunities and pathways for all students
who seek educational opportunities by attending a community college. “The goal is to optimize access to college programs and services” (Mission Statement, Goal 3, 2015).

**State level mentors.** Dr. Hornyak regarded Dr. Dave Butler as a key role model in her development as a state-level administrator. For four years, Dr. Hornyak worked with Dr. Butler. During this period in her professional life, Dr. Hornyak led many change initiatives, including an earlier statewide redesign of developmental education and general education within the community college system. Thus, she was no stranger to this type of system-wide and comprehensive change leadership. However, it was the mentorship of Dr. Butler and the lessons learned from him that left a formidable impression on her life as a person and an educator. These lessons still evoked an emotional reaction upon reflection. As an educator, Dr. Hornyak’s sense of the importance of treating people with respect, fairness, and equality had direct connection to the influence of Dr. Butler. She referred to him as one of the most incredible leaders she ever met, and described learning from him daily.

What I learned was not only that you need to know your facts and you need to be at the top of your game, but you also need to know how to treat people, how to interact, and how to be genuine. He was the leader who knew your name and introduced himself by his first name. He introduced himself and asked who you were and where you worked in the building. He was genuine to the end and certainly a role model for me. I will forever appreciate the value he added to my life. I get emotional thinking about it because he is the epitome of what a leader is. I wish I could be more like him (Interview, September 30, 2015).
**Interpretation.** The effect Dr. Butler’s leadership and mentorship had on Dr. Hornyak’s life as an educational professional, and a human being was evident. It was apparent from her recollection of Dr. Butler’s leadership that Dr. Hornyak’s leadership approach was forever impacted by his leadership approach. This interchange was noted for possible identification of similar qualities in Dr. Hornyak farther along into the interview. It was also noteworthy that leaders may internalize, espouse, and emulate desired leadership characteristics of people they deem to be influential mentors. Moerer-Urdahl and Creswell (2004) researched the power of mentors as having a ripple, or multiplier, effect particularly in leadership. Thus, effective mentors have the power to provide the model and example for leaders to emulate.

**Theme 2. Core values.**

**Honesty.** Dr. Hornyak noted the value of honesty in her description of values most important, as it stood at the center of the other core principles that guided her thinking and related actions. Although communication will be addressed later, she referenced honesty six times as an important aspect of effective communication, particularly regarding communication of a change initiative. As a value, honesty remained a fundamental value to her as a person and as a leader. To further illustrate the value of honesty, Dr. Hornyak explained:

> Being honest in how you share your message with others is probably the heart of being a successful administrator. I think it is obvious when you have a leader who does not believe in that, because I think that's when you do get some problems. It is not just what you say, it is how you model what you say in what you do

(Interview, September 30, 2015).
**Interpretation.** Dr. Hornyak discussed the importance of honesty, not only as a standalone core value, but also as a leadership quality, whereby each meaning is inextricably tied together. Implicit in the message is the concept that not all leaders value honesty. To assume that all leaders are honest leaders is questionable. Dr. Hornyak noted that she witnessed both positive and negative outcomes of honest and dishonest leadership throughout her career. However, the longevity and success of her professional career seemed to have served as an enduring testament to her commitment to core values, strong ethics, and guiding principles. Dr. Hornyak had extensive work history in giving active leadership to a variety of higher education organizations in Florida. She was also honored with a lifetime membership award from the largest organization representing Florida’s 28 community and state community colleges.

**Fairness.** Fairness is also related to the idea of equity for others as it was mentioned five times in the narrative. Like the example of the co-worker whose comment resonated with her as a younger professional, Dr. Hornyak emphasized the importance of fairness even more today, 41 years later, as a semi-retired administrator. She noted, “Administrators should know that every single individual who works in the institution should be treated with respect and should understand that they are important to the ultimate success of our students” (Interview, September 30, 2016).

**Interpretation.** In Dr. Hornyak’s comments, fairness and respect represent complementary values, which characterized her as a person, leader, and communicator.

**Caring.** Dr. Hornyak identified caring three times regarding personhood, leadership, and communication. However, it was her example of caring which highlighted the centrality of caring as a core principle. She noted just one week after
being on the job in the lead administrator role, a ranking faculty member came to her to
discuss a situation that needed to be rectified. She noted her first reaction. “I thought, this
is a person I need to develop a relationship with. Obviously, this faculty cared about the
college or this person would not have taken on this added task” (Interview, September 30,
2015).

Dr. Hornyak believed a leader must be open to all people he or she works with
because every employee is vital and functional to the institution. At her retirement,
several comments were made about Dr. Hornyak with respect to this attribute. It was
noted by one of the college leaders that she cared about her colleagues by being fair,
doing the right thing, exhibiting credibility, and promoting excellence in academics
(Observation, September 24, 2015).

**Interpretation.** The immediacy with which the participant responded to this
question was apparent, as well as the clarity with which she recounted this example. She
further noted that extra care was needed in this instance because of the challenging
circumstances she walked into as part of the new executive leadership team. Thus, both
the attributes of a caring attitude and a caring behavior were paramount to garner a
successful leadership transition with faculty and staff. This idea was reminiscent of
Noddings’ (1995) care theory in education and the ethics of care, which addressed ideas
concerning both the nature of morality and normative ethical theory. Care theory also
connects to ideas of right and wrong with a sense fairness and justice. The central key to
care theory - caring about something, and a sense of justice, must be instrumental in
establishing the conditions whereby the cared-for can flourish (Noddings, 2002a).
Theme 3. Sensemaking, open dialogue, and ongoing communication are key strategies used by this leader to facilitate understanding of change and planning for impending change. In this study, sensemaking and communication are not synonymous, but are closely-linked ideas. Here, sensemaking refers to ways in which the leader extracts meaning from a complex idea (Eddy, 2003). In comparison, communication refers to strategies for idea development, and mechanisms for information distribution during the planning phase (p. 64).

Sensemaking for the leader. Dr. Hornyak simply put things on paper. Referenced six times, the benefit of writing things down is that writing helped her see all the options and the ideas more clearly, and brought order out of chaos. Second, writing helped her to see the big picture because she could look at the written concepts and reflect on their meaning. Third, writing helped her gain control of her emotions, rather than reacting to others. The result of this practice meant she was less likely to feel forced to make snap decisions, except in the case of an emergency (Interview, September 30, 2015).

Reflection was a central component of individual sensemaking in dealing with a complex issue. For Dr. Hornyak, reflection worked best when sitting down in a quiet space to read, think about an issue to identify its various parts, and visualize connections of ideas to clarify meaning. The benefits of reflection were numerous in that reflecting removed the emotions, particularly when dealing with fast and furious chaos, helped her look at the pros and cons of the issue, and helped her to do SWOT analysis which does not require a long time. Additionally, the benefits of reflection included ways to reach beyond herself to bring clarity. This method of an external reflection included conducting a literature review on the issue and gathering information on best practices. Doing so
helped Dr. Hornyak examine the experiences of others who previously dealt with the same issue(s) and illustrated how the issue(s) was addressed both successfully and unsuccessfully given the context. Gathering research did not denote a sign of weakness, but rather, provided a mechanism to gauge how other organizations or people handled a similar issue. Furthermore, gathering research helped the leader form a preliminary framework in which to conceptualize a proposal of ideas for practical consideration.

**Interpretation.** Prior to leading any change initiative, a leader must first make sense of the complex issue for herself before communicating the idea to the people on the receiving end of the information (Eddy, 2010b). Administrators face increasingly complicated and multilayered programs which require a variety of strategies to problem-solve and make appropriate decisions. Dr. Hornyak asserted her use of one primary strategy to make sense of complex issues with several advantages. After listening to her describe the power of reflection, it seemed that sensemaking served as a pre-determinant in forming the mental infrastructure for understanding complex ideas. Reflection provided a mechanism to visualize a large and complex idea into smaller and more manageable pieces of information, essentially simplifying the issue for greater comprehension. The act of reflection played a substantial role in her preparation as a leader, a practice that should not be underestimated. Perhaps inherent in the act of reflection lay the pathway to adaptive thinking. Adaptive thinking makes way for understanding through exploration of literature and practice outside of the leader’s immediate institutional context (Heifetz, 2009). Thus, reflection aided in capacity-building to promote meaning for the leader’s individual sensemaking before ideas were introduced to others.
**Sensemaking for others.** After individual sensemaking, the next step was to interpret complex ideas for other people in a way that made sense and had meaning for them. Dr. Hornyak shared several strategies for that process which included the following: (a) the leader should share the research and related insights on the research in a timely manner, (b) the leader should allow people opportunities to discuss the information together in a structured setting, (c) the leader should try to find ways to identify common factors of the research with the complex issue, and (d) the leader should attend meetings or conferences to hear and share best practices and current research. Dr. Hornyak noted, “as administrators, we have the responsibility to stay informed about current thinking, trends, scholarship in higher education” (Interview, September 30, 2015).

**Interpretation.** Reflection aided the process in promoting sensemaking for the benefit of others. The process of gathering information through literature searches and site visits was utilized, while reflection prompted leaders to explore practices being done in other institutions. It helped staff widen their perspective, gain broader understanding, and think more creatively when solicited for solutions. This process was critical before conserving ideas to be moved to the actionable, or implementation phase of the planning cycle (Burke, 2013). Dr. Hornyak championed this approach with the other leaders of the redesign by example. She commissioned a white paper, hosted a regional mini-conference, and convened several regional meetings to explore best practices being done at other institutions. Some community colleges had already experienced success in redesigning their developmental education programs due to state legislative mandate. The meetings represented a crucial strategy in providing interpretation of the law while
helping her institution’s faculty see how S.B. 1720 could be re-conceptualized and re-operationalized to best benefit incoming underprepared students. She explicitly noted this thought while leading the college’s initial redesign planning meeting.

There are very few things that are brand new or unique in education. Other institutions have also dealt with this issue. Some have dealt successfully and some have dealt unsuccessfully. Having gone through a master's and doctoral program, the research process comes in handy because it makes you understand the value of looking at what else is being done in the field (Observation, September 24, 2015)

Based on the interview and observation, it was the researcher’s interpretation that Dr. Hornyak was strong in her keen understanding of policy, practical policy interpretation, and sensible policy outcomes, which helped her to effectively argue for educational policies that promoted realistic student success.

Open dialogue. Interview data revealed substantial emphasis regarding the concept of openness as an essential communication strategy. A word count produced seventeen instances of the word, “open,” from interview transcripts alone, which represented the largest word count of all the themes identified for this participant. Openness was directly tied to the theme of communication. Dr. Hornyak believed that a leader should embrace a mindset of openness and the action of being open to all ideas when leading change. This concept represents both a major theme and strategy for facilitating information sharing, exchange, and distribution.

A key element of creating and promoting open dialogue relates to the process of consensus-building amongst all stakeholders involved in the redesign effort. Dr. Hornyak
saw the process of consensus building as relational and encouraged relationship building when possible. First, she regarded relationship-building as consensus-building, which involved doing things to help stakeholders get to know each other as people as they engaged in the work (Northouse, 2015). Dr. Hornyak shared how relationship building as a strategy benefitted the change process because it helped to break down barriers and silos amongst individuals and groups. Second, she oftentimes included food with the meetings because she believed food served as a neutralizer of tension and an incentive for the group to move forward and make progress. Third, she noted leaders should develop a sense of humor or invoke humor in meetings and informal conversations in some way. She believed humor helped to cultivate collegiality by not being serious the entire time. Fourth, she advocated for having group outings and get-togethers outside of the college to help people get to know each other outside of their prescribed work roles. Casual interactions provided a way to foster group friendship and understanding. Fifth, she advocated for planning a retreat experience together for the group if possible. She stressed that a retreat does not need to be costly and contended that sharing life experiences fosters trust-building and openness between stakeholders. Citing the results of a similar experience from a past position, Dr. Hornyak noted:

The fact that those folks got to talk about their kids, their dogs, their plumbers, their aches and pains, they got to know each other and they became friends over the years. Trust is the essence of what I believe can really make or break a college and the relationships between people (Interview, September 30, 2015).

Next, Dr. Hornyak stressed the importance of active listening as a facet of open dialogue when stakeholders’ concerns were shared. In general, open-mindedness
supported the idea that stakeholders must feel that their leaders listen to them and understand how the change is going to impact them. An example she used in active listening was stating, “What I hear you saying, is that everybody is committed to improving the process. I actually hear consensus even though you have concerns” (Interview, September 30, 2015). Dr. Hornyak took the concerns of faculty and staff who were directly impacted by S.B. 1720 seriously by listening with an open mind. She repeatedly used the phrase, “listening with ears wide open” to describe the extent to which listening and open-mindedness mattered. Additional evidence for the importance of listening was illustrated in the following observation while she led a meeting of statewide administrators.

I believe it’s acknowledging their concerns and their fears and acknowledging their experience and their expertise. But at the same time, it’s trying to help open their eyes...we’re listening with open ears to hear what are they worried about…we’re open to looking at new and different ways of doing things…we’re here with ears wide open and we’re listening to them and that we want to help them be part of the solution (Interview, November 11, 2015).

Interpretation. Listening with ears wide open was related to demonstrating care about the employees as people, the importance of listening for professional acknowledgement and validation, empathetic understanding of employee concerns and fears, and practicality and encouragement to become part of the solution. Dr. Hornyak used active listening both as an attribute for facilitating understanding and a mechanism for communicating idea exchange.
Observations of Dr. Hornyak’s skills as a facilitator in a discussion revealed that she never raised her voice when talking and always kept a collegial tone throughout the discussion. Her underlying motto for approaching a complex issue was to, “look at the issue from a glass half-full rather than a glass half-empty” (Interview, September 30, 2015). The primary mechanism she used was establishing ground rules for discussion (see Appendix F). Given the potential conflicts associated with planning for the implementation of S.B.1720, Dr. Hornyak viewed the use of ground rules for discussion as common sense. Lastly, she provided an agenda and addressed lingering questions from discussions before moving forward. These strategies were observed in the first redesign planning meeting she facilitated (Observation, September 24, 2015).

**Ongoing Communication:** To maintain momentum and continued comprehension of a complex issue, Dr. Hornyak mentioned continuance of frequent and ongoing communication ten times. As a primary communication mechanism, she promoted the use of cross-functional and interdisciplinary teams as a means of bringing people together multiple times to discuss the issue. The idea of putting together interdisciplinary teams spoke to the nature of the complex issue, whereby every academic area was affected by the impending change. Stakeholders were given the opportunity to give input about the issue, not only with colleagues from their discipline, but also with colleagues outside of their discipline. In the case of S.B. 1720, the persons affected included librarians, discipline developmental education faculty, general education faculty, and professional enrichment staff tutors. In a subsequent observation, Dr. Hornyak proactively promoted the relationship and interdependency of these areas relative to student success and retention (Observation, November 6, 2015). All the
programmatic functions of each unit and discipline were dependent on the other, while providing a holistic and seamless student experience. Therefore, the planning for S.B. 1720 had to mirror the same organizational structure to align shared goals and related processes for effective decision-making during the planning phase. Within these teams, faculty and staff discussed the requirements of the new law, brainstormed new ideas for instruction, collaborated on new ways to map the curriculum, and suggested adaptations to course scheduling.

One of the primary ways Dr. Hornyak helped stakeholders adapt and minimize resistance was by constructing a consistent schedule of ongoing communication. She said, “leaders should realize that this not just a one-time event but must keep the conversation going, digest information, and come back again and again and again” (Interview, September 30, 2015). Repeatedly revisiting the issue in concerted and meaningful ways helped staff feel valued for their role, expertise, and solutions for change. To further strengthen their understanding of the issue and role in the development of the plan, Dr. Hornyak was instrumental in hosting several regional conferences at each phase of the planning process. She meticulously explained every facet of the emerging developmental education plan, departmental functions, and associated timeline for planning leading up to implementation. PowerPoint presentations were used as a communication tool as well as a benchmark of progress made. Subsequently, the presentations were made available before, during, and after the conferences (Observation, November 6, 2015).

Dr. Hornyak’s strategic suggestions for communication distribution regarding S.B. 1720 planning included, but were not limited to, the following internal committees
and entities: student success committee (composed of developmental education faculty, librarians, tutors, and advising professionals and workgroups); general education faculty committees; faculty senate; student success deans (leaders of campus advising staff); committee; curriculum committee, and workgroups. She also planned for the college to host two regional conferences in conjunction with other state colleges. Communication distribution channels included a series of professional development workshops co-hosted by the college’s internal faculty professional development department, three to four primary college-wide email updates, two college-wide leadership forums (professional development days), and communications through individual phone calls, emails, and office visits as the need arose from anyone who needed information and clarification. Other external resources included the senior state college leaders and the department of education staff.

**Interpretation:** Working across departments and disciplines in cross-functional teams strengthened Dr. Hornyak’s belief in open and ongoing communication as a tool. Additionally, utilization of cross-functional teams extended her belief that colleagues need to work together to break down silos and determine shared and complimentary areas of work to solve problems. At one of these meetings, Dr. Hornyak ensured that everyone in the group who wanted to be heard was heard without judgement. As a group facilitator, Dr. Hornyak was effective in keeping the conversation on track and focused on the issue. Dr. Hornyak also kept the conversation focused by distilling or condensing the information into manageable chunks of information, which subsequently led to consensus and decision-making (Observation, September 24, 2015).
As noted earlier, frequency of communication was tantamount to achieving clear messaging. A 2011 article she authored in a leadership magazine on change provided a very similar illustration of these principles when the state education department was tasked to create a new statewide placement test under the leadership of Dr. Hornyak. She stated, “the process, which initially relied upon faculty’s subject-matter expertise, soon became a classic example of success nurtured by professional respect, dedication to a common goal, and ongoing communication between college faculty and their K-12 counterparts” (Interview, September 30, 2015).

**Theme 4: Leadership qualities.** Leadership approaches may refer to a specific style or manner of leading, or typify certain leadership characteristics depending on the context. In this case, both descriptions were appropriate regarding the exploratory nature of this research study. However, data from Dr. Hornyak’s interview offered patterns that pointed toward larger themes. Genuineness (authenticity), empathy, practicability, adaptability, and collaboration typified her leadership qualities to lead and manage the planning of the change process prior to implementation of the change. These qualities are highlighted in the following sections.

**Genuineness/authenticity.** Dr. Hornyak mentioned ten times that all leaders know the importance being genuine and authentic, especially within the context of leading major change. The idea of being genuine represented the heart of the leadership approach; all actions emanated from this vantage point. She not only emphasized the importance of being authentic or true to oneself, but also encouraged genuine interaction with other people. She noted the significance of how genuine modeling for others reflects the way a leader treats people. The idea of showing one’s true self as a leader through
realness and authenticity put people at ease, while facilitating a connection and a comfort level with the people during the redesign planning. She noted, “There are okay ways, and there are more productive ways to meet your goals; there are also less productive ways’’ (Interview, September 30, 2015).

**Interpretation.** The art of being genuine and the act of showing genuine interactions related to the leadership approach of Dr. Dan Butler. Dr. Hornyak described him as the epitome of an exemplary leader. Given her targeted focus on this leadership characteristic, the researcher can connect the multiplier whereby genuineness was shared by both leaders because of his influence on her leadership style (Moerer-Urdahl & Creswell, 2004). Being genuine represented the overarching theme and cornerstone approach of Dr. Hornyak’s leadership in that she also exhibited genuineness in her work (Observation, November 6, 2015).

**Empathy.** Dr. Hornyak mentioned the importance of empathy in working with people directly affected by the change, while ultimately recognizing her role, and that of other leaders, as problem-solvers. Although mentioned only two times, empathy was important to Dr. Hornyak as she described herself as a genuine person. Leaders should collaborate with people and be engaged in a humane and genuine manner while working through challenging and complex issues. She referenced this idea in the following excerpt:

> Try to understand where the other person is coming from. Look at the facts and look at where you are coming from and try to find common ground. Take control of the things you can to take control of in a situation. Whether operationalizing a
change in a delivery modality or in some educational policy or function, aim to figure out how to make the best out of it (Interview, September 30, 2015).

**Practicality.** Dr. Hornyak relished the idea of being practical in her approach to managing a complex issue. Years of experience taught her that not every situation was perfect. However, if the leader can bring practical ideas for discussion, the decision-making process becomes slightly less daunting and the challenge less difficult to navigate. Inherent in the idea of practicality was the notion of facing reality as opposed to denying or imagining otherwise. This was the case when S.B. 1720 was passed. Community college faculty and administrators had to face this issue directly because developmental education redesign was now Florida law and colleges were going to be held accountable for the planning and implementation of the law at certain time benchmarks. In other words, compliance with S.B. 1720 was not an option in Florida. Dr. Hornyak noted her practical approach three times when asked to address educators around the state after passage of S.B. 1720 in 2013:

I said we were very upset that the state of Florida did this. Educators did not think it was a good move, but it was what it was. S.B. 1720 is now law and so you can look at a glass as half empty or look at the glass as half full, but I prefer the analogy of the person who is asked is the glass half full or half empty and picks it up and drinks it and says, ‘it is neither to me, I am a problem solver. It is not half empty; it is not half full. It’s just something we must deal with (Observation, November 11, 2015).

**Interpretation.** Recognition of the fears and anxieties of the faculty and staff first was paramount to exercising practicability before the leader could engage in problem-
The leader had to exhibit a healthy balance of empathy and confidence in her ability to shepherd the group through this initial stage of change. Schein (1987) called this initial stage “change disconfirmation” whereby the leader provided information about radical change in the organization’s external environment that potentially threatened the survival of the enterprise. In this case, the external force was S.B. 1720 and the threat was to developmental education programs in all state colleges in Florida. Each administrative leader had to deal with local currents at the leader’s individual college. For her college, the student assistance center was an award-winning developmental education program. Dr. Hornyak had to help developmental education faculty and support staff, face the dismantling of this successful program with empathy and practicality to make the slightest progress. To help them deal with the anxiety and move to the next stage, leaders must create a psychologically safe space where members can express their feelings as they adjust to the new reality (Burke, 2011). As the lead administrator of the redesign, Dr. Hornyak appeared to understand the importance of this concept, but also exuded the confidence and practicality to move the process forward (Observation, September 24, 2015).

**Adaptability.** Inherent in the process of leading change was the ability for the leader to adapt and lead others to the new reality in ways that encourage constructive productivity. Dr. Hornyak mentioned it was important that the leader not come from a hierarchical or top-down perspective (i.e. administrator to faculty) as it puts stakeholders on the defense from the beginning and builds a wall in negotiation. She used adaptive strategies to help stakeholders adjust to the impending change of planning for the developmental redesign in two basic ways. She insisted that the leader must start by
stating the issues as they are and explain the actual issues without glossing over the facts. Second, recognizing differences, the leader must devise a clear and cogent way to lay out the issues so that everyone understands them. Last, she contended that it is critical to discuss possible options and how those options could together make the change a win-win situation for all stakeholders. She noted her approach, “let’s talk about how we can possibly come away from this experience both feeling like we have the best solution possible. That way, we chose to look at the glass half-full or half-empty” (Interview, September 30, 2015).

**Interpretation.** The researcher related adaptability to the Dr. Hornyak’s ability to address a complex issue in a realistic and pragmatic manner. Key takeaways from her ability to adapt was the realization that the plan would not necessarily be perfect, occasional tweaks would need to be made, and the plan would require continuous evaluation. Realizing the ongoing potential to help students, the leader endeavored to work for the very best possible outcome for students. Thus, given that the law was so far-reaching and that preliminary student data were collected for accountability purposes, Dr. Hornyak understood that this issue was far from over. Given Florida’s history in passing cutting edge educational policy, and her experience as a policy analyst, she also understood that nothing was ever set in stone and more change would be needed after initial reporting of the performance data.

**Collaboration.** Dr. Hornyak valued collaboration and considered engagement of collaboration an essential aspect of confronting complex issues and leading change. Collaboration represented an indication of a leader’s passion for what she believed and supported; this was evidenced by the usage of the term 14 times in her interview. At the
same time, collaboration also referred to the recognition of different viewpoints, noting that all viewpoints have value. Dr. Hornyak referenced a statement she once made to a group who wanted her to address a certain issue. She reminded them: “Please do not come and say we are here to collaborate and then a draw a line in the sand” (Interview, September 30, 2015).

Regarding collaboration in the context of the developmental education redesign, Dr. Hornyak praised the work of Dr. Catalina Rivera, who led change by talking to faculty in a genuine, empathetic, and understanding way whereby “they got it.” She also acknowledged faculty fears, concerns, and expertise as content experts. She included their input and listened with open ears by asking for their help versus dictating a directive. As a collaborative leader, Dr. Hornyak invited faculty to consider new approaches as part of a future pilot program to help them make evidenced-based decisions using pilot data. She concluded: “As educators, I invited them to join us moving forward” (Interview, September 30, 2015).

**Interpretation.** What made collaboration unique was Dr. Hornyak’s belief that the leader sets the tone for the college. Collaboration and relationship-building in a larger institution such as this one can be very challenging because collaboration is always constant, but keeping people informed is the key to successful collaborations. In her remarks at her retirement celebration, she noted that it was imperative that she role-modeled core values of honesty and genuine communication, while providing professional development because, “people remember what leaders do more than what leaders say” (Observation, October 23, 2015).
**Special emphasis: Importance of community college mission.** Dr. Hornyak described her concerns with issues currently impacting community colleges in the following manner:

Challenges and policies against open access mission impede an affordable education for some. Open pathways to education free of barriers are of great concern given rules and legislation. I would hate to see our open access mission be impacted adversely by the idea that we’re going to be funded on performance and therefore, perhaps see us go away from that open access mission. That would be contrary, of course, to the entire mission and the history of community colleges, state colleges and open access. I worry about that for the future and how future administrators will address this topic long after I’m gone (Observation, November 11, 2015).

Dr. Hornyak advocated that education leads to better quality of life and makes the difference in annual income relative to social welfare and incarceration. “Issues can be mitigated by keeping education open, accessible, affordable, challenging, robust, rigorous, and relevant. Community colleges can be all these things at the same time” (Observation, November 6, 2015).

In fulfilling their mission, community colleges can also serve students through offering the community college baccalaureate versus university-level baccalaureate degrees. In a 2010 *Inside HigherEd* article, Dr. Hornyak commented on this topic against mounting criticism from the legislature, and offered insights about how community colleges serve a unique population. She noted that these programs were attracting students from underserved populations that have not typically thrived at the state’s four-
year institutions. The demographics of students in these community college baccalaureate
degree programs have convinced many that they are not stealing students who would
otherwise have gone to four-year institutions because the average age is 26-35, whereas
the average at the university is 18-25. In a follow-up interview, Dr. Hornyak reflected
further on this idea, noting her perception of the state legislators. “I think there is a better
understanding of what it means to be part of the Florida College System” (Interview,
February 23, 2016).

These insights aligned with Dr. Hornyak’s educational philosophy to always
pursue lifelong learning and take advantage of opportunities, as echoed in her initial
interview. Community colleges educate a wide range of citizens and support access to all
students at various levels of ability. As a community college administrator and former
administrator at the state level, she remained committed to these ideals and worked to
keep the mission alive and in the forefront of any legislative policy proposed by the state
legislature.
Table 1.

Dr. Hornyak: Summary of Themes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Educational Philosophy</th>
<th>“Lifelong learning - never stop learning and take advantage of opportunities”</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Background Influences** | • Child of immigrants; expected to attend college for better life  
                               • First generation  
                               • Did not attend community college  
                               • Learned from mentors how to treat people, engage, and be genuine with people  
                               • Worked at a community college  
                               • Embraced mission of the community college |
| **Gender** | • Promoted authenticity and self-awareness  
                       • Interesting and work researching  
                       • Never thought about gender as a leader |
| **Core Values** | • Believed in treating people with honesty and transparency, fairness and equality, caring  
                           **Supporting ideas:**  
                           • Flexible  
                           • Respectful  
                           • Modeled how to treat other people  
                           • Positively engaged with people |
| **Sensemaking & Communication** | • Valued reflection  
                                • Maintained open dialogue  
                                • Led ongoing communication  
                           **Supporting Ideas:**  
                           • Used metaphors and funny stories  
                           • Personable and comfortable interacting with people  
                           • Focused on facts  
                           • Provided training  
                           • Identified and shared common factors of the research  
                           • Asked for help  
                           • Met with core group of faculty leaders to brainstorm |
| **Leadership Qualities** | **Demonstrated:**  
                           • Genuineness/authenticity  
                           • Empathy  
                           • Practicality  
                           • Adaptability  
                           • Collaboration  
                           **Supporting Ideas:**  
                           • Comfortable making decisions  
                           • Showed ability to operationalize  
                           • Used finesse  
                           • Talked with confidence  
                           • Displayed professionalism  
                           • Cultivated collegiality  
                           • Managed resources |
Case 2: Dr. Pat Burns

**Educational philosophy.** The collective experience of Dr. Burns’ family background, the educational opportunities she embraced as a community college student, and professional development opportunities gained as a professor through mentorship firmly shaped the development of her educational philosophy. When asked about her philosophy, the resounding theme which emerged was that, “education changes lives” (Interview, October 1, 2015). Several indicators point to this idea of the transformational power of education. First, Dr. Burns noted her own educational journey and how she benefitted from a college education, particularly at the community college. Secondly, she talked about the significance of being chosen to attend numerous professional development offerings paid for by the college. Lastly, she reflected on the influence of key mentors who she regarded as professional role models. Dr. Burns embraced teaching and working on behalf of developmental education students for most of her professional career. She reflected on the transformative nature of education and its impact on her own life:

> It's interesting when you think about the fact that the poorest of the poor can be a president. Somebody like me who came from a small farm, with no money and nothing, could do what I've been able to do. But I haven't been able to do it alone. I have always had people to [sic] support me (Interview, October 1, 2015).

Regarding the students she served, Dr. Burns also emphasized the importance of taking students from “where they stand” or, in other words, teaching students from where they are academically. She related to her students because she was once in their shoes.
regarding learning and life circumstances. She drew a direct parallel from her life experience to that of her students.

A lot of my students look at me and they think they don't know a lot about me. When they first meet me, they think I was the smartest kid in school. They think that I was this great student in high school and college. Nothing could be further from the truth. They have no idea until I tell them I had many of the same experiences that they experienced themselves (Interview, October 1, 2015).

Oftentimes, taking students from where they stand may also mean considering other social, economic, or other factors and circumstances which impact student learning. Dr. Burns noted the influence of external factors and how educators should consider them regarding the idea of educating the whole student.

We are educators, social workers and sometimes counselors too. We are in the social service business as well as the education business. There are a whole series of problems we’ll have to address socially if we don’t do our job in education. People’s lives are turned around by what we do for them (Interview, October 1, 2015).

**Interpretation.** Dr. Burns embodied both the mission and spirit of the reason why community colleges were developed, which was to serve all students, not solely the children of the elite (Thelin, 2011). Community colleges were important, particularly for the masses of people, at a time in American history prior to World War II when only children of the wealthy could attend elite universities. The idea of taking students where they stand signals back to the concepts of access and opportunity (St. John, Daun-Barnett, & Moronski-Chapman, 2013). Dr. Burns’ comments resonated with the introduction of
her dissertation: “all students who take that first step through the college door, no matter how tentative, deserve every chance to succeed” (Interview, October 1, 2015).

Dr. Burns firmly believed that education plays a role in the overall development of people and the effect it can make in their lives beyond the classroom. As she facilitated the initial redesign meeting, she reminded the group that “education is not just about attending college, nor content only, but it has to do with every aspect of one’s life” (Observation, September 24, 2015). As an interview participant, Dr. Burns’ reflections on her life reminded her of the power an educator possesses in the lives of students because of her own life’s trajectory. This belief formed the core of her passion to help developmental education students, having made teaching developmental education her life’s work. She never wanted to teach anything else nor did she ever regard teaching developmental education as a less important subject. Dr. Burns believed developmental education was essential to higher education because it afforded students the opportunity to rise above their circumstances. Dr. Burns’ belief that education is a transformative and life-changing value, was supported by her comments. “That's what I think developmental education does for people. That is why I am continually enamored by what we do and what this field offers” (Interview, October 1, 2015).

In sum, education changed the trajectory of Dr. Burns’ life, far from her humble beginnings. She said this was the reason why developmental education students are very important to her, and why she chose and maintained this career path. The following statement captures the essence of what has become her life’s mission and explained the reason why she decided to base her professional career at a community college. “If I
could do for other students what had been done for me, then that would be something fulfilling and rewarding” (Interview, October 1, 2015).

Participant data from Dr. Pat Burns revealed several connected qualities and characteristics grouped into four major themes: (a) background influences, (b) core values, (c) sensemaking/communication, and (d) leadership qualities. Each theme consists of several sub-themes that draw attention to the forces that shaped Dr. Burns’ journey into leadership.

Dr. Burns’ background influences were divided between two subthemes: (a) family, and (b) professional mentors. Family background and expectations provided a positive influence on the leader’s derived educational philosophy and worldview, helping her to overcome obstacles. Community college faculty and administrative leaders were the strongest influence, serving as professional mentors and supporters of her educational advancement and community college leadership, albeit not necessarily into administration. Professional development was the impetus for her leadership development. Together, mentors and family background helped this leader establish a context for leading change. Dr. Burns’ core values included genuineness, people-oriented, honesty/straightforwardness, passion, and excellence, and characterize the leader’s primary inner qualities to conceptualize change. Sensemaking, research, open dialogue, and sharing her personal story were key strategies used by this leader to facilitate understanding of change and planning for impending change. Dr. Burns’ leadership qualities included collaboration/empower the team/shared/participatory leadership, and service. These qualities combined to allow her to effectively lead and manage the planning of change process prior to implementation of the change. The
following section provides further detail on each of the characteristics, and includes analysis regarding the cluster choices by theme. For a visual representation of the themes and subthemes related to Dr. Burns’ case report, refer to Table 2.

**Theme 1: Background influences.**

*Theme 1a: Family background and expectations provided a positive influence on the leader’s derived educational philosophy and worldview by helping her to overcome obstacles.*

Dr. Burns commented that her mother emphasized that the, “one thing she always wanted me to do was to get my education” (Interview, October 1, 2015). Although her mother lacked a formal education, she possessed common sense and practical knowledge, and was very supportive of Dr. Burns and her siblings’ pursuit of education. As a single parent who lived on a farm, her mother wanted more opportunities for her children. Dr. Burns noted her mother’s sentiments. "I heard something on the radio about this place over there on Roosevelt Boulevard. It's called a junior college. I want you to go over there and see if they can help you" (Interview, October 1, 2015).

Family background provided a positive influence on the development of this leader’s educational philosophy and worldview. Her mother’s influence was particularly important. Dr. Burns commented that she first pursued her college education at one of the public universities in Florida but flunked out of school. Soon after she began, Dr. Burns’ mother became terminally ill and she had to leave the university to return home to care for her mother. However, it was because of her mother’s coaxing that she went to the nearby community college to explore educational opportunities. In one day, the college registered her for classes, financial aid, and secured a work-study job for her. From that example, she was convinced that higher education indeed changes lives.
Interpretation. Dr. Pat Burns credited her mother for instilling in her the importance of pursuing education regardless of the circumstances and meager beginnings. She reflected on her mom’s influence:

My mother was an eighth grade drop out. She had a lot of commonsense although she didn't have a lot of book knowledge. One way that I'm different is that a lot of my students don't have a family support system like I did. My mother was extremely supportive of me. One thing she always wanted me to do was to get my education. She supported whatever I did (Interview, October 1, 2015).

Despite the economic circumstances of always working to make ends meet, her mother’s influence and support were unwavering. That is why Dr. Burns stressed the importance of education to progress in life, as well as a possible way out of poverty. Education can be a bridge to moving into higher economic stability. Dr. Burns noted the significance of this view by reflecting on her current life and that of her brother in comparison to her childhood friends:

People are just perplexed by me when I go to reunions, when I go to high school reunions. They are perplexed by my brother who is an attorney. I've had people come up to me when my brother has returned back to this area for court. They went to high school with him, and they'd shake their head. I can't believe that he is an attorney because they just didn't think people coming from the farm, or where I came from, are doing what I do and doing what he does (Interview, October 1, 2015).

Theme 1b: Community college faculty and administrative leaders were the strongest influence, serving as professional mentors and supporters of her educational
advancement and community college leadership, albeit not necessarily into administration. Community college faculty and administrative leaders were the strongest influence on Dr. Burns’ educational path, serving as professional mentors and supporters of her educational advancement and community college leadership, albeit not necessarily into fulltime administration. However, she was appointed to special administrative roles to lead collegewide initiatives while still working as a fulltime faculty member. Dr. Burns mentioned the increased importance of mentors after she graduated from college and joined the faculty as a professor. She highly credited two leaders who influenced her career the most in the field of developmental education, both as a research scholar and practitioner. She also highlighted the influence of a leading scholar on community colleges who holds a significant track record preparing men and women for community college executive leadership. His educational philosophy and program is one of the primary reasons Dr. Burns chose to pursue her chosen. He believed that the best community college leaders often came from backgrounds like those of their students: working class, and often the first in their families to attend college (Smith, 2014). Dr. Burns noted, “I always tell people I am the students I teach” (Interview, October 1, 2015). Notable leaders who are graduates of this program include Dr. Walter Bumphus, CEO of the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC); and Dr. Jerry Sue Thornton, retired President of Cuyahoga Community College (Ohio) for 21 years, and known for her 40-year career in community college leadership. She was named recipient of the 2014 DIVERSE CHAMPIONS award (Smith, 2014).

**Interpretation.** Dr. Burns recognized the significance of professional mentors and the myriad of professional development opportunities afforded to her over the years as a
faculty member. She noted how fortunate she was to have been given opportunities to learn and share with colleagues, while advancing the mission of student learning efforts, having participated in literally more than 150 professional development educational trainings. In over 30 years, she presented more than 300 trainings to other people based on the trainings she received. In addition to national mentors, she also credited local mentors for their influence and support in recognizing her talent and ability to lead college-wide initiatives and advance faculty professional development. Examples of their support included being chosen to participate in several institutes focusing on developmental education. These professional development trainings supported her quasi-administrative roles by allowing her to work on special projects for the college. Although Dr. Burns opted not to pursue a fulltime and permanent administrator position within the college because her heart was in the classroom working with students, working on these initiatives fueled a stronger desire for advancement into organizational leadership. As a part-time administrator at her college, full-time faculty member, and national officer of a professional organization, Dr. Burns witnessed the effects of policy change from the perspective of an administrator and instructor at the same time. She realized all her previous experiences pointed to policy work - good and sound policy - as the next professional work phase in putting good policy into operation. She recognized that “administration was the only place where policy changes are made” (Interview, February 23, 2016). Additionally, Dr. Burns became involved in developmental education at the state and national levels. She worked on several initiatives from a service leadership position, serving as an officer in the largest association of professional community college developmental educators in the United States. Her leadership was instrumental in
helping the organization navigate through the recent developmental education reform that swept the nation starting in 2013. In other organization, Dr. Burns revamped reading courses for developmental education students across the state.

Relatedly, the importance of the community college holds a direct relationship to factors which led Dr. Burns to continue her career in higher education. Graduating from a community college, and experiencing life as a community college professor led Dr. Burns to engage in a variety of leadership opportunities over the past 30 years because of her exposure to extensive professional development and tuition reimbursement. Her experience with professional development shaped her entire professional career to improve student learning and the learning experience, grounded in teaching and learning theory. The college positively encouraged and fully supported Dr. Burns’ doctoral education by providing tuition reimbursement. “I would not have the career I have now if it weren’t for my experience at the community college” (Interview, October 1, 2015).

Theme 2: Core values. Dr. Burns’ core values of genuineness, being people-oriented, honesty, passion, and excellence characterized the leader’s primary inner qualities which allowed her to conceptualize change.

Genuineness/authenticity. Genuineness emerged as a major key concept with this participant. A word count revealed “genuineness” and “real person” as a personal quality; the words were mentioned eight times throughout the conversation. It is referenced both as a core value as well as a state of being because of the close association to the idea of being people-oriented. The participant placed major emphasis on genuineness while also highlighting the importance of being authentic to people. She noted this correlation on several statements within the same response:
I genuinely have a love for people. I have a love for wanting this college to be able to move in the direction where we serve. We give our students the most positive educational experience we can. I like people, for one thing. I really like people. I have a genuine and sincere love for this college. I think people feel like they can talk to me and that I'm genuinely going to help. If tell you I'm going to help you, I'm going to do the best I can to help you. I think genuine caring for others is essential so that they understand that your concern is about everyone involved (Interview, February 23, 2016).

For Dr. Burns, being viewed as genuine, and a real person are equally important in that they help people feel comfortable communicating with her. The idea that she is going to laugh, cry, share good and bad times with her faculty helps her maintain a leadership role, especially when she makes critical decisions. At the redesign planning conference, faculty colleagues commented that, “Dr. Burns makes every attempt to make and communicate the best decision with the information she has to work with at the time. Eventually, she knows decisions must be made one way or the other and she makes them” (Observation, November 6, 2015).

**Interpretation.** A relationship among Dr. Burns’ genuine like for people, genuine love for the institution, genuine help for faculty, and genuine care for people overall was found. It was evident how the pairing of these ideas formed the basis for her core values. Additionally, she believed the people being led should regard the leader as a real person without pretense or ulterior motive. She approached change from the standpoint of the people, not a plan or a process, but with the full recognition that human beings are the source of where the change begins. It is also noteworthy to see how Dr. Burns tied the
importance of being genuine to communication, and ultimately, decision-making, on a continuum. The linking of genuineness to decision-making set the stage for the next core value she identified.

**Honesty.** The quality of honesty emerged multiple times and was often iterated first in a group of the additional related qualities mentioned. A word search of honesty revealed a reference to honesty six times in the interview transcript. Honesty formed the foundation for the other characteristics as Dr. Burns emphasized that, “honesty is the key” (Interview, October 1, 2015). She mentioned the importance of honesty in leading change, in that she tried to engage people with transparency and openness. However, for Dr. Burns, being honest did not imply that she knew the answer to every question or problem. Rather, although occasionally incorrect, she made the earnest attempt to be as honest as possible. While co-facilitating another planning redesign meeting, she asserted, “I will tell you what I know” (Observation, November 20, 2015). This statement underscores the importance of the related concept of being upfront, or forthcoming, with information that people need to know to process an impending change. “If you don’t train them and share expectations, don’t expect them to be able to get there” (Interview, February 23, 2016). Dr. Burns believed in sharing information with people in a straightforward manner. For example, when asked about the developmental education reform, she recalled how she was open and upfront in saying to her national colleagues that, “we can’t do business as usual, or we’ll be out of business” regarding the traditional way developmental education had been delivered all these years (Interview, February 23, 2016). She was emphatic in her assertion that honesty is the key to clear communication.
**Interpretation.** Dr. Burns linked honesty to the qualities of realness and genuineness to being an authentic, transparent, and straightforward person. She had no problem presenting her true self to her peers and students as a leader and instructor. Additionally, she also maintained the same demeanor in a part-time administrative role. In a follow-up interview, the researcher asked Dr. Burns which core value was the most important to her out of all the ones mentioned. Without reservation, she identified honesty as the most important value. She said, “if a person is honest, all interactions and decisions will emanate from that vantage point. Honesty paves the way for people to empathize and trust your leadership, especially when faced with making very challenging decisions in a changing landscape” (Interview, March 3, 2016).

**Passion.** One of the unique values stated and exhibited by Dr. Burns during an observation and a follow-up interview, was the concept of passion. In fact, the term “passionate” was used eight times in the interview, often repeated with emphatic emotion. She referred to passion as a strong and compelling demeanor for ideals what she believed in, with emphasis on communicating the importance of developmental education. Dr. Burns communicated her unwavering commitment to the sustainment of developmental education and its transformative power in the lives of students. This commitment embodied her mission as an educator as she dedicated her career in higher education to developmental education. It also underscored why she chose to anchor and maintain her career at a community college. The mission became clear as she reiterated the need to never lose sight of the fact that, “we are talking about educating students and those students are human beings” (Observation, February 18, 2016). She described herself as a passionate person:
I think people know that when it comes to developmental education, for example, because that is where my career is primarily focused on, I'm very serious and very passionate. I think you wouldn't find me any more fired up or passionate than I am when I'm challenged by somebody who thinks developmental education is a bunch of hokey stuff (Interview, March 3, 2016).

Second, Dr. Burns contrasted her self-perception of being passionate to the perceptions of others who described her passion for developmental education and passionate demeanor of communicating its merits to others, regardless of whether they agreed with her point of view. She further explained this external perception in the following excerpt:

I think the passion is what comes through. People tell me that all the time and I think everyone who's ever known me has said that about me. I've spoken to hundreds of groups across the nation. I've spoken to thousands of people at one sitting. They will all tell you that they know my passion comes through. I think that comes across when I communicate with people, and it means a lot to me (Interview, February 23, 2016).

**Interpretation.** Being passionate in her convictions about education, and specifically, developmental education, certainly distinguished Dr. Burns as a leader who had served in multiple leadership roles on the local, state and national levels. This is one of the primary reasons for her selection as a participant in this study. The passion she described was at the heart of her work as a developmental educator and a national expert on developmental education reform and redesign. What the researcher noticed in Dr. Burns was the purpose in the passion, confirmed by the value she attached to how other
people also spoke of her passionate communication style whenever she talked about the importance of developmental education. In a way, she spoke of this passion as if wearing it like a badge of honor, as if it were her life’s mission. Thus, Dr. Burns’ strong sense of passion not only represented a personal value, but also provided an underlying context for influencing others to understand and adapt in a changing educational environment. This mindset was evident when she was observed leading a workshop in a previous meeting of the college’s developmental education committee where members were asked to identify practices they deemed most valuable from the dismantled developmental education program. Her passion came through as she helped her colleagues discuss effective pedagogical practices in a constructive manner, while leading them through the difficult work of adapting to a new programmatic model, one with less certainty of success and moderate buy-in from her colleagues (Observation, November 20, 2015).

**Excellence.** Dr. Burns referred to the idea of excellence in her work as an instructor and leader, linking it to the way in which she approached her work ethic. Although the word, excellence, was only mentioned two times, other related ideas were clustered to better explain how she achieved excellence and positive outcomes in her professional life.

Dr. Burns noted that she believed the basis for the college’s investment in her professional development, and their support of her leadership in special initiatives, was her dedication to excellence. She also attributed other related values of consistency, dependability, and performing a quality job well. For Dr. Burns, doing a quality job meant being trustworthy to always strive to do a job to the very best of her ability. She attributed her longevity at the college to her unwavering commitment to these ideals
which characterized her ongoing work ethic. “I’ve been through many reorganizations at this college and survived every one of them. So, I hope the new leadership will also see these qualities as did previous leadership” (Interview, October 1, 2015).

*Interpretation.* Dr. Burns talked about excellence based in trust as the primary reason why she was afforded so many opportunities to lead special initiatives for the college during her tenure. This idea was also present in the way she talked about the traits of leaders she admired who currently served in an administrative leadership capacity at the college.

The qualities I think they have seen in me are that if they give me a task, they know I'm going to do it and I'm going to do it well, or do it to the best of my ability. They know they can depend on me. If I tell you I'm going to do something, then I'm going to do it (Interview, October 1, 2015).

In addition to dependability, she also talked about the importance of identifying competent and consistent role models as an aspect of her success as a faculty leader. When reflecting on the leadership abilities of past mentors and current colleagues, she noted the following sentiment:

They do their jobs very well and I'd like to emulate that. Everybody in that group are brilliant people. They have special talents and they all do their jobs very well. That's what inspires me about that group of people (Interview, October 1, 2015).

Ultimately, excellence is the desired outcome from the leaders and staff of any organization. Thus, exhibiting excellence is not reserved for higher education leaders only. Rather, it is an important value in general, with implications across many types of institutions and organizations. Therefore, leaders may also need to consider the
components of excellence, as articulated by Dr. Burns, within the context of leading a complex change initiative to: (a) operationalize the leader’s primary inner qualities and core values to conceptualize change, (b) accomplish the needed goals, and (c) gain the respect and constructive participation from individuals to be led through the change process.

**Theme 3. Sensemaking & communication.** Dr. Burns used the key strategies of sensemaking, sharing research, open dialogue, and sharing personal stories to facilitate an understanding of change, and planning for impending change. This theme focused on strategies and aspects of the communications process which considered both the intrapersonal perspective of the leader, and interpersonal communication, or the way the leader distributed information to stakeholders impacted by the impending change.

* Sensemaking. Sensemaking is the attempt to make sense of an ambiguous situation. Furthermore, shared sensemaking is the process by which people give meaning to experience. Thus, it is the process of creating situational awareness and understanding in situations of high complexity or uncertainty to make decisions (Kumar & Singhal, 2012; Salas & Klein, 2001; Snowden, 2005; Weick, 1995). Dr. Burns described the ways in which she made sense of a complex issue for herself before attempting to explain it to someone else. She made nine references to chunking information, stating that she liked to break down the issue into manageable chunks of information. She suggested laying out the information so others could see whole picture. In doing so, she tried to explain how the chunks of information connect to each other. Finally, she attempted to convey how the issue related to the college’s strategic mission and the broader mission of educating the whole student.
Dr. Burns emphasized the importance of simplicity and data reduction when attempting to make sense of a complex issue with others. Like intrapersonal sensemaking for herself, she also talked about the need to break down information into understandable chunks for others, so that people are not overwhelmed by the information. In the process of breaking down information for others (data reduction), she referenced the communication model of Dr. Sandy Shugart, President of Valencia College:

He keeps it simple. He uses simple analogies to break down complex issues. Instead of using PowerPoint, he opts for a chart, an easel, and a marker to illustrate the key points. He also uses storytelling to convey his message and makes himself open to feedback to answer questions and offer clarifying information (Interview, October 1, 2015).

The idea of keeping it simple for others to understand and process information was also evident as Dr. Burns led a professional development workshop for developmental education faculty entitled, Strategies for Teaching Academically Underprepared Students in Gateway Courses. Dr. Burns used Dr. Shugart’s example, and employed a story telling approach to explain how her students tend to learn best and excel in subsequent college coursework. Classroom examples of her instructional techniques were relatable and practical, and were conveyed to her colleagues with passion and a sense of mission in helping her students succeed (Observation, November 6, 2015).

Research. The incorporation of research represented another form of communication used by Dr. Burns at almost every initiative which she led. In fact, she referenced the word, research, ten times throughout the initial interview session. Research
represented the basis for understanding an issue, and being able to communicate key points in ways to situate an issue in a broader context, and to offer validity to the discussions with others. The idea of validity was crucial to the process of developing the college’s developmental education redesign plan. She was asked by Dr. Hornyak to assist Dr. Catalina Rivera in co-leading the formation of the college’s plan. From the very beginning, Dr. Burns took the role of researcher by orchestrating the literature review and researching other programmatic models being used around the country to implement developmental education redesign initiatives at other colleges. Her literature review represented a continuous attempt to communicate aspects of the model throughout the planning process while guiding multiple conversations. She was given credit for her research efforts by Dr. Rivera in the following excerpt taken from the acknowledgement section of the completed plan:

We are especially indebted to Dr. Pat Burns, who, while serving as President of the National Association for Developmental Education, contributed invaluably to the college’s plan by preparing a survey of the literature upon which course and program reforms are based. Special thanks to Dr. Pat Burns, as well, for authoring passages within the proposed plan, and for preparing the glossary of terms (Developmental Education Plan, 2014).

Dr. Burns also met with many internal stakeholder groups such as faculty, tutors, advisors, librarians, and tutors regarding additional redesign ideas. In a previous committee meeting, several workgroups were assembled to focus on developing certain aspects of the proposed new model. The committee was comprised of developmental education faculty, general education faculty, advisors, librarians, tutors, and other
interested persons. It served as the primary group impacted the most by the S.B. 1720 policy change and the same group called upon to help with formulating the plan and new strategies. Dr. Burns reiterated the importance of bridging the work of academic and student affairs by using research as a basis for collaboration. She commented to the group, “the research will tell you that collaboration is the most important part of what you do in developmental education. Collaboration between the academic side and student affairs is extremely important because they contribute to the positive educational experience of our students” (Observation, November 20, 2015).

Dr. Burns also noted the use of research in the daily work of delivering developmental education as a field of study. She noted the importance of scholarship is as relevant both in the context of research theory, as well as the instructional pedagogy and daily classroom practice:

Everything that I have ever done in developmental education is research-based. Those methodologies, those practices, if you want to call it, a lot of people do not like the term, “best practices.” But anything that we've ever benchmarked, anything we've ever done in developmental education that I've been involved in, has always been based on research (Observation, November 20, 2015).

**Interpretation.** Dr. Burns was frequently called upon to consult with several colleges about the status of their current developmental education programs and redesign plans. Considered as a national expert, she travelled across the country and could witness firsthand how other states were dealing with similar legislative mandates. Though not every state mandate was the same, similar elements were common across the country.
However, regardless of the size of the college, one thing remained true for Dr. Burns. The importance of using research to make evidenced-based decisions about redesign changes, even in the context of mandated change, was stressed. She emphasized her point further:

I fail to remember off the top of my head how many colleges I've gone into where I've talked to people about redesign; maybe a hundred. I've talked to so many people and done it so much. My research training from took me to other colleges to study colleges, contribute what I know educationally, and suggest research-based changes needed in their programs (Interview, October 1, 2015).

**Open dialogue (listening & answering questions).** Dr. Burns shared current research on developmental education redesign with the council on multiple occasions to launch small and large group discussion with an end-goal in mind. The idea was to use the strategies highlighted in the research with three main goals in mind: (a) to stimulate conversation about the relevance of the research, (b) to review the effectiveness of the practices at other colleges, and (c) to explore contextualization of these practices for potential use at the college. At times, these open dialogue sessions could have turned into gripe sessions. However, because of the clear three-pronged parameters set by Dr. Burns, facilitation of these conversations had a clear purpose, framework, and outcomes to be accomplished by the end of the session. The key to successfully achieving all three goals was the freedom established by Dr. Burns for participants to express their views in a civil and constructive way without fear of retribution, regardless if they agreed or disagreed with the redesign initiative. The goal of these sessions was not to be right but to utilize the open dialogue time to focus on what was possible. She believed that open dialogue was a non-linear and non-hierarchical function, whereby administrators, faculty, and staff
were on equal footing to freely discuss the redesign and ask questions for further clarification.

Being open to feedback and questions from people is important; sometimes leadership forgets that...you lay this out for me. I don't really, fully understand it. You don't want to answer my questions and you don't want to hear about what I must say about it. Sometimes I will give you a better idea (Interview, February 23, 2016).

Thus, clear communication from the facilitator leads to better understanding of the issue between the participants. That is why the facilitator needs to first understand the issue; and do research for more personal clarification before communicating the information to the group. Doing so makes it easier to address participant questions in an accurate and believable manner.

Additionally, solicitation of feedback and suggestions from the group were widely encouraged so that participants felt part of the solution. As the designer and facilitator of these open dialogue sessions, Dr. Burns expressed the following thoughts about their significance:

I'm open to other people's ideas. I don't necessarily think I always have the best solution. I may have a solution, but you've shown me that personally. You have better solutions than I do. But together, we have great solutions (Interview, February 23, 2016).

*Interpretation.* The significance of open dialogue suggests the importance of listening and the presence of humility. Although these attributes were not mentioned as repetitively as other themes, their inclusion in the narrative is no less important. Dr.
Burns reflected on the power of listening as a leader. She stated, “realize you can’t be everything to everybody, but try to listen. Even if I don’t like what I’m hearing, they still have a right to express how they feel” (Interview, February 23, 2016).

The recognition of humility supported many of the key values in Theme 3, but also served as a type of internal compass for open communication in Theme 4. Humility served as a way of taking the focus off the assigned leader as the only bearer of information, and spreading the focus to the broader group as the collective information gathering/sharing body. Even after having achieved notoriety at the national level, Dr. Burns valued humility as an important characteristic. “A key thing about leadership is that you need to be unassuming. You need to be in the background. That takes humility” (Interview, February 23, 2016). The inclusion of the open dialogue along with listening, answering questions, humility, and clear communication, provided a pathway for the leader to share to her personal story as another type of communication strategy to move the discussion forward.

**Sharing her personal story.** Dr. Burns believed in telling her personal story and journey through education which was, essentially, her life story. In the context of communicating change, she believed that knowing your story and sharing your story with others, can provide a greater picture of the issue through the leader’s perspective, particularly if the story embodies the pertinent or compelling aspects of the issue at hand. It was referenced at least three times. Dr. Burns frequently referenced her story to convey the purpose and mission of developmental education to both her students and colleagues, or anyone she felt should hear it. To her students, she often stated, “I always tell people I am the students I teach. Your story is my story” (Interview, February 23, 2016). This
quote is a reference to her childhood and the recognition of the transformative role community college played in changing the trajectory of her life.

Dr. Burns shared her personal story with her colleagues of how education transformed her life communicating with people in planning change, particularly those working in developmental education reform. The benefit of sharing her personal story was that it allowed people to better understand the problem, enhance their empathy of the student experience, and inspire them to do the challenging redesign work to help underserved students succeed. “I want to do what somebody did for me and I try to pass it on. If there is a chance, there is a glimmer of hope. There is always a way to make an avenue if there is a glimmer of hope” (Observation, November 20, 2015). She tried to engender this sentiment in her colleagues when formulating the developmental education plan.

**Interpretation.** Because of the recognition of her journey with her students, Dr. Burns served as a credible role model because of their similar struggles. She believed her students trusted that she had their best interest at heart. Stories appeal to the emotional side of leadership. The idea here is rooted in the notion that leaders may approach communicating these complex issues with both head and heart, appealing to others with facts and feelings with a sense of mission and purpose. Certainly, this idea was reinforced in the passionate way Dr. Burns seemed to leave a strong impression on others about how the power of education played out in her own life. It was indeed a very compelling story as she used her personal narrative to help her colleagues move beyond indifference to constructive action. The power it had to convey to others the importance of developmental education and to compel them to work through the challenge of
redesign, even during uncertainty, was recognized by the researcher. She expressed this idea again in the spring committee meeting (Observation, April 15, 2016).

**Theme 4: Leadership Qualities.** Collaboration/team/participatory leadership and service typified Dr. Burns’ leadership qualities, enabling her to lead and manage the planning of the change process prior to implementation of the change. The process of leading change was signified by the approach Dr. Burns used, and qualities which denoted her related leadership acumen.

**Collaboration.** An analysis of the data revealed collaboration as a leading sub-theme in this category denotes leadership qualities. A word count using collaboration revealed its usage 15 times throughout the interview data. When asked about her transition into part-time administrator, Dr. Burns credited collaboration as an area of expertise because she was skillful in bringing people together. Her acumen helped to promote collaborative learning amongst her colleagues by encouraging professional development. She stated, “that’s one way I’ve been able to contribute most as an administrator. I have collaborative skills” (Interview, October 1, 2015).

Clustered with the skill of collaboration are associated qualities which make collaboration possible. For Dr. Burns, it was easier to enact change when people came together with common goals versus individual agendas. In that way, the atmosphere of leading collaboration was better suited to achieve consensus. Dr. Burns viewed working in a collaborative way as a hands-on, or approachable, activity rather than using a laissez-faire approach. She was not afraid to get her hands dirty and jump into the thick of the conversation. She stated, “I’m going to get in there with you and do it to the best of my ability because I’m a participatory leader.” Thus, her aim in leading change was not
solely to get buy-in, but to build bridges, connections, and consensus. As a result, “decision-making became a function of the collective group because of the participation of all types of thinkers who are able to contribute to the decision” (Interview, February 23, 2016).

Relatedly, the act of facilitating collaboration entailed physical characteristics of group interaction. In explaining what collaboration looked like, Dr. Burns described the environment as a socially diverse exercise with different personalities and viewpoints where everyone was engaged in the process. There were many people talking and wanting to express their ideas out loud. The room was not silent, nor was the group of people afraid to express their thoughts. Rather, people were physically moving about the room asking questions, particularly, “what-if” type questions. This sound embodied a range of emotion, “the happy and aggravating all mixed together” (Interview, October 1, 2015). To document this movement, the facilitator was observed leading the group in sharing and drawing their ideas on big poster paper. There were groups versus individuals working alone. The facilitator brought everyone together in the process to develop a summative or culminating product to capture those ideas and use for further planning (Observation, November 20, 2015).

Interpretation. Dr. Burns described herself as a collaborator and she always wanted people to collaborate with her. In observing Dr. Burns facilitate this process first-hand at a committee meeting, the researcher noticed a very interesting outcome which underscored the significance of collaboration as a leadership quality. Leading change was a difficult task, but as the collaborative process unfolded just as Dr. Burns described it earlier, the end result highlighted that a collaborative process encouraged people to be
more invested in the work, spurred the group to actually get planning done, even under a short timeframe and deadline, led to collective decision-making, whereby the group took ownership for the decisions made, and heightened the ability of the participants to change and embrace change or face stagnation. Thus, ownership occurred as a direct result of collaboration because it was facilitated well by the leader. There was much collaboration involved in the redesign effort.

In a follow-up interview in early 2016, Dr. Burns reflected on the collaboration process since the committee meeting in the previous fall term. Given the merits of achieving consensus through the facilitated collaborative process, she also reflected on another reality. In leading change, Dr. Burns recognized collaboration did not equal total agreement. She noted:

You can’t make everyone happy all the time. The best you can do is try to work with the majority of those who are willing to work with you. There are people who will absolutely going to refuse. You do what you can and if you can’t, move on (Interview, February 23, 2016).

The discussion of collaboration as a leadership quality for leading change naturally lent itself to the team approach to leadership.

*Team Approach.* The idea of working together as a team was identified by Dr. Burns as the logical compliment to collaboration. Team leadership was referenced seven times as shared or participatory leadership. Although not mentioned as frequently throughout the narrative, the team subtheme solidified the connections between themes and the findings for this case.
As illuminated throughout this case, Dr. Burns preferred to collaborate with other people to solve problems and to ultimately lead a change initiative. She referred to this idea as being other-centered and serving the people on your team as a means of leading. Service was mentioned six times in the narrative. Being other-centered meant empowering the team by building a sustainable model through the work of others. She noted this idea as the primary reason why a team approach is essential to leading. The idea of working together as a team was identified by Dr. Burns as the logical complement to collaboration.

We are a team! If you build something and it doesn't sustain itself, if you are the only bolt holding it together and you leave and it falls apart then what good have you done? You can't be the only cog in the wheel (Observation November 20, 2015).

**Interpretation.** Dr. Burns’ dissertation study was based on the tenets of team leadership for helping students succeed despite their challenging circumstances. In fact, the dedication section of her dissertation revealed the depth of her commitment to this characteristic.

Like my students, I was juggling family, home, and career. I had no time to review the research in the field of developmental education. In fact, it never crossed formally my mind. I was too busy trying to determine what needed to be done to help get these students through my courses, how I might find resources to help me do that within the institution where I worked, and how I might collaborate with other faculty members who were interested in trying what was considered innovative approaches that could help these students. Together, we
developed a fairly involved plan using a team approach that provided additional academic support to help these students succeed (Interview, October 1, 2015).

In summary, the collective background influences, communication methods, and leadership qualities provide a full picture of her leadership approach in trying to lead change. As a leader, she exhibited a high degree of self-awareness and used this awareness to effectuate genuine interactions to conceptualize change. Building on this sense of genuineness, Dr. Burns presented open, clear, and honest communication to share timely information to facilitate the understanding of the anticipated change. Through collaboration and a team approach, she encouraged group ownership for collective decision-making in leading the group through the initial change and subsequently managing the impact of the change.

Special emphasis: Importance of developmental education. Dr. Burns’ educational philosophy embodied her work as developmental educator, administrator, and overall leader of change in a field where the experiences of students can either hinder or encourage pursuit of their educational dreams. She summed up the importance of developmental education in the context of her education philosophy:

Education is a transformative and life-changing value. We are educators, and social workers, and sometimes counselors, too. We are in the social service business as well as the education business. There are a whole series of problems we’ll have socially if we don’t do our job in education. People’s lives are turned around by what we do for them. Given the role of developmental education in the community college, I have dedicated my entire life to teaching these students.
That’s why I earned a doctorate in this field. If we don’t educate them, then who will? (Interview, March 3, 2016).

Table 2.

Dr. Burns: Summary of Themes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Educational Philosophy</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“Education is transformative, life-changing. Community colleges were created for a reason. We are here to serve the community and students, especially economically disadvantaged students of color. Take students from where they are or where they stand.”</td>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>Background Influences</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Came from meager economic means</td>
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<td>Mother believed in college education</td>
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<tr>
<td>Community college changed her life</td>
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<tr>
<td>Student experience led to work at community college</td>
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<tr>
<td>People believed in her and saw her leadership acumen</td>
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<td>Identified to lead major initiatives</td>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
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<tr>
<td>Did not indicate either way</td>
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<td>Focused on being excellent</td>
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<tr>
<th>Core Values</th>
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<tr>
<td>Promoted genuineness/authenticity/realness with people</td>
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<td>People-oriented</td>
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<td>Honest/straightforward</td>
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<td>Passion for the work</td>
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<td>Excellence</td>
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<th>Supporting Ideas</th>
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<tr>
<td>Empathy</td>
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<td>Humility</td>
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<tr>
<td>Caring</td>
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<td>Understanding</td>
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<td>Reliability</td>
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<td>Dependability</td>
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<td>True to word</td>
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<td>Consistency</td>
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<td>Unselfish</td>
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<td>Unassuming</td>
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<td>Other-centered</td>
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<td>Built bridges of understanding with people</td>
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<tr>
<th>Sensemaking &amp; Communication</th>
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<tr>
<td>Shared research/literature</td>
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<td>Related research to issue/correct terms</td>
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<td>Encouraged open dialogue</td>
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<td>Shared personal journey story</td>
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<tr>
<th>Supporting Ideas</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reduced complex concepts/PowerPoint</td>
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<tr>
<td>Started with familiar</td>
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<td>Was comfortable communicating</td>
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<tr>
<td>Listened and answered questions</td>
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<td>Let people talk</td>
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<tr>
<td>Got people talking, drawing, moving around, sharing</td>
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<td>Sought input</td>
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<tr>
<td>Constantly mingled</td>
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<tr>
<td>Used focus groups, committees, and email</td>
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<tr>
<td>Faculty councils</td>
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<tr>
<td>Used total group activity to process issue or topic</td>
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<tr>
<td>Displayed all ideas on giant post-it notes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Used technology – website and video</td>
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</tbody>
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Leadership Qualities

- Cultivated collaboration and empowering the team
- Cultivated participatory and shared decision-making
- Cultivated service to others

Supporting Ideas

- Built consensus, promoted mission of community college, used classroom instructional methods to facilitate learning environment, believed in the work, believed fellowship built comfort and trust with colleagues, had fun – relaxed, understood the political power structures and tried to influence where possible, stayed on-task, professional and knowledgeable

Case 3: Dr. Catalina Rivera

Educational Philosophy: Dr. Rivera reflected on the most important lesson imparted to her about the value of an education that formed the foundation for what has become her educational philosophy. She attributed this mindset to the ideological influence of her parents. Dr. Rivera ascribed to two primary ideals: service and mission. She said, “those who are considered to be educated have the responsibility to use education in the service of others with the goal of helping others by always asking the question, how can I help you?” Simply put, she articulated her educational philosophy in the following manner. “Serve students, advocate for community, and provide excellent teaching and research” (Interview, October 5, 2015).

Dr. Rivera elaborated on the idea of service in that she believed the work of teaching at a community college represents a way to serve the community because a person may feel as if he or she is on a mission to change the world in a positive way. “This idea rests at the heart of what the people’s college is all about. After serving in an open-access institution and feeling its mission, you come to understand, believe, and commit to it” (Interview, October 5, 2015).

Interpretation: The idea of serving others provided a direct reflection of the influence of her parents, which is one of the reasons she chose education as a professor. Ironically, she was the first educator in her family, as education represented her way of
serving humanity. Until the interview for this study, she had not realized the connection of her parents’ view of service to her own educational philosophy. However, as she reflected on the idea of service, it became clear that the model of helping and serving others as demonstrated in her family household, was ingrained in her approach to helping and serving her students as an educator. Additionally, the responsibility of advocating for the community was one of the influences in her choice to teach developmental education courses along with teaching standard college credit courses. Teaching developmental education was a way for her to help students from underserved communities and those who needed help and a second chance in obtaining an education to improve their lives.

Participant data from Dr. Catalina Rivera revealed several connected qualities and characteristics grouped into four major themes: (a) background influences, (b) core values, (c) sensemaking/communication, and (d) leadership qualities. Each theme consisted of several subthemes which drew attention to the forces that shaped Dr. Rivera’s journey into leadership.

Dr. Rivera’s background influences were divided between two subthemes: (a) family, and (b) mentors. Background influences included her family’s commitment to, and sacrifice for, her education. These expectations shaped the leader’s derived educational philosophy and world view. Administrative leaders were the aspirational and inspirational influencers who served as professional mentors and supporters of her educational advancement into community college leadership. Administrative assignments were the impetus for her leadership development. Together, family and mentors helped leader establish a context for leading change. Core values included service, people-oriented, respect/fairness, honesty/integrity and equity, and characterized the leader’s
primary inner qualities to conceptualize change. Sensemaking, research, human, open
dialogue and listening, transparency were key strategies used by this leader to facilitate
understanding of change and planning for impending change. Dr. Rivera’s leadership
qualities included collaboration, problem-solving, and consensus-building. These
qualities combined to allow her to effectively lead and manage the planning of change
process prior to implementation of the change. The following section provides further
detail on each of the characteristics, both individually, as well as analysis regarding the
cluster choices by theme. For visual explanation of these themes, refer to Table 3.

**Theme 1: Background influences.**

**Theme 1a: Family background and expectations provided the strongest
influence on the leader’s derived educational philosophy by their commitment to, and
sacrifice for her education.**

*Parents.* Dr. Rivera spoke of her family background and upbringing with a sense
of pride and dignity. A native of Indiana, she referred to herself as a first-generation
college graduate as she and her brother were the first to attend college in their family on
her mother’s side, and the second generation on her father’s side of the family. Dr. Rivera
emphasized that her parents instilled in her that obtaining a college education was not a
right, but a privilege and an honor. She remembered the sacrifice her parents made on her
behalf and being told how fortunate she was to attend college when so many others could
not. Additionally, education was always regarded with the highest level of esteem;
appreciation was expected for the opportunity to pursue education. Her parents were
committed to her and her brother equally in providing as many educational opportunities
as possible. They also provided her encouragement and financial support to pursue both
undergraduate and graduate school. Dr. Rivera referenced the book, *The Outliers*, by Malcolm Gladwell, which stressed the importance of family and community influence on an individual’s outlook towards education. She was reminded of the African proverb, “it takes a village to raise a child” (Adelekan, 2004).

**Interpretation.** The value and appreciation of education was evident in Dr. Rivera’s response. No doubt her parents left an indelible mark on her thinking. It was interesting when she shared that her father originally thought she would study law to become an attorney at one point because of her attitude and ability to negotiate. However, this was not her chosen career path. Rather, she followed her love for writing and literature as an aspiring educator instead. Because of the strong influence her parents played in their support for her education, Dr. Rivera attempted to instill the importance and meaning to her students regarding the transformative nature of education, an ideal that became a primary part of her life’s work both as a college professor and administrator.

**Theme 1b: Professional mentors.** Former teachers and administrative leaders were the aspirational and inspirational influencers who served as professional mentors and supporters of her educational advancement into community college leadership. High school teachers represented the strongest influence to pursue the teaching profession, while opportunities to engage in specific and timely college administrative assignments became the impetus for her professional leadership development.

**Role models:** Dr. Rivera recounted the influence of two high school teachers she regarded as significant educational role models in her early life. Mrs. Sherman and Mrs. Yates both taught high school English literature. They loved the written word and the
science behind it. “Because of the passion they displayed for writing and literature that was effusive and infectious, I wanted to be just like them” (Interview, October 5, 2015).

**Interpretation:** These two teachers served as the inspiration for Dr. Rivera’s decision to teach high school English, as that was her initial plan after graduating from college. In fact, she had been preparing to be a high school English teacher and had earned the appropriate credentials - a bachelor’s degree and a master’s degree in English and a minor in secondary education from a university in Florida. The two high school teachers were also role models for her love of literature. Dr. Rivera also shared this same proclivity for their literary and poetic style of writing. Some examples of this literary bent were exhibited in titles of past presentations and writings. They included a grant report and conference presentation. In both documents, she began the presentation with a literary story to serve as the backdrop for the content and ended the report and presentation with the conclusion to the story, while relating it to the focus of the report, i.e. student success, advising, learning resources or pedagogy. When asked if family or mentors were the most influential in her life, she substantiated the reason why she felt her parents had stronger influence in the development than the role models.

Without the strong foundation from my parents, it would be challenging to recognize opportunities, special people, and good mentors in your path. And so, with that foundation: work hard, be thankful, look for opportunities, and take opportunities when they come to you, and use them as thoroughly and effectively when you can. Let other people know you appreciate them along your pathway. These kinds of blessings allow for receptivity to other secondary mentors and
become a confluence of influence along life’s trajectory (Interview, October 5, 2015).

*Mentors.* While her high school role models encouraged her desire to teach high school English, college mentors also played a significant role in Dr. Rivera’s decision to teach at a community college and pursue administrative leadership. She spoke of taking a diverted path to community college teaching after being influenced by a college professor who identified this potential in her to teach at the college level.

It was a Spanish literature professor, Dr. Geraldine Nichols, who said, “I really think you would enjoy teaching at a community college, have you thought about teaching part-time at the community college?”, as it was then called. Until then, I had never heard of community college (Interview, October 5, 2015). The urging of this professor was so profound that she decided to start working as an adjunct at community college after graduating from state university in Florida.

Additionally, Dr. Rivera also recalled and recognized the influence of another significant mentor, Dr. Robert Williams, as the person who encouraged her to pursue administrative leadership. In his capacity as campus president, Dr. Williams was the person who hired Dr. Rivera as a fulltime English professor. Incidentally, this is also how she met Dr. Pat Burns. She described Dr. Williams as a leader of the people and someone who loved people and walked the campus regularly. His approach to leadership was marked by always welcoming ideas, offering support, and encouraging people to pursue opportunities. He had a saying that, “capacity attracts and the more capacity and ability you have, the more opportunities will present” (Interview, October 5, 2015).
She credited his influence as the most instrumental person in her decision to pursue leadership. Furthermore, she described Dr. Williams as an inspirational role model. The following passage illustrated his love of literary style by using analogy to emphasize the importance of pursuing community college leadership. She quoted Dr. Williams’ s idea:

When you are a teacher, you can only tend to one tree at a time, and the work you do in cultivating that tree is important. But when you’re an administrator, you cultivate the forest at a time. And I believe you have the potential to grow an entire forest in a way that creates rich, fertile, and seminal growth opportunities for many (Interview, October 5, 2015).

When she was hired as to create academic programming, Dr. Rivera took Dr. Williams’s advice to heart in leading the planning of new student assistance center that would serve as the hallmark of the college’s quality improvement plan. The goal of the plan was to increase student success in the developmental areas of reading, writing, and math, including wrap-around academic support services. This comprehensive initiative required the collaboration and help of many people college-wide working together as a collective body to re-design programmatic course curricula, as well as re-conceptualize academic support facilities college-wide. The work included development of a white paper highlighting best practices.

In addition to the white paper to revise developmental education, the scope of the role also included the following: (a) support and design program models to enhance the first-year experience and student life skills for at-risk learners, (b) a redesign of the student life curriculum, (c) research in collaboration with a major local initiative –
addressing economic/educational challenges of the inner core of the city—suggestions for economic development, social services and revitalization of the city; and (d) SACSCOC accreditation and compliance reporting.

**Interpretation.** Dr. Rivera’s description of Dr. Williams was that he was an extraordinary educator and a special human being. The researcher recognized similarities between Dr. Rivera and Dr. Williams regarding core values, leadership qualities, and the shared sense of community college mission. Overall, his influence in the early days of her career may have served as one of the key motivators that led Dr. Rivera on the road to leadership.

The creation of the student assistance centers resulted in an incredibly successful project that touched almost every facet of the college, from faculty to facilities. It led to the complete renovation of all five campus libraries as the new Library Learning Commons, and the creation of the One-Stop Centers which housed advising, financial aid, and testing centers. To compliment this project, new technological upgrades, including computers and software, were added. Indeed, this was an exciting time for the college, and for the students who would benefit from this initiative, one that represented a monumental organizational change.

The college was recognized statewide because of this massive effort, having earned an award presented by the Association of the Florida Colleges. The researcher was a conference attendee and witnessed the award being presented during that meeting. Dr. Rivera was interviewed about the mission of the student assistance centers, the components of the program, and how it provided services to assist all enrolled students in addition to students taking developmental education courses. As the researcher reflected
on this project, and the leadership role of Dr. Rivera for this project, it was evident the influence of Dr. Williams was an enduring presence both before and after his death. Perhaps he saw that kind of leadership potential in Dr. Rivera which prompted his encouragement for her to follow administrative leadership opportunities. Since the creation of the student assistance centers, Dr. Rivera’s role expanded by being given additional programs to oversee. The irony of the successful student assistance centers was the passing of the S.B. 1720, legislation which essentially dismantled their programmatic existence in 2015. Once again, Dr. Rivera found herself in the role of leading yet another systemic redesign of the developmental education program, albeit this time due to external legislative forces.

Theme 2: Core values. Service, respect /fairness, honesty/integrity and equity/diversity characterized the leader’s primary inner qualities to conceptualize change.

Service. Dr. Rivera’s educational philosophy linked service to her core values. The word, “service,” was used a total of eleven times in the original interview transcript. It was also the first quality she identified after being asked which values and principles contributed most to her leadership approach. She believed that community college employees should serve the students who come to seek education at an open-access institution. Dr. Rivera also believed, “we should serve them as enthusiastically, as professionally and as inspirationally as we possibly can so that we can advocate for our community, the diverse citizens whom we serve and student for whom we represent” (Interview, October 5, 2015). These ideas appeared seamless and interconnected, linking students, people, and the community college. She was observed reiterating these ideas
while leading a meeting of the student success committee after implementation of S.B. 1720. She emphasized that educators in community colleges still have a great responsibility to help people discover what is possible for their lives through education by asking “How can I help you and serve you?” (Observation, September 24, 2015).

**Interpretation.** Like Dr. Williams, Dr. Rivera believed that anyone who has the desire can: (a) serve students and embrace the community college mission, (b) provide excellent and targeted teaching and research to the many differences and potential needs presented by students, and (c) advocate for the community and diverse citizenry served and represented by the college, regardless of their education background and leadership style. Though not originally familiar with community colleges, Dr. Rivera grew to love the diverse student body and open access mission of community colleges as the “people’s college” (Interview, October 5, 2015).

**Respect/fairness.** Respect, or admiration, represented a primary value for Dr. Rivera as it was used eleven times throughout the narrative. Similarly, being “human” was referenced alongside respect as a strong term, and was used ten times. In the process of leading change, the idea of respect is at the heart of planning change while attempting to lead others through an adaptive process. Respect is strongly associated with being “human” towards the involvement and treatment of the people who are part of the change process. Specifically, Dr. Rivera advocated respect for human beings, respect for her colleagues, respect for their professional expertise to contribute to the work, respect for the learning moment (teachable moments), and respect for diversity, students of color, students of linguistic and culture difference, and respect for students with diverse levels of academic preparedness or with varying levels of academic ability.
First, respect lay at the heart of working with people and on behalf of the people in a constructive manner. Dr. Rivera’s opening remarks to the faculty and academic support professionals at the Foundations of Excellence mini-conference emphasized this very point. She stated, “to move forward in this work we can each contribute to the institution in terms of a space in the place that values and respects your individual and collective expertise” (Observation, November 6, 2015). Coming from the human place, she believed that when engaging together, it is important to treat each other respectfully as professionals and equals as they would want to be treated. This sentiment set the stage for the tone and manner everyone would take in the change process, even in times of potential disagreement. She also recognized the mutuality of respect amongst colleagues. In a subsequent follow-up interview, Dr. Rivera elaborated on this thought:

If people trust you, then they can respect you. If they respect you, they can work with you. That means that we are professionals among professionals and equals among equals, and we respect that place as the starting point and as the definitive aspect of who we are and what we're doing (Interview, February 3, 2016).

Second, respect for a wide array of students was tantamount to the purpose and success of the change process. The needs of the students are the cornerstone of the work. Therefore, Dr. Rivera believed that recognition of their diverse learning needs and learning styles must be taken into thoughtful consideration with respect to redesigning the developmental education curriculum given the large number of non-traditional students who place into developmental education courses. Serving academically and economically underserved students represents part of the community college mission (Thelin, 2011). Next, the idea of coming from a human place provided the impetus for respecting the
students slated to be impacted by the program change. Dr. Rivera indicated the importance of leaders who come from a human place when leading a diverse student population: (a) helps the leader understand where they are coming from, (b) helps the leader acknowledge them, and (c) helps the leader become more aware of their assumptions. She also referenced why educators should demonstrate respect for the diverse student body and shared this idea while facilitating a robust student success committee meeting.

All good leaders should be teachers and all good teachers should be leaders. I am a teacher at heart. So, if I come from who I am and what I do, I teach. Then, I increase my ability of being successful at helping others learn to implement change, grow, and meet deliverables we’ve been given (Observation, November 20, 2015).

**Interpretation.** The ideas of respect and coming from a human place were easily clustered as Dr. Rivera placed high regard for respect for her colleagues, students, and humanity overall. These ideals seem to be mutually exclusive in that the belief of coming from a human place provided the foundation whereby respect was demonstrated through an appreciation for colleagues and students alike. Dr. Rivera recounted the experience of teaching her first developmental education course as an adjunct. It was an eye-opening experience as her college training was primarily embedded in training people to teach literature. However, after teaching her first developmental education course, Dr. Rivera immediately began to understand the extent of the academic need presented by these students. In short, she was hooked. Additionally, the work of teaching the developmental education student was far more rewarding for her than originally envisioned. These
students deserved respect just like any other student, and she saw their potential for success realized in her courses.

**Honesty and Integrity.** The internal quality of honesty also emerged as a strong element representing the leader’s core values. Honest and honesty were used five times. However, honesty was reiterated in a cluster articulated with other values, which also showed strong orientation of the leader’s emphasized values important to her. Dr. Rivera clearly articulated the principles and values which she ascribed to in her personal life and, tried to practice daily as an educator and administrative leader. In fact, she listed honesty in close relation to the values of integrity, service, respect, love, and transparency. For this study, transparency is referenced as a strategy of communication due to the way the participant described its usage. However, Dr. Rivera mentioned honesty and transparency in a similar word cluster. She distinguished honesty as a quality one possesses in comparison to the act of being transparent, more so as a strategy. In her assertion, the outcomes of honesty were trust and respect. She stated, “That's important because if people trust you, they can respect you. If they respect you, they can work with you (Interview, October 5, 2015).

**Interpretation.** Even though the idea of integrity was not routinely mentioned in the interview, the combination of the values identified by Dr. Rivera rested on the foundation of integrity as an embedded core value. Integrity was mentioned only once during the interview; however, its importance was as significant as the other qualities regarding helping people prepare for change, and subsequently adapt to change. Additionally, honesty, trust, and integrity were needed for the leader of change to establish credibility. This idea was important in the early stages of leading a major
change initiative because faculty were more apt to constructively follow a leader who exhibited honesty, trust, and respect towards them.

The role of integrity was particularly important when Dr. Rivera led the development of student assistance centers as part of the college’s quality improvement plan. At that time, the researcher was the director of a campus Library Learning Commons, where the first student assistance center would be housed. There was talk about how this change would dramatically alter operations. A meeting was convened to present the new idea and Dr. Rivera was placed in charge of leading the meeting. In that meeting, Dr. Rivera reflected on the idea of recognizing the “elephant in the room” in acknowledging the fears and anxiety people were feeling because of the uncertainty spurred by the impending change.

I brought in the elephant in the room, put the elephant in a paper bag and just said, Okay, everyone, bear with me, a little corny here, but I know there is an elephant in the room. Here is what it is and they kind of laughed. We were able to laugh with the difficulty. Okay, we've got it out! This is not popular. I know you don't like it. Maybe if we walked in for the day, I would have chosen a different path, but here is what we've been given. Let's talk about how we're going to get there. That's one strategy for helping others and letting them know that you're there (Observation, November 6, 2015).

Thus, it took honesty to take that approach as a leader because the group’s initial response was still uncertain. By taking the time to acknowledge those concerns from the outset of the meeting, Dr. Rivera found it easier to begin the conversation, allowing for openness and questions as the group began to process the change idea.
**Equity/Diversity.** Although originally unfamiliar with community colleges, Dr. Rivera grew to love the diverse student body, the open access mission of community colleges, and the concept of the people’s college. She further elaborated on her understanding of the people’s college as it related to the concept that emerged from literature on community college development in the United States (St. John et al., 2013). It may also denote first-generation students who come from a lower socio-economic background regardless of their ethnicity, although many of these students comprise a segment of the minority population (Thelin, 2011). Additionally, they may be academically underprepared or lacking educational opportunities (p. 232). The idea of the community college representing the diversity of people truly resonated with Dr. Rivera as she gave the opening remarks at the mini-conference:

> We’re for the people, of the people, and by the people, at this great American institution. I’m here to serve and help others, and I hope in doing so to apply the strongest sense of fairness, equity, respect for human beings, and the learning moment that presents itself anytime in an education environment (Observation, November 6, 2015).

**Interpretation.** Dr. Rivera’s emphasis on the people’s college holds significance given the focus of her work as the executive leader with oversight in developmental education and adult education. Upon the urging of a mentor to consider community college teaching, the scope of her current role served as a natural extension of the people’s college. It was also understandable that resource-oriented academic departments such as librarians and professional tutoring provide a natural bridge of academic support to these students, in addition to providing wrap-around academic support to all students
who attend community/state college. Dr. Rivera’s teaching experiences and professional administrative opportunities, coupled with her desire to help students overcome challenges, made her ideally suited for the role she played in the community college. Perhaps, this was the internal quality that caught her mentor’s attention as an undergraduate student. Dr. Rivera highlighted her passion for community college by saying,

I love the students that we serve and I love the people we work with. I love the things that we do as represented by our department, Academic Foundation, with its two primary instruction areas of adult education and developmental education resting right at the heart of what the people's college is, of what it's about (Interview, February 3, 2016).

**Theme 3: Sensemaking and communication.** Sensemaking, research, human, open dialogue and listening, transparency are the key strategies used by this leader to facilitate understanding of change and planning for impending change. For this study, sensemaking and communication are not synonymous, but related concepts. Here, sensemaking refers to ways in which the leader extracted meaning from a complex idea (Eddy, 2010b). In comparison, communication refers to strategies for idea development, and mechanisms for information distribution regarding the planning phase (p. 64).

**Sensemaking.** Dr. Rivera identified several strategies used to first understand the issues for herself as she reflected on the process of sensemaking with a complex issue or situation. When charged with the task of leading this developmental redesign effort at the college, it was essential to fully comprehend the legislation before engaging in conversations and meetings with applicable faculty and staff impacted by the legislation.
To understand the content, scope, and potential implications of S.B. 1720, Dr. Rivera first read and re-read the legislation alone several times, took copious notes, and reflected on her initial interpretations. Second, she met regularly with Dr. Hornyak to address her questions and seek additional clarification on law. These meetings were beneficial to arrive at a common understanding of the law to accurately convey information to the faculty and staff. She also conferred with Dr. Pat Burns, the resident faculty and content expert on developmental education, and office of a national organization at the time. Third, she attended numerous trainings and webinars held by the state Division of Florida Colleges, the state education entity charged with ensuring compliance to S.B. 1720 from the Florida College System. Because of these preliminary efforts to understand the law, she re-wrote her own talking points, and composed a PowerPoint presentation. She also kept PowerPoint presentations under 15 slides to maintain audience engagement when presenting to the student success committee at the college.

**Interpretation.** For Dr. Rivera, the connection of reading the law then writing her own talking points were an important part of increasing her understanding of the law. The researcher was intrigued by Dr. Rivera’s reference to her learning preference in describing the approach taken to understand the complex bill. The reference to the read-write connection was an instructional writing approach that was recognized as an underlying principle of the college’s quality improvement plan for student success. “I know one thing about myself; I'm a read-write learner. I need to write it down in order to get it” (Interview, February 3, 2016). However, in this example, the researcher noticed an association between Dr. Rivera’s learning preference, sensemaking, and leadership style. A connection existed between the way in which Dr. Rivera learned in relation to the way
she led others. She utilized the read-write approach as part of her presentation style by utilizing a writing activity to facilitate understanding and action steps based on the information presented.

**Sensemaking for others.** As a further extension of personal sensemaking, or the way in which the leader makes sense of a complex issue for herself, Dr. Rivera took the information to help others understand the issue as well. As administrators, leaders have the responsibility to share information so others can make informed decisions. External sensemaking is an essential part of communication in a college community. Dr. Rivera shared her view on the importance of external sensemaking:

You must provide information unless it's classified or confidential for whatever reason. But that is typically not the case in our line of work. Then, it is your responsibility to share it, so others already know and can help make informed decisions about where to go from here (Interview, February 3, 2016).

The leader’s approach to supporting sensemaking for others included several strategies she used in past change efforts. They included: (a) having a sense of humor, (b) citing research, and (c) presenting a proposal.

During committee meetings, a sense of humor helped the leader take the edge off the issue because of the challenges in planning the redesign (change). Employing a little humor helped to diffuse the difficult adjustment to change in others, lighten the mood, break the tension, and open avenues to be more relaxed, comfortable, and freely talk. Dr. Rivera also offered the idea of balance while extracting meaning (sensemaking) of the legislation. She explained balance in the context of helping others adapt to change by employing pedagogical technique used to teach students how to write an effective
argument (Observation, November 6, 2015). She later referred to this idea borrowed from Greek literature as the balance of ethos, pathos, and logos. Ethos refers to the appeal to ethics based on the credibility of the persuader, pathos refers to the appeal to emotions based on creating an emotional response, and logos refers to the appeal by logic based on persuading by reason (Interview, February 3, 2016).

**Research.** The process of citing relevant research was useful in the change process. Dr. Rivera referred to research sixteen times throughout the interview narrative. When planning for an important change process, the leader must do his/her homework and research the issue at hand. Dr. Rivera knew it was imperative to immerse herself in the scholarly literature to examine theory and effective practices so that she could know the content of the upcoming change. Examination of other models of practice helped others begin to consider the possibilities of change beyond what they already knew and did in their current practice. Exploration of other institutional models allowed the faculty and staff to examine potential pedagogical implications for the new program. She brought information back to the group to share, “here is what some other research says, which helped create the idea that if other institutions tried it successfully, perhaps, it could work here” (Interview, March 3, 2016). Inviting other colleges to speak about their redesign experience fostered greater understanding. Dr. Rivera mentioned that the college hosted a regional mini-developmental education conference to brainstorm with other community colleges on ways to redesign the developmental education curriculum. During that one-day conference, two non-Florida colleges gave presentations describing their redesign experience and subsequent results. This regional meeting positively contributed to the facilitation of redesign efforts, not only at the college, but amongst the other community
colleges in the region and the state, as educators travelled from all over Florida to attend 
(Interview, March 3, 2016).

Using the literature to present a proposal to explain the law and introduce a 
preliminary or conceptual draft of a redesign helped Dr. Rivera paint a way forward. 
“Coming in with a proposal and a plan is good because at least people can look at it in 
writing, concise but clear. A proposal gives them something tangible to react and respond 
to” (Interview, March 3, 2016). Stakeholders were then able to put their ideas on posters, 
whiteboards, and easels to brainstorm possible strategies for programmatic change. It was 
crucial for the leader to be a voice, a listening ear, remain available to the group for 
support, information, and to act as the gatherer of feedback from the group. Stakeholders 
were encouraged to research the scholarly literature to contribute to the planning process. 
Dr. Rivera formed workgroups comprised of the Academic Foundation whose task it was 
to research the literature and develop ideas for practice on a specific niche component of 
the redesign. The leader also provided a working glossary of new terms for the committee 
as they formed workgroups to examine these areas in more detail. Workgroups examined 
areas such as new diagnostic tools for placement options, new course modality options 
such as compressed, co-requisite and bridge options, and altered math course sequencing 
based on intended program of study (Observation, November 20, 2015).

Interpretation. The process of both internal and external sensemaking took on 
different forms depending on the situation. In this case, the use of research from scholarly 
literature and a proposal were helpful tools to foster both individual and group 
understanding of S.B. 1720. For Dr. Rivera, the level of urgency of ensuring everyone 
was given accurate and timely explanations of the law, was paramount to the eventual
development of the college’s redesign plan. The most striking was the inclusive atmosphere the leader established in leading the redesign project. Never were the terms “I” or “me” used to show leadership. Rather, Dr. Rivera frequently used the pronouns, “we” and “us” to describe the group effort involved in planning the redesign together with her colleagues. She emphasized the participation of the group in her opening comments for a site visit from Florida State University Office of Postsecondary Research. Thus, sensemaking represented a shared experience starting from the individual leader and extending to the group, so that the result rendered a collective understanding of the complex issue (Observation, February 18, 2016).

**Human.** After sensemaking (meaning) was established, it was vital that the leader provided clear communication to the stakeholders involved in the change planning process. In this case, the goal was the development of the college’s developmental education redesign which had to be submitted to Florida Department of Education (FLDOE) by Spring 2014. However, in addition to the programmatic aspect of the change, Dr. Rivera first identified the importance of the human element behind the process. She said, “we must first understand that we are working with people on behalf of people. Thus, it is critical to be genuine and to approach this process with a sense of humanity and dignity because people are not robots” (Interview, February 3, 2016). She mentioned the idea of coming from a “human place” when engaging in discussions, workgroups, and all forms of communications with each other. Dr. Rivera reminded the group that it was never just about big ideas or big data, but human beings. Because these ideas would directly impact the way in which students enter the institution, she stressed the importance of having honest conversations. She also welcomed all manner of
feedback with the realization that some people would be challenged by the process because of the potential harm to student progression if underprepared students were not sufficiently ready for college-level work.

The human place can serve as both a behavioral approach and a communication strategy. When asked about communication strategies/mechanisms Dr. Rivera found useful in planning change, there were several ideas which emanated from recognizing the human element. First, as a behavioral approach, the leader should recognize that he or she is human and be comfortable in his or her own skin. To lead change, the leader should come from a genuine place of knowing his or her strengths, weaknesses, talents, and personality. She said, “it is important to work with who you are to communicate with credibility” (Interview, February 3, 2016). Second, as a strategy, the leader should be willing to entertain and share alternative viewpoints, but find common ideas. With that, the leader should share what she knows and share what others stakeholder groups are also thinking. Third, it was very important for the leader to follow-up and follow-through multiple times continuing to share information between groups by providing draft meeting notes for review and comment. Last, the leader should employ the technique of restating, “what I am hearing you say is…” to verify and clarify ideas given from stakeholders. “This approach helps move people from chaotic space to more order” (Interview, March 3, 2016). Dr. Rivera summarized the importance of coming from a human place.

The best thing I can do is to recognize we are human beings and to talk to you as a human being and to just come at it from a really genuine place. ‘Here is a proposal and here is some research that supports it. We've got different points of
view, but may I have your support to try this idea to pilot together’ (Interview March 3 2016).

**Interpretation.** The concept of the “human place” was highlighted in Dr. Rivera’s communication approach which was like the communication approach of her primary mentor as described earlier in the narrative. Being human (real) was noted as one of the qualities lacking in higher education and society in general. The lack of civility represents a gap in the recognition that people should treat each other respectfully and humanely. When dealing with change, the propensity for emotions to get out of hand is heightened. However, if the leader establishes a common framework for engagement, the group can productively work through challenges of redesign.

**Open dialogue and listening.** Open dialogue was a key element in how Dr. Rivera facilitated communication. She welcomed ideas and openly solicited feedback from the group and with the group for both current and future exploration of ideas. No idea was turned away. The reason for this openness came from the understanding that everyone was learning together and that no one person had all the answers, including the leader. She was always learning to be a better administrator and leader. She noted that as leaders, “we have to approach these issues from a learning standpoint, and that we are learning together with our team of colleagues together” (Interview, March 3, 2016). Open dialogue amongst our colleagues cultivates trust, learning, support, and collaboration with the group. Furthermore, the idea of openness was a natural extension of coming from a human place. To be open to new ideas and viewpoints, a leader must be comfortable in discussing all ideas, even those that are unpopular. Dr. Rivera believed that being open to various viewpoints required the willingness to listen with an open
mind and open heart without judgment or preconceived notions as echoed in a previous TEDX talk she presented on this topic (Interview, April 26, 2016).

Dr. Rivera included listening as the ideal complement to encourage open dialogue and facilitate shared communication. Listening was used 19 times in the original interview played an essential part of her administrative role. Her area of oversight encompassed a large academic area of the college and there was always an opportunity to see things differently or learn anew from listening to other employees including faculty, learning resource professionals, and students. Listening also supported collaboration and promoted communication in a relational way in getting to know co-workers as people while engaging in the change process. Listening was a key part of building relationships which eventually helped to build consensus that spurred follow-through, movement, and idea exchange like a spider web. She stated:

It is through relationships that you realize your colleagues have a life outside of work. When you take the time to know a little bit about who these special people are, you understand, and you get that it creates a different working relationship than just coming into let's get something done. How we get things done is in community with one another. But listening is the tool that encourages this kind of relationship-building (Interview, April 26, 2016).

As educators, listening also facilitates learning and growth for the leader and for others. Dr. Rivera related this idea while conducting a previous student success committee meeting. “While we may feel as if we can see several miles down the road and what the best research-based solution may be, there is always the opportunity to see differently or learn anew from listening to others” (Interview, April 26, 2016).
Listening is a sign of good leadership and should not be underestimated in terms of its importance as a tool of communication or its influence as a component of leadership. Dr. Rivera believed in this idea because so much good work can happen from the middle; each person can contribute to the institution in terms of a space in the place which values and respects individual and collective expertise. She was not fond of terms like “top-down,” or “bottom-up,” which suggest a hierarchical style of communication. She preferred the illustration of a circle, or a web for communicating with others, while using listening as the foundation for understanding:

You need to listen. It's the most under-estimated communication skill that we have. Most of us spend a lot more time talking than we do listening. Most of us want to be heard; want to be listened to. We seek understanding; we seek to be understood. Listening is critical for me to change leadership role (Interview, April 26, 2016).

Lastly, a key strategy Dr. Rivera used in listening was writing. This idea goes back to her preference of the read-write connection to facilitate understanding of a topic and comprehension of alternative viewpoints. Writing notes and following up on the ideas generated from those notes plays a critical role moving an initiative to the next step of planning. She noted:

I usually travel with a notebook, a journal, and take notes when others talk. My notes seem to be a better tool than my memory. This shows people that I mean business and that I'm actively listening to their ideas. Unless there is a confidential conversation, this is my record, or this is my draft, for turning rough
thinking into a tangible product that reflects multiple voices (Interview, April 26, 2016).

**Interpretation.** Dr. Rivera regarded open dialogue and listening as key components to facilitate communication and idea sharing, and she encouraged others to share their viewpoints. Openness provided the mechanism for allowing others to share their ideas without fear of judgment or retribution. Lack of openness diminished relationship-building and closed the channel of information-flow amongst the group. Thus, listening was critical to leading change planning.

**Transparency.** The quality of the transparency emerged as a part of the cluster, and was often referenced in conjunction with the openness and honesty. It was stated early in the narrative and referenced approximately eight times by the participant. The participant discussed transparency more often in the context of communication than as a quality. However, the first time the term transparency was mentioned was in response to a question about the principles to which she ascribed. In short, she referenced this idea in her first, and last, interview. “I hope in my daily work the core principles defining my ideals and values are ones of service, of principle, integrity, honesty, transparency, the genuine love for humanity” (Interview, April 26, 2016).

As a communication approach, the participant linked transparency to facilitating open conversation, and encouraged ongoing collaboration in a group situation. Dr. Rivera stressed that the art of conducting a constructive discussion is facilitating a structured conversation. She compared this activity to having a classroom conversation amongst students whereby the teacher (leader) frequently shared pertinent information as a launching pad for discussion, recognizing the voices in the room - both dominant and
passive - redirected when needed, included all perspectives, even from individuals who were not inclined to speak, and responded appropriately in a manner that all voices were heard with respect and objectivity. As the teacher (leader) guided the process, transparency lay at the heart of fostering honest and civil dialogue. Dr. Rivera noted the importance of being transparent as the facilitator to the group. In leading a past structured conversation, she emphasized, “I am making a commitment to you that I will share that data regularly and transparently and that the conversation won't stop here, but that it will start and it will continue” (Observation, April 15, 2016).

Transparency also encouraged ongoing collaboration. Collaboration was identified as a quality of leadership to be discussed in the next thematic category. However, transparency encourages ongoing collaboration because as the leader demonstrates transparency, the leader gains greater trust with stakeholders to freely share their ideas to begin the process of brainstorming and vetting ideas with each other. The leader sets the tone and models the type of approach she/he hopes to see mirrored by the group. When this happens, she said, “there is communication and a hearing of voices, not just one loud voice in the room, coming together to produce a symphony of colleagues’ input and feedback” (Interview, April 26, 2016).

**Interpretation.** Recognition of transparency seemed to strengthen the clustered association of open and honest communication, stressing the importance of clear and frequent communication. Both qualities also provided the perfect transition to the next theme which elaborated further on the prominent leadership characteristics that emerged with this leader.
Theme 4: Leadership qualities. Collaboration, problem-solving, and consensus-building typified her leadership qualities to lead and manage the planning of change process. Leadership approaches may refer to a specific style or manner of leading, or typify certain leadership characteristics, depending on the context of how it is discussed. In this case, both descriptions are appropriate to the exploratory nature of this research study.

Collaboration. “Leadership is not by coercion; rather, leadership is by invitation” (Interview, October 5, 2015). This quote illustrated the way Dr. Rivera involved the engagement of others in the change process. Whether regarded as a leadership quality or approach, collaboration also formed the basis for associated leadership qualities deemed important to the way Dr. Rivera viewed both the style and process of leading others through challenging problems with uncertain outcomes. Collaboration was used at least ten different times in the participant narrative. It was stated in close association with the ideas of problem-solving and consensus-building, all of which are explained in more detail as sub-themes in this section.

When asked, what collaboration looked like for her, Dr. Rivera gave a step-by-step picture of the process she utilized. First, she referenced the image of a web versus chain or pyramid, whereby the interchange of people and the exchanging of ideas are ongoing, shared, and interconnected. In a group context, she facilitated the presence of a roundtable or circle whereby people gathered together and space defined the nature of exchange. The setup was compared to cooperative learning in that the group interacted with each other in a circle where everyone it is expected to participate in the discussion process (Eddy, 2010a). To foster full participation, the leader facilitated from the middle
of the circle versus the front of the room (Observation, April 15, 2016). Second, people interacted with each other by looking eye to eye, talking, exchanging, debating, disagreeing, and communicating, while trying to reach a place to come together through feedback and consensus, although not necessarily in total agreement. Third, for the leader, the process involved utilizing creativity, finesse, and orchestration behind the scenes to help the group engage in sharing, exchanging, and genuinely working together to solve a problem or resolve an issue through active listening. The goal for the leader was for everyone to participate and create an environment so the circle looked and felt organic: circle = results = democratic process. Last, the context of this collaborative process considered the climate, culture, and mission of the institution built on follow-up, hard work, inclusion, respect, trust, and collegiality amongst the stakeholders. She noted:

I'm not crazy about top down. I really don't like bottom up because it invokes a hierarchical ladder, or ladders, like a chain, and I don't think that image describes the institution. I am hoping we can each contribute in terms of a space in the place that values and respects the individual expertise and the collective expertise where in the end, we feel good about it (Interview, April 26, 2016).

**Interpretation.** This explanation of collaboration strongly drove home the notion of inclusivity; everyone participated in some aspect of the process. With that idea, there was an eager expectation of both individual and group responsibility to contribute to the writing of the developmental plan. The work of change was not borne solely on the back of Dr. Rivera. Rather, it was a collaborative effort as both a shared burden, as well as a shared opportunity, to create positive change out of a challenging situation.
Collaboration means that we did not just have a leader at the helm behind the lectern or sitting at the head of the table, but that we had somebody who was sitting with and among the faculty and staff. I would rather be in the middle of the room, because I think there was so much value in the pictorial image of a circle or web (Interview, April 26, 2016).

Finally, Dr. Rivera used both literal and figurative language by invoking the visual image of the leader operating not as a hierarchical leader who dictates to the group, but rather, the leader facilitating interchange from the middle as an inclusive and collaborative leader seeking input from others as a part of a broader and more important democratic process. Collaboration not only described her leadership approach, but also served as a personal principle for how she lived her everyday life, and how she practiced a way of life.

**Problem-solving.** Problem-solving was closely affiliated with collaboration as an essential strategy for the leader in handling conflict-management. Problem-solving appeared in the narrative 13 times, usually stated in the context of overcoming, addressing or mitigating conflict. Dr. Rivera referred to problem-solving in two distinct ways: as a disposition, and as a process. First, she saw the work of problem-solving as exciting and gave three reasons why it she felt that way. Problem-solving produced a level of excitement because she liked to have a big messy problem and the opportunity to think it through strategically she liked to have the chance to enjoy and work with people, not just data or big ideas, but human beings; and she loved intellectual work, research, writing, and plan development that led to problem-solving. “You've got to enjoy it or you
are not going to be able to thrive at it. If you are uncomfortable with conflict, you will not genuinely enjoy the resolution piece of it” (Interview, June 6, 2016).

Dr. Rivera outlined a specific thought process undertaken when contemplating conflict or working through conflict, equating it to the steps of problem-solving as an activity. Here, she elaborated on a series of pointed questions a leader should consider when assessing her self-comfortability or personal ease of dealing with conflict. The list of questions included: (a) Am I comfortable in the face of emotion? (b) Do I understand that there are certain strategies, psychological and otherwise, for resolving and bringing a group of diverse stakeholders to a reasonable place of agreement? (c) Can I help people learn to disagree agreeably? (d) Do I have the ability to tolerate ambiguity? (e) What do I do to bring some clarity to it? (f) Am I willing to roll my sleeves up and occasionally get a little bit messy in the process? These are questions that the leader should ask and hopefully answer affirmatively (Interview, April 26, 2016).

In a follow-up interview, Dr. Rivera reflected further on this mental exercise and deemed it as very important because, “if you're not as comfortable with meeting or negotiation, if your skin is thin, it would be uncomfortable, or maybe untenable, to have some push-back” (Interview, June 6, 2016).

**Interpretation.** In her deliberation of the leadership quality of problem-solving, Dr. Rivera broached the dual ideas of both the art and practice of the leader mentally preparing herself to lead change. She reflected on both internal aspects of enjoying problem-solving as well as gauging the leader’s comfortability with conflict-management. It is interesting however, to also note the idea of suitability as part of this continuum in that the level of comfortability may signal the leader’s ability to engage in
deeper levels of problem-solving. Considering the risk factors as well as the potential outcomes of success or failure as a leader, a leader weighs what may be gained if the outcome is perceived successful versus what may be lost if the outcome is perceived as unsuccessful. If the risk of fear of an unsuccessful outcome outweighs the leader’s attempt to problem-solve, this may signal the need for the leader to reconsider leadership altogether. She noted this sentiment in another follow up interview: “We sometimes deal with high levels of emotion, frustration, even anger. If this thought overwhelms you, then this kind of work may not be for you, may not be for everyone” (Interview, June 6, 2016).

**Consensus-building.** Consensus-building played yet another complementary function as an aspect of collaboration and represented the third part of the collaboration cluster including problem-solving and conflict management. Consensus-building brings resolution. Although used only five times throughout the narrative, consensus-building’s relative importance because of the close association to collaboration, could not be minimized. As referenced earlier, consensus building represented what Dr. Rivera stated as the art, or science of leadership, whereby the leader’s personality coupled with ability and skill, characterized the leader’s approach and style. The outward presentation of that approach looks different for every leader because everyone is different. It is the essence of what the leader brings to the process.

For Dr. Rivera, consensus-building involved working directly with various stakeholders, dialoguing, and formulating resolution by employing group work, coming back to the table, idea processing, and creating of timeline to get the work done. She expressed excitement and enjoyment of anticipating the building of consensus. She said,
“I love a big messy problem and what may appear to be tabula rasa that's never really a tabula rasa because it's always overlaid with an historical approach of others who've had solutions to similar problems” (Interview, April 26, 2016).

Dr. Rivera’s approach to building consensus was subsequently built on the trust cultivated by the leader earlier in the problem-solving and conflict management phase through relationship-building. “Relationships and trust is really how we got things done in community with one another” (Interview, April 26, 2016). But the aim with consensus-building is to get the job done and finalize the process. She offered some factors to consider when engaging in the process of bringing everyone together to build a plan.

You need to know your stuff and to know your people. Ask yourself these questions: Who are you working with? What are some of their vested interests? Why do they have those vested interests? Where are they coming from? I think another strategy is finding the responses to those questions (Interview, April 26, 2016).

Next, the key aspects of moving from idea exchange and structured discussion rested in the element of conducting follow-up with both individuals and groups. Immediate, responsive follow-up brought clarity, increased shared ownership, and encouraged consensus as faculty contributed to the plan development and writing of the plan. This perspective was particularly important in planning new course options and augmented entry into gateway courses for students affected by the changes of S.B. 1720. The group wrestled with how the decisions recommended by the faculty and staff for the plan would impact students who might test into developmental courses, but instead, opt to enroll directly into college credit courses. Repeated follow-up was done to weigh pros
and cons of each suggestion to obtain acceptance from the faculty and staff groups and sub-groups. She noted the critical nature of follow-up in another subsequent conversation:

Follow up was really important! Follow up and follow through with whichever group of stakeholders with whom you were working, that you're following up, and you’re sharing, ‘Here's what I heard in our meeting, and this is a draft of some of those notes. Am I hearing you right that this is how you think we can fast move? Here's what another group is thinking.’ How do we take all those voices that may result in a little bit of cacophony, a move from the chaotic space to more order? (Interview, March 3, 2016).

This perspective represented the turning point of the change which was often the defining essence of leadership, at least in the leadership experiences of this participant:

Follow-up sets the stage for resolution by: (a) asking for their support, (b) suggesting to try new ideas on a pilot basis, (c) gathering data and determining effectiveness, and (d) reporting back as part of the resolution aspect of the consensus-building process. At that point, the key question to ask the group was, “may I have your support to try this idea?” It takes courage and heart at the same time to work from chaos to consensus, but this is the essence of change. But having a balance of ethics, emotion, and logic strengthens the courage needed to help others adapt to change (Interview, March 3, 2016).

**Interpretation.** The importance of consensus building in a major change initiative remains a primary responsibility of the institution and the success must be owned by the leadership. When it's an executive mandate, it means college leaders are responsible for
it. The highest level of leadership has identified a need and has delivered a directive that the work be done. Yet, collaboration through consensus forms a foundation from which the leader shares the opportunity and responsibility with the vested stakeholders to engage in exciting work. As a result, everyone has an opportunity to grow and serve by the people and for the people.

**Special emphasis: Importance of mentor’s influence on leadership**

When considering the emphasis on service in her childhood, the influence of Dr. Williams on service, together with the mission of community college, it is plausible to understand the recognition of service as the centerpiece of Dr. Rivera’s educational philosophy. It also related to her humanity in leading from a human place. For Dr. Rivera, leading from this orientation also associated the characteristics of care: nurturing, loving, and giving as a servant leader. Like her mentor, she believed a leader should exhibit a healthy balance of ethics, heart, and logic. They are neither male nor female qualities, just human. Her philosophical approach to leading this important work is summarized in this way:

You bring who you are to whatever work you do. It’s important that we define our work by who we are, not that we define ourselves by what we do, or by gender, because that can be an extremely limiting and potentially painful trap in a critical distinction (Interview, June 6, 2016).

To summarize, for Dr. Rivera, the ideas of authenticity, equity, honesty, and service illustrated her overall leader approach regarding the way she engaged with colleagues as well as the people (students) who benefited from the services she oversaw. Serving others by providing care, resources, and the atmosphere by which everyone takes
ownership in part of the process, was her preferred style in contrast to a hierarchical or top-down approach to leading others, and particularly when leading others through a major change initiative. Table 3 provides a visual summary of Dr. Rivera’s primary and supportive themes.

Table 3.

*Dr. Catalina Rivera: Summary of Findings*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Educational Philosophy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Serve students, advocate for community and provide excellent teaching; and research. Leadership is by invitation, not coercion. Keep students at the forefront of the work. Advocate on behalf of human beings. Try to put forth our very best effort, do no harm to students and work for their best interest.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Background Influences</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Childhood experience with disabled classmate evoked interest and empathy for differences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University graduate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Influenced by professor to teach in community colleges</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr. Williams hired her: (a) encouraged her to pursue leadership, (b) cultivated scholarship</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Identified with qualities of being nurturing, giving, serving, listening, comforting, helpful</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Core Values</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Genuine and real</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Served people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People-oriented</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respected people/fair</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Valued honesty and integrity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Valued equity/diversity/inclusion</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Supporting Ideas:

- Encouraged responsibility to serve the people and the underprepared
- Extended collegiality and trust
- Fostered practicality, purpose, optimism, desire to learn, community, availability, sense of humor, reality approach to move forward, smiling
### Sensemaking & Communication
- Researched and partnered/data experts pilot and share data
- Real and open
- Ongoing dialogue
- Listened
- Displayed transparency
**Supporting Ideas:**
- Told stories/poems drawn from literature
- Used synopsis memo PPT to convey message
- Used round tables to facilitate meeting
- Took notes when others talked
- Provided draft plan and requested feedback
- Put ideas on big whiteboard
- Balanced/redirected
- Inserted feedback and kept revising
- Talked clearly
- Provided ongoing updates/training
- Visited other sites and shared findings
- Hosted joint meetings
- Used brochures, white papers, and provided glossary for common understanding

### Leadership Qualities
- Encouraged collaboration, problem-solving, consensus building
**Supporting Ideas:**
- Balanced all voices and views
- Showed courage
- Comfortable with conflict, thick skin
- Came from human place
- Led from the middle
- Led within group
- Knew culture
- Knew her staff
- Comfortable with conflict
- Formed work/group for each aspect of issue
- Visited groups several times
- Asked for support
- Follow-through
- Knew how to facilitate a structured conversation
- Identified internal forces/prepared to encounter external forces
- Utilized grant to advance work
Cross-Case Analysis

**Summary of common themes.** After initial collection of the interview data, the analysis process was commenced by listening to multiple playbacks of the interview recordings. The researcher reviewed all interviews in their entirety to mentally draw patterns, notate key ideas, and code terms to determine emergent themes. Each major theme built upon the foundation of the previous one, similar to instructional scaffolding that is typical of a constructivist approach in educational philosophy. It also referenced as inductive analysis. Patton (2005) described the process of inductive analysis as the discovering of patterns, themes, and categories in the research data, “as opposed to deductive analysis, whereby prescribed categories are pre-determined per an existing framework.” As a result, the researcher identified four major themes that emerged from the data (Table 4):

1. The influence of the leaders’ past experiences and current convictions contextualized the approach to leading change in developmental education redesign.

2. The leaders’ internal values and intrinsic beliefs formed the foundation to conceptualize change in developmental education redesign.

3. The manner of communication and sensemaking of the leaders necessitated the understanding of complex change in developmental education redesign.

4. Leadership qualities and approaches facilitated acceptance, adaptation, and management of leading change in developmental education redesign.
Table 4.

**Frequency of Major Themes**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dr. Anne Hornyak</th>
<th>Dr. Pat Burns</th>
<th>Dr. Catalina Rivera</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Theme 1: Past Experiences/Current Convictions</strong></td>
<td><strong>Theme 1: Past Experiences/Current Convictions</strong></td>
<td><strong>Theme 1: Past Experiences/Current Convictions</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theme 2: Core Values</td>
<td>Theme 2: Core Values</td>
<td>Theme 2: Core Values</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Honesty</td>
<td>Genuine</td>
<td>Service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fairness/equity</td>
<td>People-oriented</td>
<td>People-oriented</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caring</td>
<td>Honesty/straightforwardness</td>
<td>Respect/fairness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Passionate</td>
<td>Honesty/integrity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Excellence</td>
<td>Equity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Theme 3: Communication</strong></td>
<td><strong>Theme 3: Communication</strong></td>
<td><strong>Theme 2: Communication</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reflection: re-write in own words</td>
<td>Reflection: chunk information</td>
<td>Reflection: read out loud and took notes;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open dialogue</td>
<td>Research</td>
<td>Research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ongoing communication</td>
<td>Open dialogue</td>
<td>Being Human (real)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sharing personal story</td>
<td>Open dialogue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Listening</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Transparency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Theme 4: Leadership</strong></td>
<td><strong>Theme 4: Leadership</strong></td>
<td><strong>Theme 4: Leadership</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Genuine (authentic)</td>
<td>Collaboration</td>
<td>Collaboration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Empathy</td>
<td>Team/shared/participatory</td>
<td>Problem-solving</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Practicability</td>
<td>Service</td>
<td>Consensus-building</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adaptability</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collaboration</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To complement the major themes, the data also revealed sub-themes for each major theme relevant to both the individual and collective experiences as expressed through the initial interviews, follow-up interviews, document analysis, and observation of each study participant. Additionally, analysis of the themes aligned with qualitative references by providing the reader with rich and thick descriptions. This process helped the researcher understand the leaders as people through examination of their leadership approaches while leading other people through complex change to accomplish a common
goal. The following sections will delve further into the data while revealing participant voice and thoughts in quotations.

Quality of study. As previously referenced in Lincoln (1995), *Four Criteria for Assessing the Soundness of a Qualitative Study* was used to analyze the results. Criteria included:

(a) **Confirmability** in using member checks with participants in follow-up meetings to review common themes and emerging trends of information gleaned from data reporting and analysis. For accuracy, all participants gave additional insight through a combination of member checks, follow-up interviews, and review of their individual case summary and full-length case narrative. They were also invited to view and give feedback on the conceptual framework.

(b) **Credibility** by ensuring that "the data speak to the findings" (p.59). Interpretations followed each aspect of the findings and offered further insight and analysis of data. The researcher addressed confirmability and credibility by reporting data from initial interviews and several follow-up member checks conducted with each participant. These conversations were designed to give the opportunity for participants to clarify, confirm, or disconfirm the emerging themes as identified by the researcher from the collective interview data of each individual participant in separate and shared meetings. Participants also suggested additional information sources that they deemed relevant to use for the research study.

(c) **Dependability** in providing clear and sufficient documentation of modifications, and unexpected events, in the phenomena being examined as reflected and addressed by development of a research log (Appendix E).
(d) **Transferability** whereby indicating the provision of background data to establish context of study and detailed description of phenomenon in question to allow comparisons to be made. This also refers to external validity in addition to obtaining a greater depth, richness, detail, and understanding of the phenomenon as evidenced in the cross-case analysis.

The cross-case analysis was designed to offer both a comparison of common themes among the participants as well as suggest unique or contrasting themes identified in the interview data. To provide a consistent structure, the cross-case analysis was organized by the three sub-questions supported by the four primary emergent themes (Table 5).

**Table 5.**

*Common Major Themes of Participants*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Theme 1</strong></td>
<td>The influence of a leader’s past experiences contextualizes the approach to leading change in developmental education redesign.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>Educational mantra (philosophy)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sub-theme 1</td>
<td>Influence of family and/or professional mentors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sub-theme 2</td>
<td>Importance of community college mission – open access</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sub-theme 3</td>
<td>Importance of diversity and developmental education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Theme 2</strong></td>
<td>The leader’s internal values and intrinsic beliefs form the foundation to conceptualize change in developmental education redesign.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>Authentic – genuine, human, and real</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sub-theme 1</td>
<td>Honesty is exhibited by transparency.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sub-theme 2</td>
<td>Humility is exhibited by empathy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sub-theme 3</td>
<td>Caring is demonstrated through listening.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Theme 3</strong></td>
<td>The leader’s manner of sensemaking and communication necessitates the understanding of complex change in developmental education redesign.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>Internal sensemaking (for the leader) – read, research, reflect (action)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>External communication (for others) – clear, simple, plausible (messaging)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Theme 4</strong></td>
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With respect to the primary research question, participant data revealed commonality in their philosophical ideas.

**Research Questions**

The primary research question was, *what are the strategies adopted by the select state college administrators leading a major developmental education redesign initiative within a community college?* To further elicit the answer to this question, three sub-questions were designed, and were used as additional research questions for the study.

**Sub-Research Questions**

**Sub-research question 1:** *What influenced the leadership approaches adopted by the select state college administrators in leading the new developmental educational redesign initiative?* Answered through the interviews, it produced both an overarching educational philosophy for each participant as well as a pervasive theme regarding the influence of past experiences of family and mentors that guided each participant’s leadership decision-making processes. The participants also indicated how they viewed their role in the world and the philosophy that they currently espoused as educators. Collectively, each participant highlighted an educational philosophy: (a) education is lifelong learning, (b) education is transformative, and (c) education is service to others. When considering the first theme, participants talked about people and events from the early part of their lives that served as watershed moments. The primary constructs identified for this theme are (1) educational philosophy and (2) life purpose. Theme 1 encompassed three sub-themes: (a) influence of mentors, (b) importance of community college mission and importance of diversity, and (c) importance of developmental education. Toward the end of the interviews, the researcher placed a focus on the
participants’ educational philosophies to culminate the interviews. Placing them at the end gave the interviewees greater opportunity to converse and reflect on the various aspects of leadership, allowing for a more naturalistic way of building a philosophical statement. However, in the case narratives, the educational philosophy section was placed before Theme 1 because ideas generated from the influence of family background and mentors provided a natural progression towards substantiating the educational philosophy. Additionally, placement of education philosophy at the beginning of each case narrative provided a chronological continuity of ideas.

**Educational philosophy.** Regarding educational philosophy, the three participants focused on a specific idea that provided identification of distinguishable qualities among each leader. Dr. Hornyak focused on describing the importance of education as a component of lifelong learning. Dr. Burns emphasized the transformative nature of education on one’s life, while Dr. Rivera underscored the acquisition and practice of education as an act of service.

**Education is lifelong learning.** Dr. Hornyak described her educational philosophy as one based in lifelong learning. She emphasized the importance of encouraging a person to never stop learning and always take advantage of all of opportunities, because one can always learn something to enhance his or her knowledge, skills, and abilities regardless of age or level of education. Learning is key to successful living, and every person has the capacity to learn. Learning leads to a better quality of life and can serve as the determining factor in annual income or the difference between a higher quality of life relative to social welfare or even incarceration (Dewey, 1939). Dr. Hornyak summarized her thoughts about lifelong learning:
I think of myself as a lifelong learner. I got my bachelor’s degree in the 1970’s. I earned my master’s degree in the early 1990’s. Likewise, I earned my doctorate in 2000. So, I would say that I am a poster child for lifelong learning. I hear people say I am too old to do that or too old to start this or change careers (Interview, March 3, 2016).

For Dr. Hornyak, the dual concepts of pursuing lifelong learning and having opportunities to use one’s education went hand in hand. She expressed a sense of possibility and potential of what education can do to enhance or change people’s lives. Her advice to others about the power of lifelong learning was that is nearly always a time when you could jump in and improve your life. She noted, “Lifelong learning is something everyone should consider. If you didn’t start school when you were 18, then there was an opportunity at 30” (Interview, May 3, 2016).

**Education is transformative.** In contrast, Dr. Pat Burns’ career has been situated in community colleges since her undergraduate days as a student. She graduated from an institution not unlike the study site and then earned a teaching degree at a four-year university. Her experience as a community college graduate led her to establish her career as a community college instructor. She noted, “If I could do for other students what had been done for me that would be something fulfilling and rewarding” (Interview, May 3, 2016). Like Dr. Hornyak, Dr. Burns’ leadership ability was quickly noticed early in her professional life resulting in numerous leadership development opportunities through the college, namely support for her doctoral education. Over the next 30 years, Professor Burns attended and led numerous specialty workshops and institutes. She earned national educational certifications as a faculty member to improve student learning and learning
experiences grounded in teaching and learning theory. The professional and leadership development she received shaped her professional career. She stated, “I would not have the career I have now if it were not for my experience at the community college” (Interview, June 16, 2016).

Dr. Burns offered comments that also related to the power of education and learning. She noted that education is transformative with life-changing value. In a sense, she talked about the value of education in inspirational terms, in that education has transformative properties whereby people’s lives are enhanced through life-long learning and transformed into something better. This transformative power of education rings true in her own life and resonates in the way her educational experience impacted her evolution from a child who came from meager beginnings, being raised on a local farm, and who has grown to become a highly-respected academic leader in the national developmental education field.

*Education is service to others.* In comparison, Dr. Catalina Rivera was not originally familiar with community colleges, but quickly grew to love the diverse student body and open access mission of the community college after being first hired as an adjunct professor at a community college and then securing a full-time position at her current institution. Unlike Dr. Hornyak, she was diverted from teaching high school by the influence of a college professor who saw her potential to make a greater teaching difference at the community college level. Her decision to remain came because of her experience teaching a diverse student body, which connected to her graduate studies that placed heavy emphasis on teaching diverse literature. She noted, “after serving in an open-access institution and feeling its mission, you come to understand, believe, and
commit to it” (Interview, March 3, 2016). Dr. Rivera used the phrase, “the people’s college,” in referring to the community college. This phrase goes back to the history of community colleges in that these institutions were designed to educate the masses. In one sense, the phrase often refers to educating first-generation students who might also come from lower socio-economic environments and or who may be academically unprepared. This concept, or ideology, was visibly important to Dr. Rivera as it served as a primary factor that led to her decision to continue a career in community colleges. For her, serving at a community college meant service, and a mission to serve the world in a positive way. As an administrator, she was still respected as faculty. She loved the students, her colleagues, and her work in leading adult education and developmental education at the institution. “These are the services which rest at the heart of the people’s college” (Interview, March 3, 2016).

Theme 1: The influence of a leader’s past family experiences and mentors contextualized the approach to leading change in developmental education redesign. This theme focused on the past experiences that the leaders considered to be major influences in their personal development and leadership orientation as professionals, and can be viewed much like the core of an apple – the center, or driving factor, in the leaders’ success.

Influence of professional mentors on leadership: philosophy and practice. Influence of professional mentors resonated with all participants in a similar way that paid tribute to people who played a critical role in their professional journey. Dr. Hornyak highlighted the influence of her parents and three key professional mentors who encouraged and supported her pursuit of advanced education. Dr. Burns cited her mother
and professional mentors who supported her attainment of professional development and project coordination experience. Dr. Rivera referenced her father’s influence to pursue college teaching, and several professional mentors who encouraged her to pursue college administration to maximize her impact on students.

**Importance of community college mission and diversity.** All participants noted the significance of the community college mission and diversity in how they approached their work. Dr. Hornyak passionately conveyed her sentiments from a policy perspective: “I would hate to see our open-access mission be impacted adversely by the idea that we're going to be funded on performance, and perhaps see us turn away from that open access mission” (Interview, May 3, 2016). Dr. Burns understood the value of the open-access mission because of the benefit she saw in her own life. She noted a specific focus on community colleges. “With our students, we focus on retention and success” (Interview, June 16, 2016). Interview, Dr. Rivera noted that the mission drives the work. “Once you serve in an open-access institution and you feel the mission, then you come to understand and believe in it and commit to it” (Interview, June 6, 2010).

**Importance of developmental education.** While Dr. Hornyak referred to policy implications affecting the redesign of developmental education, Dr. Burns and Dr. Rivera, were charged with focusing on the programmatic implications of the redesign. Dr. Hornyak skillfully demonstrated her extensive ability to dissect the law and explain its components in layman’s terms due to her strong intellect and years of experience in the Florida College System. At her retirement ceremony, several individuals noted her unique ability to simplify policy and make it easily understandable by distilling the most
important bullet points and conveying them in a most compelling manner. One person said, “She is quite honestly the smartest person I know” (Observation, May 23, 2016).

Regarding the programmatic aspect of administering the developmental education redesign, Dr. Burns possessed extensive content knowledge, professional training, teaching experience, and leadership over a national organization. She displayed passion for this work and compassion for the students she served. There is no doubt that this institution was fortunate to have access to her expertise and support. Dr. Rivera was also very skilled in leading the important work of developmental education redesign. Dr. Burns’ lifelong dedication to developmental education and advocacy for her students as an instructor and administrator was essential for the complicated redesign work they were charged to lead at the institution. She understood firsthand how this change could impact these students if not done with much thought and care. Likewise, Dr. Rivera was uniquely talented to lead both developmental education faculty and non-developmental education faculty through the comprehensive process of the redesign process. Dr. Hornyak commented, “She has the personality, organizational skills, and heart to delicately guide them through this process. I am very fortunate to have to Dr. Rivera working on my executive leadership team” (Interview, May 3, 2016). All three participants were keenly aware of the gravity of the task before them as they reflected on how each leader brought complementary skills and expertise to leading her part of the process, given the potential impact on student progress.

**Sub-research question 1.** *What influenced the leadership approaches adopted by the select state college administrators in leading the new developmental educational redesign initiative?* Answered through the interviews, it produced three themes related to
core values each participant held that guided their leadership and decision-making processes.

**Theme 2. The leaders’ qualities formed the foundation to conceptualize change in developmental education redesign.** The primary characteristics identified for this theme include having authenticity or being genuine. They are supported by the following subthemes: (a) honesty is exhibited by transparency, (b) humility is exhibited by empathy, and (c) caring is demonstrated through listening. These characteristics are illustrated throughout each narrative. Taken together, they represent instances most commonly referenced among the participants and were explored in more depth as the most commonly used characteristics in practice.

The major theme of authenticity was alluded to as displaying humanness and realness as a leader. People want to see the leaders’ true personalities without filters and presumptions. In other words, the desire for people to see the leader as a real person played a very important role in the change process. A leader who portrays authenticity invokes trust, respect, and a willingness to support the change. Authenticity was referenced the most times among the combined participant responses.

**Honesty exhibited by transparency.** The sub-themes, or characteristics, of honesty and transparency support authenticity as related qualities to lay the foundation for conceptualizing the change planning process. Before embarking on a planning strategy, honesty must be established between the leader and the faculty and staff involved in the planning process to gain trust, or the process becomes compromised.

Dr. Hornyak established honesty exhibited by transparency through her ability to communicate the truth about the policy even if she fundamentally disagreed with its
intent. She was transparent in acknowledging both the positive and negative policy aspects to the staff by simply being truthful and allowing others to express their true opinions without judgment, albeit constructively, respectfully, and tactfully. Likewise, Dr. Burns established honesty exhibited by transparency by highlighting her role as a current full-time faculty member who actively taught developmental reading while also serving as the National Association Developmental Education president. She related information to developmental education faculty with honesty and understanding because she also taught these classes alongside them as their colleague. Because of her involvement in co-leading the change planning process, she enhanced leader credibility and trust amongst the developmental education faculty. With Dr. Burns serving as one of the planning facilitators for the redesign, faculty were more apt to be open and cooperative because she had their best interest at heart, which was to do the best job to support the students who could be potentially impacted after implementation of the redesign.

Similarly, Dr. Rivera established honesty by exhibiting transparency, being open to feedback, and being available to the faculty and staff whenever they needed to discuss ideas, suggestions, resources, or any part of the planning process. As the key administrator tasked to lead the change planning process, she held regular planning meetings and often said, “I understand your frustration and welcome your help because this is a team effort. We are all in it together, and we are going to help each other to do the best we can under the circumstances” (Observation, April 15, 2016). Her transparent approach allowed her to inspire the faculty and staff to work together, offer productive
suggestions, help conceptualize new programmatic pathways, and pilot alternative instructional models before implementation.

**Humility exhibited by empathy.** The reference to humility was characterized by emanating selflessness versus seeking to put the spotlight on oneself, or in this case, the leader. Exercising humility also encouraged others to trust the motives and decisions of the leader. Empathy helped the leader recognize how other people felt about the change and fostered understanding from the same vantage point as the followers. In this case, these common qualities were evidenced across all three cases, and were demonstrated by their shared focus on the change process as a team endeavor and collaboration with faculty and staff.

When the realization set in that S.B. 1720 was mandatory, Dr. Hornyak reiterated that she understood the frustrations of everyone, but that they would work together to develop the best possible way forward. She never used the language of a dictator in what “they” were going to do. In fact, her humility was exhibited through empathy by being open and honest about the issue throughout the planning process. Her ability to be selfless paved the way to see how other faculty and staff planned for the potential impact of implementing S.B. 1720. She often stated, “I too, dislike this new legislation just as much as you, and I feel your pain” (Observation, November 20, 2105). As a result, Dr. Hornyak addressed faculty and staff concerns and questions, not as a threat to her leadership, but rather as a partner in planning the work together.

In the same vein, Dr. Burns’ humility was exhibited through empathy in that she understood firsthand the faculty point of view because of her dual role of faculty and administrator. She not only understood from the viewpoint of a practicing faculty
member, but she genuinely understood the relational piece, and would often say to her colleagues, “I am in the trenches with you, and truly understand your concerns, because I also share the same concerns as an active classroom instructor” (Observation, April 15, 2016). As a result, her colleagues trusted that in her administrative role, she would have their best interest, and the best interest of the students, at heart.

Similarly, Dr. Rivera demonstrated humility and empathy by using visuals or sharing a short literary piece to evoke a sense of team unity. She would invoke the image of a boat and maintained the idea that, “we are all in the same boat together.” There is no big and little you, but rather, it is all of us together, and I help guide the ship with your help.” As a result, Dr. Rivera positioned herself as more of a facilitative leader in working with the staff rather than directing the staff. In return, Dr. Rivera received trust and commitment from faculty and staff in the change planning process (Observation, April 15, 2016).

**Caring demonstrated by empathic listening.** The use of care theory was ever-present as a common value expressed by all three cases. Nel Noddings (2002) is credited with the development of care theory with respect to educational settings, albeit mainly at the K-12 level. Noddings’ premise started from the position that (a) care is basic in human life (moral attitude) – that all people want to be cared for; (b) caring-about (sympathy) establishes the conditions whereby the cared-for flourish; (c) caring is characterized by receptivity, relatedness, and engrossment; and (d) caring factors in justice as the foundation for ethical decision-making. Demonstration of care has found a place in community college settings as well, particularly in developmental education. Many developmental students may come to higher education underprepared and, thereby,
need extra support in navigating the academic terrain. Moreover, faculty and staff involved in legislatively-mandated developmental education also needed care from the leader to do the work of redesign planning, at times against their better judgement. Empathic listening is the action that promoted the idea that the listener seeks to understand the person who is talking through a variety of techniques such as giving full eye-to-eye contact, listening without disrupting or judgement, asking clarifying questions, showing empathy, using an engaged body language, dealing with the realness inside a person’s heart and head, and focusing on deep-level communication of the soul (Covey, 1992). Together, caring can be demonstrated by employing elements of empathic listening in any situation.

Dr. Hornyak set a caring tone of all change planning conversations by modeling active listening from the very beginning. She utilized the steps of active listening as part of her principles of engagement for every meeting with stakeholders. She modeled active listening for both her executive team and the faculty. Additionally, she made it an expectation in every meeting for everyone to hold each other accountable, including the executive leaders tasked with leading the faculty and staff through the redesign work. She set organizational expectations to engage in respectful and constructive interactions while cultivating a supportive and caring environment versus a cynical and potentially toxic atmosphere (Observation, November 20, 2015).

Dr. Rivera invoked the same principles of engagement and discourse to set expectations as well as cultivate an atmosphere of caring and respect. In doing so, she reiterated the human aspect of the work, reminding the group that this initiative was not just focused on program, but the needs of the people including faculty, staff, and students.
She said, “We are all coming from a human place, so we must treat each other with kindness and care” (Observation, November 20, 2015). This perspective was reminiscent of the people’s college, but with emphasis on the needs of the faculty and staff involved. She also noted the importance of taking care of each other due to the stress they could experience. Establishing a caring atmosphere allowed people to accept the intensity of the redesign constructively, creatively, and thoughtfully, and minimize the strife and divisiveness that could often accompany change planning (Observation, April 5, 2016).

Likewise, Dr. Burns’ approach to caring through active listening came by facilitating meeting activities which encouraged members to explore key questions in small groups to document their feedback, suggestions, and concerns on notecards and giant Post-it note paper. She walked around the room to serve as a resource while making sure the group conversation remained on-task and engaged. Small group ideas were then shared with the larger group. Dr. Burns’ goal was to illicit structured conversations in a constructive manner while facilitating this part of the process. As members of the group each summarized their ideas, she used active listening techniques to ensure the larger group understood the ideas and clarified any discrepancies. An affective outcome was realized in that she wanted each person and the members of each group to feel that their ideas were being heard and that she addressed concerns in an intentional, accurate and meaningful way. Dr. Burns aimed to strengthen member trust and positive participation in the change planning process (Observation, November 20, 2015).

**Sub-research question 2.** *What communication approaches were adopted by the select state college administrators in leading the new developmental education redesign*
initiative? Answered with participant data, it revealed several connected qualities. The following major theme emerged.

**Theme 3. The manner of sensemaking and communication of a leader necessitated the understanding of complex change in developmental education redesign.** Through data analysis, two primary constructs were identified as common and recurring themes that emerged from the data: (a) internal (for the leader) - research and reflection = sensemaking; (b) external (for others) – clear, simple, and plausible = communication.

Both internal and external communication provided the landscape by which the leaders sought internal clarity of the issues to communicate the message to others and to help them understand the full spectrum of the legislation and its requirements. All the leaders referenced the action of reading, researching, and reflecting as a necessary precursor before any external communication can take place. The leader must gain a mastery of the complex issue prior to presenting it to the group. Otherwise, the leader stands to lose credibility from the beginning if he or she fails to explain the information with the confidence of having full grasp of the issue driving the change planning process.

Dr. Hornyak referenced the importance of researching and reflecting to present clear, simple, and plausible information to the faculty and staff. She noted the importance of conducting a mental literature review (researching), re-writing her interpretation of the issue, and learning how other institutions dealt with the same issue, either successfully or unsuccessfully, because most of these topics were not new (reflecting). Writing helped her fully understand and internalize the issue while preparing to explain it to others clearly and accurately. She communicated to the group by inviting guest speakers to the
college from other colleges who had successfully implemented redesign from theory to practice. As a result of doing her homework on the issue, she appeared prepared, confident, ready to lead informed discussions, answer questions from a knowledgeable stance, and help the group maintain focus on the issue rather than complaints (Observation, November 20, 2015).

Dr. Rivera also referred to the necessity of reflecting on the joy of presenting simple and plausible information in this way. She noted how she enjoyed dealing with a big and messy problem, conducting research, and attending state conferences about statewide developmental education redesign efforts hosted by the Florida College System. She did so as a means of researching the issue to build her internal knowledge base. She also read the legislation in full at least three times and created PowerPoint presentations to reflect and document her understanding. Reflecting on the knowledge gained helped build her understanding of the issue and strategize solutions to begin the process of developing a skeletal proposal. She used PowerPoint, diagrams, and illustrations to visually present and communicate a clear picture of the issue to the faculty and staff in large group meetings. Visual presentations encouraged brainstorming other ideas and collaboration. Thus, she could aptly present the information in a logical and sequenced way for others to understand (Observation, November 20, 2015).

Dr. Burns also valued the process of researching and reflecting as a way of presenting simple and plausible information in this manner. She explained the process of researching as essential to understanding the issue from both a micro- and macro-level given her work at the local community college and as president of a national organization. Her research focused on studies conducted by other scholars in
developmental education after implementation of the redesign strategies and the results of student performance (research). Then, she condensed the research studies into smaller chunks and conducted a micro-analysis of these studies (reflecting). Next, she communicated using custom handouts and presented the results together to the larger group of faculty and staff to demonstrate how other institutions addressed the same issues and to show what was possible for her own college (simple). From there, she employed hands-on activities for the group to help them think deeply about the college’s current developmental education program to determine what elements worked, what elements to keep, and what new ideas could be included because of the legislation (plausible). She communicated the issue in a way the group could process and utilize the research from a large complex issue to manageable and workable ideas (Observation, November 20, 2015).

**Sub-research question 3.** *What are key leadership qualities and/or perspectives of select state college administrators leading the planning for legislatively mandated change in developmental education redesign?* The following primary themes emerged from the data in the fourth theme.

**Theme 4. Agile leadership qualities and approaches facilitated the acceptance and management of change in developmental education redesign.**

*Primary theme: Open, collaborative, and non-hierarchical.* Data collected and analyzed from all participant interviews revealed a preference toward the idea of openness and collaboration expressed as a foundational construct of their leadership. Dr. Hornyak noted how openness set the tone for others regarding being heard, feeling understood, accepting the challenge, and exhibiting the willingness to engage in the work of planning change to help others move from a place of unacceptance to acceptance. As
the institution’s chief academic leader, she asserted, “My role is to help everybody to understand that we’re here with ears wide open, we’re listening to them, and that we want them to help them be part of the solution” (Interview, May 26, 2016).

Even in her position, Dr. Hornyak evoked a spirit of collaboration which detracted from the notion of hierarchy and invited partnership from employees down the organizational line. She tried to ensure that everybody involved was recognized for their contributions in open meetings. The-chain-of-command structure approach was abandoned and substituted by an approach in which everyone was asked to contribute as a unit free of organizational walls and political barriers, which can hinder true openness and collaboration (Interview, May 3, 2016).

Dr. Burns promoted openness and collaboration to minimize a hierarchical leadership approach. Openness paved the way for greater trust among the group and provided the foundation from which collaboration was encouraged and cultivated. She also talked about openness as one of her personal strong traits which lent itself well to her ability to build solid professional relationships and to be regarded as a trustworthy leader. “I think that being open to feedback and open to questions from people is something that sometimes leaders forget, but it is important to see” (Interview, March 3, 2016). For Dr. Burns, leadership also represented an expression of humility, a quality noted earlier in the analysis as essential to successful collaboration, and was her trademark leadership approach. Dr. Rivera referenced this quality in Dr. Burns: “She was open to the fact that other people may have better solutions than her own when given the opportunity” (Interview, March 3, 2016). Dr. Burns never saw herself as a lone instigator of change, but viewed the process as team working together toward a common goal.
Dr. Rivera’s leadership approach mirrored strong and frequent references to openness and collaboration. Dr. Rivera highlighted the importance of collaboration early in the planning phase, while minimizing a hierarchical approach as a precursor to the change in general: “To effectively administer any academic or instructional program, we need democratic, collegial collaboration. There's so much good work that happens in the middle. We don't need hierarchical directives” (Interview, March 3, 2016). She stressed that collaboration and openness operated together on a continuum. She invoked literary references from poetry in describing her vision of openness in this manner: “There is always something beautiful blooming. It was just a matter of opening our eyes and seeing it. To do that, we have to get out of our own space” (Interview, March 3, 2016). Dr. Rivera also indicated openness to risk-taking and embracing the possibility of making mistakes, particularly in the absence of right or wrong strategies. In so doing, the leader must reject fear and embarrassment over mistake-making and for the sake of life-long learning (Observation, Dr. Rivera, TEDX Presentation, April 15, 2016).

Lastly, the writing of the college’s Developmental Education Redesign plan was the most poignant example of college-wide collaboration as evidenced by the many acknowledgements at the beginning of the report. Dr. Burns spared no one in recognizing people and their specific contributions to the development of the 70-page plan submitted to Florida Department of Education. Dr. Burns spoke of Dr. Rivera, “In her selfless way, this was truly a massive team effort led by Dr. Rivera” Interview, March 3, 2016).

**Subtheme 1: Adaptive approaches are actualized through participatory and collaborative leadership.** In addition to her home institution, faculty and staff of community colleges throughout Florida looked to Dr. Hornyak for leadership and
guidance about the statewide mandate of developmental education redesign. Much was at stake because of the number of students who would be potentially impacted by the programmatic changes post S.B. 1720. Her leadership approach, therefore, set the tone and modeled the way other college leaders would approach redesign planning. As an institutional leader, Dr. Hornyak displayed adaptive and agile qualities in her interactions with Dr. Rivera and Dr. Burns, as well as faculty, promoting the idea that every idea was on the table for consideration in the planning process. After obtaining an accurate grasp of the legislation, she gave great latitude to her two key leaders because of their collective expertise. Instead of micromanaging the project, she offered advice and feedback while giving them the freedom to use their knowledge, expertise, and resources to guide the process and to serve as the face of the redesign for the college. This approach allowed the key leaders to use creative thinking strategies for brainstorming and to solicit assistance beyond college-wide hierarchical lines. Dr. Hornyak organized regional mini-conferences that allowed for broad discussion, idea formation, and workgroup planning to facilitate collaboration with leaders across different institutions (Observation, November 6, 2016).

Dr. Burns optimized her platform and encouraged members to share information regarding redesign efforts across the country. She provided opportunities for local colleagues to present at the annual conference, participate in regional roundtable discussions, and share research with faculty and staff within her home institution. She was agile enough to toggle between local, state, and national conversations, inviting feedback from colleagues from all levels of the continuum because of her belief that no idea is a bad idea. People felt comfortable sharing their ideas in several publications, including the college’s Developmental Education Redesign Plan, a white paper
conference presentation, and a mini-conference featuring instructional strategies and best practices from her local college faculty colleagues. It was an impressive amalgamation of people in her sphere of influence whom she brought together. All these events substantiated what Dr. Hornyak referred to as, “flow-through,” a spirit of openness, flexibility, and collaboration (Interview, February 8, 2016).

Lastly, Dr. Rivera was observed as a person through whom humility and openness inspired collaboration. Her kindness and respect for each person created an atmosphere of cooperation. She understood the power of food, and how offering food can serve as a symbol of openness to minimize barriers and cultivate a welcoming environment among the group. Her effective use of eye-to-eye contact communicated that not only was she open to hearing people share ideas, she also listened actively to their views with a purposeful concern and caring. She positioned herself as a supportive resource to every discussion group by offering assistance, additional information, and timely clarification of the redesign process. Dr. Rivera helped the faculty and staff operate from a point of collaboration and productivity rather than from a point of territorialism and mere survival (Observation, November 6, 2016).

**Subtheme 2: Service-oriented and strategic approaches promote consensus-building and problem-solving.** The role of each leader in addressing service-oriented and strategic approaches is an important consideration. Dr. Hornyak was ultimately responsible for the entire redesign as the college’s chief academic leader. Although she was accessible to faculty and staff, most of her planning conversations transpired with Dr. Burns and Dr. Rivera in strategy meetings. Dr. Hornyak regarded her ability to serve
as a resource to her executive leaders as well as the faculty and staff (Interview, May 26, 2016).

Both Dr. Burns and Dr. Rivera noted how Dr. Hornyak provided them expert guidance, mentorship, knowledge as a high-level leader, and the benefit of her vast professional experience in leading similar change initiatives at both the campus and state levels. Developing executive leaders represented a way of serving the profession. Through teaching graduate students and mentoring both emerging administrators and executive leaders, she remained in high demand for teaching leadership development with numerous organizations. (Joint Interview, Dr. Burns and Dr. Rivera, March 3, 2016).

As noted at her retirement ceremony, Dr. Hornyak possessed the strong ability to process large chunks of legislation and distill it into relevant and understandable talking points to make a compelling argument to lawmakers when advocating for college students in Florida. She was successful in building consensus utilizing this strategic approach through the statewide leadership to provide solutions to policies mandated by the state legislature. Dr. Hornyak provided strategic leadership on behalf of the Florida College System. Overall, her active involvement in addressing legislative issues was her way of serving the community colleges in Florida in an effective manner (Observation, October 23, 2015).

Dr. Burns also exhibited servant leadership and spoke of work in the language of service. The word “service” appeared six times and was reiterated in subsequent member checks. She mentioned serving students as a reading professor, serving colleagues through hosting professional development, leading special initiatives, and serving the
education profession through her many leadership roles in professional organizations. She approached her roles as service to others rather than just an occupation. Dr. Burns viewed service as part her life’s purpose. “If I tell you I'm going to help you, I'm going to do the best I can to help you” (Interview, April 26, 2016). An attitude of service led to her collaborative approach in helping groups reach consensus to problem-solve in a strategic way. She noted:

> I'm constantly walking in and intermingling with them all the time. That's the way I am with people, and I think that's important when it comes to collaboration because I aim to build consensus through collaboration. Then, you come up with a product that is just phenomenal because you could have never done that on your own (Interview, June 16, 2016).

Dr. Rivera expressed her approach to leadership as a way of service, and that service characterized her natural and preferred approach to leading others. Out of the three participants, the quality of service or servant leadership was referenced most in her interviews. Like Dr. Burns, she, too, spoke the language of service, which emanated throughout her interview narratives and other documents suggested by the participants.

Dr. Rivera stressed service as an underlying belief when providing educational opportunities and supporting colleagues. She noted, “Whether you are serving directly in the classroom as a faculty member or serving in the administrative capacity as we do, I think the primary factor is that you really feel as if you are making a real difference” (Interview, June 6, 2016).

Dr. Rivera reiterated the importance of coming from a human and honest place when leading colleagues through a major change initiative, and while building consensus.
She believed that people appreciate honesty. When the leader substantiates and uses ideas of the others, consensus is strengthened. Dr. Rivera commented on how she strategized the way to present an amalgamation of ideas and how she communicated to the group:

Here is our attempt to be inclusive of everyone’s ideas. I want to share some research with you that supports it. Here is what we see in the research. Here is another institution who has applied this approach, and they are similar to us. In fact, they are considered to be our benchmark, or sister institution. We've got different points of view, but I am going to ask, if I may, for your support that maybe we approach it on a pilot basis and that we gather data. And although we still have a complicated issue to unravel, that type of approach makes the process more manageable and easier to solve the problems or challenges at hand (Interview, June 6, 2016).

Dr. Rivera’s approach to consensus from a spirit of consideration and collaboration paved the way for consensus to occur.

In conclusion, the common qualities and leadership characteristics identified in this narrative align with the interviews, member checks, and observations of all three leaders in the study. They worked in tandem as a core leadership group as well as operating in their respective roles in the redesign planning on the local, state, and national levels. Regardless of the phase of change, the data consistently revealed these common themes across all cases and settings.

**Unique Characteristics**

In addition to common characteristics, the exploration of unique characteristics was also considered and identified as the participants represented distinguishable points
of view. In short, they were not a monolith. Rather, they were people who brought unique perspectives about how they approached leadership, and specifically, leading change. For each participant, five unique qualities were identified through observation and interviews conducted by the researcher. Unique characteristics were also mentioned during follow-up interviews by participants in responding to a question about the qualities they admire most about each other. For consistency, these unique characteristics were divided into the same five categories as noted in the theme charts. They included background experiences, gender, values, communication, and leadership qualities (Table 6).

Table 6.

Unique Characteristics Identified by Participant Member Checks

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key Characteristic</th>
<th>Participant 1</th>
<th>Participant 2</th>
<th>Participant 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Background Experience</td>
<td>Seasoned professional – most experienced</td>
<td>Represented embodiment of her students</td>
<td>Profoundly influenced and inspired by literature</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>Never considered gender implications for leadership</td>
<td>Focused on excellence more so than gender</td>
<td>Portrayed leadership characteristics described as feminine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Values</td>
<td>Practical (pragmatic) – focused on facts</td>
<td>Knowledgeable about issues</td>
<td>Critical thinking and organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication</td>
<td>Shared human interest stories to illustrate a point</td>
<td>Shared her personal story</td>
<td>Utilized literature to evoke visual example of an issue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership Quality</td>
<td>Analytical and adaptive thinking</td>
<td>Passionate and outspoken – subjectivity</td>
<td>Maintained balance and neutrality - objectivity</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Background experiences: Background experiences are comprised of events, interactions, and other distinguishing factors that contributed the leaders’ worldview and leadership approaches. Dr. Hornyak’s unique background experiences centered on her extensive experience as a seasoned educator, particularly in the state of Florida. With a career spanning the longest and deepest of all three participants, her professional experience in education covered K-12 and college-level instruction, in addition to serving in all levels of community college administration. She worked at both the institution
level, and the state level, where she oversaw implementation of state policy. Because of her longstanding state-level experience and her position as the chief academic officer on campus, she offered her assistance as mentor to the other participants and other emerging professionals. She was already an established faculty member teaching in a masters-level and doctoral leadership program. Providing mentorship in this setting was a natural fit.

She also served as a speaker for higher education leadership development programs and institutes such as the University of Florida, Association of Florida Colleges, and Chancellor’s Leadership Institute offered through the Florida College System. Having led many change initiatives as a campus administrator and state-level administrator, Dr. Hornyak’s experience and expertise in implementing policy and leading major initiatives represented great support to Dr. Burns and Dr. Rivera.

Dr. Burns’ unique background experience focused on her assertion that she represented the embodiment of her students’ educational experience because she also came from a similar background as her students. Thus, she knew, understood, and related first-hand with many of the socio-economic and family struggles endured by her students. This perspective provided Dr. Burns the impetus for teaching developmental reading, teaching at a community college, and becoming involved in leading special initiatives which supported the success of underrepresented students. It was the key reason she often told her students and colleagues, “I am the students I teach” (Interview, June 16, 2016).

Dr. Rivera’s unique quality centered on the profound influence and impact of literature in her professional life. Her love of literature was first sparked by two key high-school teachers whose inspiration encouraged her to major in literature as an undergraduate student. She taught literature and developmental education as a college
professor. As an administrator, she continued her commitment to classroom teaching; however, she also infused references to literature during speaking engagements, report writing, and daily conversations with colleagues. It was a part of her identity to naturally relate to other people.

**Gender:** The category of gender represents the way in which gender influences one’s approach to leadership, and/or impacts the perception of the leaders’ ability. In this case, participants responded to a question asking about their opinion of being a female administrative leader: “As an accomplished female administrator, do you perceive advantages to your leadership with regard to communicating change to the organization?” (see Appendix D). Each leader had starkly different responses. Since all three leaders are females, it was interesting that this question yielded more contrasting characteristics than common characteristics.

Dr. Hornyak revealed a seemingly neutral response in her initial interview and member checks; she stated that she never actually considered her gender as either a help or hindrance to her leadership trajectory. It was not something about which she needed to be concerned because other leaders, although all male administrators, noticed her leadership acumen and ability, and offered to support her advancement to higher levels. With respect to her colleagues, she was rarely referred to as a female administrator. Rather, she was known more for her intellect. She did not recall being subjected to a different standard as a female leader, nor did she consider her leadership qualities as particularly male-leaning nor female-leaning: She never thought of myself as a female administrator. Dr. Hornyak believed there was no difference: “I’ve thought of myself as
an administrator, and I've been very lucky, I think, because I haven't witnessed a lot of discrimination in moving forward” (Interview, September 30, 2015).

Dr. Burns’ approach articulated a slightly different perspective about gender; she primarily focused on achieving excellence rather than exploring the influence of gender in her leadership journey. This view was somewhat like Dr. Hornyak, yet with a more gender-neutral slant. Dr. Burns spoke about the importance of leadership ability to complete work that needed to be accomplished on behalf of students, regardless of their background, including gender: “The advantage of having me is that I'm willing, I'm able, and I've got the training and ability that has nothing to do with gender” (Interview, October 1, 2015). However, she indicated a dislike in dealing with the politics of education. She said politics sometimes causes her stress, and she is not particularly good at it but will engage in politics when needed. However, she considered Dr. Hornyak to be very good at handling this aspect of leadership – dealing with boards, elected officials, and the media. Interestingly, Dr. Burns also noted role reversal and the progress of women joining executive ranks over the past few decades, such as the selection of female college presidents and other college executives. She noted a study conducted by one of her doctoral colleagues, who completed her dissertation on the reversal of roles between husbands of female community college presidents versus the role of wives of male community college presidents (Leggett, 2011). Clearly, women’s leadership was a topic of note for Dr. Burns in talking about other female leaders. She saw herself as an accomplished and capable leader. However, when referring to leadership in the context of gender, she noted what she disliked, which seemed to indirectly reference gender, such as her dislike of institutional politics, policy, and deal-making. These topics are traditionally
associated with male leadership (Rosenthal, 1998). This trend gradually changed in the 2000’s with increased numbers of executive women taking major leadership roles in higher education, although barriers still exist (Dunn, Gerlach, & Hyle, 2014).

Moreover, Dr. Rivera was referenced by both Dr. Burns and Dr. Hornyak as exhibiting characteristics considered to be closer to perceived feminine leadership characteristics. In separate follow-up interviews, Dr. Hornyak commented on Dr. Rivera’s ability to connect with people by demonstrating genuine interest, concern, and empathy for both students and faculty.

I was so lucky to have Dr. Rivera who had just the personality to be able to lead that change and to talk with faculty. She is so genuine that I think it would be hard for people to say that she approaches anything otherwise” (Interview, September 30, 2015).

Dr. Burns described Dr. Rivera as nurturing almost in a motherly way, yet still maintaining professional demeanor to do the hard work needed in leading change (Interview, March 3, 2016). Dr. Rivera started every meeting touching base with nearly every person who came in the room and offered a welcome gift of candy or some other sentiment to connect with attendees and set a welcoming tone to the meetings. She engaged people in such a way that they were first acknowledged as people and respected for their professional contributions. Her voice also gave soothing reassurance that, although there was a messy problem to solve, they felt she would lead the group to do its very best work in support of the students despite the challenge of planning for the change to come. It is similar to a previous statement made by Dr. Rivera in the context of the change, “we as leaders, faculty, and staff must be mindful to do no harm to students”
Therefore, the exploration of female gender characteristics among the participants seemed to cover all points of the continuum, from low gender with Dr. Hornyak, to gender-neutral with Dr. Burns, to high gender with Dr. Rivera.

**Values:** Values refer to the regard that something is held to deserve; the importance, worth, or usefulness of something mediated by personal, familial, social, spiritual, and cultural factors (Kohlberg, 1981). Distinguishable key values among the participants are the characteristics which aligned with their respective roles in leading redesign.

As the chief academic leader, Dr. Hornyak had to ensure that her home institution and surrounding colleges made progress toward constructing developmental education plans as required by the state’s Department of Education to comply with the legislative mandate.

As a leader, she valued pragmatism and her ability to focus on the facts to keep the process moving in a progressive and forward direction. Although she recognized it, she was rarely influenced by emotion, but took great stock in dealing with the intricacies of the issue and helping others focus on facts, research, and evidenced-based information as a means of developing practical solutions. She noted the frequent analogy she used to help others manage complexity. Here, Dr. Hornyak specifically related her glass analogy in addressing S.B. 1720:

The State of Florida knew that educators don't think it was a good move, but it is what it is. This is now law, and so you can look at a glass as half empty or look at a glass as half full. But I prefer the analogy of the person who is asked is the glass half full or half empty, and picks it up, drinks it, and said it is neither to me. I’m a
problem-solver, okay? It’s not half empty, and it’s not half full. It’s just something we must deal with (Interview, May 3, 2016).

Although she focused on facts, she also understood the importance of how information was communicated to others, especially where the potential for opposition was high:

What I also learned from my mentor years ago was not only that you need to know your facts and you need to be at the top of your game, but how to treat people, and how to interact, and how to be genuine (Interview, May 3, 2016).

Moreover, Dr. Burns exhibited a distinguishable and advanced knowledge of developmental education as a subject expert. She was also apprised about how the wave of developmental education redesign was initiated because of her close affiliation with a person considered to be the most highly-respected scholar in developmental education. Additionally, she published with other long-standing leaders and established research practitioners in the field. She also brought knowledge as a respected developmental reading instructor, having completed her doctoral dissertation research on developmental math and having co-led the development the college’s student assistance center. This initiative focused specifically on improving student success in development education. Likewise, her involvement with the leadership positioned her to become elected as a national officer just prior to the passing of S.B. 1720. Therefore, her knowledge and position placed her squarely into the public spotlight as a leading authority and spokesperson on developmental education redesign across the national and educational landscape. Dr. Hornyak noted referred to Dr. Burns’ involvement developmental education in this way:
We were very fortunate at that time to have Dr. Burns while doing research for her dissertation on developmental education and having those connections. Awesome, awesome resource! (Interview, September 30, 2015).

Dr. Rivera exhibited organizational skill through the way she pulled together the numerous moving pieces of leading this very complex change initiative. Dr. Hornyak noted Dr. Rivera’s excellent ability to organize in this way. She stated:

I'm so lucky that I've had very talented people working with me like Dr. Rivera, who took a piece of complicated legislation and work tirelessly to help operationalize it in a way that had positive benefits (Interview, September 30, 2015).

Dr. Burns also noted Dr. Rivera’s organizational skill in developing the college’s Developmental Education Plan. Dr. Burns referenced Dr. Rivera in this manner: “My contribution was secondary, really. I mean, Dr. Rivera was the mastermind of that plan, and many other people who contributed” (Interview, October 1, 2015). Together, Dr. Hornyak, Dr. Burns, and Dr. Rivera brainstormed together as the core leadership team, bringing their unique characteristics of pragmatism, content knowledge, and organizational skill to the overall planning process. Dr. Hornyak noted, “We worked very well together as a leadership team which helped us overcome many potential pitfalls and barriers to the change planning process” (Interview, May 3, 2016).

**Communication:** Communication of change was the way participants brought to bear three distinguishable communication approaches in delivering targeted messages throughout the planning phase. The messages served as a means of drawing people into the process in preparing for them to continue moving from the three phases of transition
as noted by William Bridges: (a) endings-letting go of previous practices; (b) neutral zone–state of limbo and heightened anxiety of the unknown; (c) new beginnings-focus on new goals, behaviors to psychologically prepare to move ahead (Burke, 2011). Stories and symbols can help frame and communicate a message and draw attention to specific versions of a campus story they are creating (Bohman & Deal, 2008). Dr. Hornyak, Dr. Burns, and Dr. Rivera all utilized the tool of storytelling to convey critical and strategic messaging throughout the planning period. However, each leader distinguished her storytelling method by the types of stories she chose to utilize. Dr. Hornyak preferred to use human interest stories that had an underlying theme, or message, for others to glean a specific idea, principle, or strategy that could be used in planning. Because of her long career in higher education, she could easily draw from her own treasure trove of experiences in leading major change initiatives as a former campus administrator and state-level education administrator. She would use specific scenarios that fit the current phase of change and then highlight the outcomes and results of those initiatives. Doing so helped remove the mystery around the impending change because it was done previously. It also gave others hope for what could be possible, and made them positive about the change initiative (Observation, November 20, 2015). The focus was on how students could be supported differently, or even better than before, rather than only focusing on how the institution would comply with the state law. The stories she shared also put a human face on the issue by highlighting the human implications versus solely concentrating on the policy implications.

Dr. Burns also used storytelling to convey her message. However, she often utilized her own personal story to drive home messages in a compelling way. Her life
story of struggle connected to the community college mission and subsequent success. Furthermore, the use of her personal story exemplified the critical nature of why careful and thoughtful planning were paramount to the success of students who would be positively or negatively impacted by the redesign. Lastly, her personal stories helped to keep planning meetings on topic, and on track, and reminded everyone of the reason for which they chose to teach in a community college at the forefront of discussions. Regardless of the legislation, students should remain the primary focus. Dr. Burns noted the transformative power of telling personal stories in the excerpt below:

I think that I am not one for saying that telling your story always works, but I think that when people know your story, when you do tell it, just like I just told you, they understand it a little better. I think that stories are good things, and that is why I encourage us to tell our students stories. Our students’ lives are turned around by what we do for them (Interview, October 1, 2015).

Dr. Rivera also utilized stories but drew from her rich knowledge of literature and poetry to convey important and timely communication during the change planning process. What was even more distinguishable was her use of literature in meetings to set the tone for participation. She also used stories in formal reports, white papers, conference presentations, and professional development workshops. An example of a symbol was the “elephant in the room;” She used this symbol to represent what the group was probably thinking about, but remained silent. She also used this symbol to gently begin the conversation in early planning stages, and encouraged talking about fears and concerns that needed to be aired. In her address to a developmental education conference, Dr. Burns illustrated a Superheroes theme. She used the theme as a metaphor to
emphasize the power that each individual person has when working with others to solve problems. At the close of the presentation, she evoked a powerful symbol by including the words of Ted Kennedy in delivering the eulogy of his brother Robert. “Some men see things as they are and say why? I dream of things that never were and say why not? Let us as 21st century developmental educators dream of the things that have never been, and ask ourselves why not, and how can we?” (Observation, April 15, 2016).

The final example of Dr. Rivera’s use of stories was highlighted in the Developmental Education Plan. Here, she used elements of the poem, *The Waking*, written by American poet Theodore Roethke, to illustrate the dawning of new day in developmental education. The following excerpt demonstrated the power of the poem’s meaning and the symbol it evokes to the reader as an introduction to the plan.

“I learn by going where I have to go” as he awakens to a new day - a day filled with both potentialities and uncertainties that he learns to embrace equally…. with the passage of Senate Bill 1720. Like the speaker in “The Waking,” the students, faculty, and staff find themselves awakening to a new day, one in which they must learn to embrace both the challenges and the opportunities inherent in reforming developmental education (Developmental Education Plan, 2014).

She used poetry to end meetings, recapping and confirming the hard work of the group. Poetry also served as a form of inspiration in preparation for continued work that lay ahead. Thus, the leaders’ preference affected the ways in which they framed and connected new information or reinforced existing information. Communications styles and leadership approaches were closely linked (Eddy, 2010a).
Leadership qualities: Leadership qualities represented the traits and abilities which characterized the way each of the leaders approached the process of leading change in her own way. Unique qualities were identified through interviews and observations that distinguished each participant.

Dr. Hornyak not only brought a depth of experience to the redesign planning, but also brought a high degree of analytical and adaptive thinking to the planning and coordination of the core group. This specific aspect of her leadership acumen was noted throughout the individual interviews and special events in which she was involved. It was also highlighted in her recollection of how the dean, who first hired her at the community college, recognized her strong leadership acumen just three months into her higher education job. She referenced his observation: “I've been watching your work and looking at your work. He said, ‘I think you could do my job, but you only have a bachelor’s degree” (Interview, October 1, 2015). It seemed to her that he was referring to her intellectual ability. Dr. Hornyak recalled it was in that conversation she was encouraged to pursue graduate education and was promised the support of the institution to help her do so. This trend continued until she earned her doctorate, which eventually led to her promotion as at the college.

Dr. Burns demonstrated analytical thinking in the way she studied S.B. 1720, and provided a detailed synopsis and expert interpretation for others to easily understand. Her research strategy was outlined in the first interview – reading the legislation, searching for similar legislation, providing talking points, finding practice models, and organizing mini-conferences to provide deeper understanding of the topic. However, Dr. Burns’ ability to make adaptive connections was also noted in this manner:
Part of my role consisted of going back and proofreading and saying, “Well, I think we can try this, or how about …” Or she’d bring a model to me, and I'd say, “Okay, but maybe we can shift it, and we can do this and get some input here and how about that” (Interview, October 1, 2015).

Dr. Burns’ distinguishing trait was exemplified in her passionate and outspoken manner of expression. She noted early in the study, “I open my mouth and say what I think” (Interview, October 1, 2015). She did not hold back her thoughts, particularly if she perceived that students might be negatively impacted by policy decisions. The researcher also observed Dr. Burns’ passionate advocacy of students in a faculty council meeting where she emphatically talked to a group of developmental education faculty and staff after a site visit from FSU researchers who conducted follow up interviews after the implementation of S.B. 1720. She lamented:

Why can’t these legislators get it through their heads that our students are non-traditional students? That is the mission of the community college and these students attend our college for a reason! Why do these policymakers continue trying to lump all students in one big homogenous category? If they are not careful, the legislature will end up doing more harm than good (Interview, October 1, 2015).

Lastly, Dr. Rivera exhibited the quality of maintaining balance and neutrality throughout the planning process. As she was charged to facilitate the conversations with faculty, Dr. Rivera brought an extraordinary sense of balance by avoiding the temptation of getting too emotionally tied to the issue (Observation, April 15, 2016). By maintaining a neutral stance, she could listen to all sides of the topic, maintain a calm atmosphere
during the meetings, and encourage collaboration and consensus-building among the
group, even in the absence of total agreement. This approach represented the literary
concepts to which Dr. Rivera referred as the balance of pathos (emotion), logos (logic),
and ethos (ethics) (Interview, June 16, 2016).

In summary, the recognition of the common and unique qualities paints a more
complete picture of the study participants in terms of background, gender, values,
communication, and leadership qualities they each brought to the change planning
process (redesign). Organized by the major themes, these characteristics exhibited how
each leader complemented the other through the demonstration of similar, unique, and
perceived dissimilar qualities, all of which were needed for facilitating change leadership
in holistic way (Eddy, 2010b).

**Conceptual Framework**

The purpose of this study was to explore the personal perspectives of select
community college administrators regarding the purpose, values, and beliefs they
inherently espouse about leadership, developmental education, and academic success.
The second goal of the study was to examine the way select state college administrators
lead change through communication strategies from the leader to the stakeholders. The
third goal of the study was to identify professional leadership approaches and describe
related management strategies of select state college administrators charged with leading
the major redesign of a developmental education program at a large community college
in Florida.

To facilitate the coding process by participant for the structured interviews, a case
and theme-based framework was used to organize the key ideas by participant and
emerging themes and patterns, given the nature of the comparative case study (Smith & Firth, 2011). Categories were labeled with codes (key words) to align with related themes (Marshall & Rossman, 2011). Advantages of this framework allowed the researcher to organize and reduce the data into meaningful chunks of information. Multiple readings of the interview narratives and MS Word counts from the interviews were employed to aid in creating word clusters, associations, and categories to connect theories and develop interpretation of the data (Creswell, 2012). Out of the analysis came the formation and identification of four primary emerging themes (Patton, 2005). The four main themes included (a) the influence of a leaders’ past experiences of parents and mentors contextualized the approach to leading change in developmental education redesign, (b) the leaders’ internal values and intrinsic beliefs formed the foundation to conceptualize change in developmental education redesign, (c) the manner of communication and sensemaking of leaders necessitated the understanding of complex change in developmental education redesign, and (d) leadership qualities and approaches facilitated acceptance, adaptation, and management of leading change in developmental education redesign (Table 5).

**Hybrid Authentic-Adaptive-Agile Leadership model.** Based on the analyses of participants’ data and synthesis of relevant literature reviewed for the study, the researcher conceptualized a hybrid framework “Hybrid Authentic-Adaptive-Agile Leadership Model” that represents confirmation of what has been previously understood about leadership approaches, communication strategies, and change processes.

The hybrid conceptual framework was developed based on emerging data inclusive of interviews, observations, selected artifacts, and documents in the public
domain or suggested through participant recommendations (Figure 1). The researcher refrained from approaching the study with a preformatted conceptual framework, providing safeguard for minimizing bias. Rather, the data spoke to the findings and constructed a hybrid conceptual framework based on the subsequent analysis. Therefore, the hybrid framework was developed from relevant parts of other established models, yet customized to the specific findings of the study (Patton, 2005).

Hybrid Authentic-Adaptive-Agile Leadership Model

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Authentic Leadership Model</th>
<th>Self-Awareness</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Internalized Moral Perspective</strong></td>
<td>Reflecting on one's core values, identity, motives and emotions; trusting your own feelings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-regulatory process using internal moral standards to guide behavior</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Relational Transparency</strong></td>
<td>Ability to analyze information objectively and explore other opinions before making a decision</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being genuine, open, and honest in presenting one's true self to others</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Adaptive Reflection &amp; Communication</th>
<th>Agile Leadership Approaches &amp; Competencies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Adaptive Change Process</strong>b</td>
<td><strong>Collaboration</strong>d</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Determine whether technical change or adaptive change is needed</td>
<td>Cultivate team, share information, encourage ideas, and facilitate brainstorming</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Iterative Decision-Making Modelc</th>
<th><strong>Multidimensional Leadership</strong>e</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Observe, interpret, and intervene (reflection-sensemaking-action)</td>
<td>Leadership schema, gender, communication, sensemaking, and framing</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>AAC&amp;U Competencies</strong>f</th>
<th><strong>AACC Leadership Competencies</strong>g</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Organizational strategy, collaboration, communication, community college advocacy, and resource management</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
I. **Authentic Leadership** – Developed by Walumbwa, Avolio, Gardner & Peterson (2008), the original authentic leadership model was comprised of four components to include the following: self-awareness, internalized moral perspective, balanced processing, and relational transparency. While the hybrid model entailed three major components, each component was aligned with the four major themes of the study.

**Themes 1 and 2** encompassed self-awareness (core values), internalized moral perspective (influence of family background on formation of worldview and educational philosophy), authentic conviction (influence of mentors on formation of leader identity and leadership development), relational transparency (being genuine, open and honest), and balanced processing (ability to explore other points of view). Consideration of how experiences formed the foundation of the leaders’ worldview was noted. The following two sections were added because of the study findings and cross-case analysis.

II. **Adaptive Reflection & Communication – Theme 3** (Heifetz et al., 2009) included determining technical or adaptive change, iterative decision-making process (sense-making for self and others) and balanced processing (open communication).

III. **Agile Leadership Approaches and Competencies – Theme 4** (Chrislip & Larson, 1994; Eddy, 2010a; AACC, 2013) included collaborative, multidimensional, and AACC competencies for community college leaders. Together, sections I, II and III formed the Hybrid Authentic-Adaptive-Agile Leadership Model (Figure 1).

To demonstrate confirmation of participants’ feedback to pre-existing leadership conceptualizations, the researcher provides Figure 1 as an illustration of a hybrid adaptation of leadership approaches. The resulting conceptual framework with this study, the Hybrid Authentic-Adaptive-Agile Leadership Model, was applied to each participant
collectively to show an overall comparison and contrast across all participants (Table 7).

Additionally, the hybrid conceptual framework was individually applied to each participant to illustrate how her specific attributes aligned with each element of the framework based on the combination of data from the findings and cross-case analysis. Lastly, each section of the framework was tagged to one of the corresponding themes connecting further relationship to the model.

Table 7.

Comparison of the Hybrid Authentic-Adaptive-Agile Leadership Model, Participants, & Major Themes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant Comparison</th>
<th>Hornyak</th>
<th>Burns</th>
<th>Rivera</th>
<th>Major Themes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I. Authentic Leadership</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Theme 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. internalized moral perspective (background)</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>Theme 1a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. authentic convictions (mentors)</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>Theme 1b</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. relational transparency (open and honest)</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>Theme 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D. balanced processing (explore other views)</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>Theme 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II. Adaptive Reflection and Communication</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Theme 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. determines technical or adaptive change</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>Theme 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. observation and interpretation (reflection)</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>Theme 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. intervention (communication and action)</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>Theme 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III. Agile Leadership Approaches and Competencies</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Theme 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. Collaboration</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Theme 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. collective team</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>Theme 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. share information</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>Theme 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. encourage ideas</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>Theme 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. facilitate brainstorming</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>Theme 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Multidimensional Leadership</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Theme 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. leadership schema</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>Theme 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. gender (continuum of style)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Theme 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Communication</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>Theme 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. sensemaking &amp; framing</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>Theme 4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
I. Authentic leadership (Themes 1 and 2): Based on the analyses of participants’ data and synthesis of relevant literature reviewed for the study, the research conceptualized a hybrid framework “Hybrid Authentic-Adaptive-Agile Leadership Model” that represents confirmation of what has been previously understood about leadership approaches, communication strategies and change processes. The focus of authentic leadership lies in the perspective that authentic leaders are genuine; its manifestation relies on the life-story of the leader (Walumbwa et.al., 2008). Authentic leadership was born out of a need for trustworthy leaders given social and corporate upheavals. Definitions of authentic leadership also included an interpersonal definition in that leadership based on self-concept and how self-concept relates to actions (Shamir & Eilam, 2005). Related characteristics to this definition are that authentic leaders exhibit genuine leadership, lead from conviction, base actions on values, and are not copies, but originals. A developmental definition posits that leadership can be nurtured, develops over a lifetime, and can be triggered by major life events (Avolio & Gardner, 2005). However, the leader’s behavior is grounded in positive psychological qualities and strong ethics (Campbell, 2010).

A more recent definition of authentic leadership encompassed both principles:

A pattern that draws upon and promotes both positive psychological capacities and a positive ethical climate to foster greater self-awareness, an internalized moral perspective, balanced processing of information, and relational
transparency on the part of leaders working with followers, fostering positive self-development (Northouse, 2015).

Robert Terry (1993) proposed a model based on the premise that authentic leaders should do what is right as a leadership approach. He further stated that authentic leadership is action-oriented. Authentic leaders try to get at the heart of an issue and ask, “What is really going on and what can (we) do about it?” In comparison, Bill George (2003) proposed a leader characteristic model whereby leaders have genuine desire to serve others. Additionally, they exhibit five primary characteristics: (a) understand their purpose; (b) espouse strong values; (c) value trusting relationships; (d) maintain self-discipline; and e) act from the heart (mission). The original conceptual model was based on the definition by Walumbwa et. al., (2008), which purports four main components (Figure 2). They include: (a) self-awareness - reflecting on one’s core values, identity, emotions, motives and being aware of and trusting your own feelings; (b) internalized moral perspective - self-regulatory process using internal moral standards to guide behavior; (c) balanced processing - ability to analyze informational objectively and explore other people’s opinions before deciding; and (d) relational transparency - being open and honest in presenting one’s true self to others. It is from this model that a new framework emerged in response to the analyzed data. Thus, a newly-formed Hybrid Authentic-Adaptive-Agile Leadership Model was developed as the conceptual framework while reflecting on authentic leadership as a process (Figure 1).

II. Adaptive reflection and communication (Theme 3): When faced with leading complex change, the leader drew upon her core values, educational philosophy, and past leadership experiences. Acknowledgement of core values sets the stage for the leader to
engage in adaptive reflection and communication. According to Heifetz et al. (2009), the leader should initially determine if the challenge is an adaptive or technical challenge (Figure 3). Next, the leader should embark on the process of reflection and communication. Heifetz’ Adaptive Change process posits that the leader should first determine whether a technical change (using current knowledge), or an adaptive change (learning new knowledge) is needed (Heifetz et al., 2009). Next, an adaptive communication process based on Heifetz’ Iterative Decision-Making process is employed by the leaders responsible for oversight of substantial organizational change (Figure 4). There are three perspectives an adaptive leader must possess (Heifetz et al., 2009). The balcony (looking down on the dance floor) is where the leader gains a big-picture perspective of the change issue and gauges the initial response from others. Second, the staircase represents space for reflection and making sense of the issue for the leader in preparation of providing anticipated guidance. From here, the leader observes patterns, reflects, thinks, analyzes, and monitors responses to the initial awareness of the change. Lastly, the leader takes action and makes an intervention. This phase is described as stepping onto the dance floor and participating in the dance. The leader communicates with the followers and addresses the anticipated change directly (p. 18).

**III. Agile leadership approaches and AACC competencies (Theme 4).** As the leader engaged in reflection and communication, she also utilized leadership approaches and competencies to shepherd others through the change process. When interacting with faculty and staff, shared communication, adaptive decision-making, acknowledgment of leadership, a display of competencies occurred as the leader continuously manifested these characteristics throughout leading the change process. From the researcher’s
interpretations, the data collection and analysis indicated that all the participants displayed agile leadership approaches and competencies. As confirmed by Chrislip and Larson (1994), analysis included characteristics of collaboration which the researcher characterized by the following: (a) cultivating collective team power, (b) sharing information, (c) encouraging suggestions and ideas, and (d) facilitating brainstorming. Collaboration laid the foundation for consensus-building.

Agile leadership approaches encompass elements of Eddy’s Multidimensional Leadership approach (2010a). Multidimensional leadership as defined by Dr. Pamela Eddy includes constructs of leadership utilized as an aspect of the conceptual framework for the study. This type of leadership approach differs from the traditional top-down model (Burke, 2010). Rather, multidimensional leadership advocates flexibility and a structure based on the leaders’ schema (background experiences), gender, sensemaking, framing and communication. The model is situated on five underlying propositions, and recognizes that a leader’s dimension of leadership is part of continuum and evolves over time (Eddy, 2010a, p. 37). The five primary propositions include the following: (a) there is no universal model for leadership, (b) multidimensional leadership is necessary in complex organizations, (c) leaders depend on their underlying schema in making leadership decisions, (d) leaders often adhere to their core belief structure or educational philosophy, and (e) leaders are learners (pp. 33-35). The multidimensional leadership approach provides a multifaceted way to research the manner organizational change might manifest within the setting of developmental education redesign. Brief consideration to the leaders’ core values and beliefs regarding the leaders’ personal philosophy of education was explored as a source input into their leadership approaches.
Additionally, skill competencies based on the core leadership competencies developed by the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC, 2006) lay at the foundation of the hybrid model. The competencies are inclusive of the following: organizational strategy, resource management, communication, collaboration, professionalism, and community college advocacy, and still considered as essential skills for community college leaders (AACC, 2013).

Finally, the original Authentic Leadership model developed by Walumbwa et al. (2008), encompassed only Section I of the Hybrid Authentic-Adaptive-Agile Model. Sections II and III were added to adapt the original authentic leadership model reflective of the data findings and subsequent thematic analysis. The ongoing interaction between the three elements of the model characterizes the flexible nature of the hybrid conceptual framework when leading complex change. The model suggests that leaders may engage in any of these processes at any point in leading and communicating change. Therefore, the model is not intended to be viewed as cyclical, but rather as ongoing. Together, authentic leadership, adaptive reflection and communication, and agile leadership approaches and competencies, provide the foundation by which the newly-formed Hybrid Authentic-Adaptive-Agile Leadership Model is applied to participant data (Tables 9, 10, and 11).
Figure 2. Authentic Leadership Model. (Walumbwa, Avolio, Gardner, Wernsing, & Peterson, 2008).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What is the work?</th>
<th>Who does the work?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Apply current know-how</td>
<td>The authorities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learn new ways</td>
<td>The people with the problem</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 3. Adaptive Leadership Model. (Heifetz & Linsky 2002).

Figure 4. Iterative Decision-Model. (Heifetz, Linsky & Grashow, 2009).
Table 8.

Major Study Themes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Theme 1</td>
<td>The influence of a leaders’ past experiences and current convictions contextualized the approach to leading change in developmental education redesign.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theme 1a</td>
<td>Influence of family background encouraged formation of the leaders’ worldview and derived educational philosophy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theme 1b</td>
<td>Influence of mentors encouraged formation of leader identity/development.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theme 2</td>
<td>The leaders’ internal values and intrinsic beliefs formed the foundation to conceptualize change in developmental education redesign.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theme 3</td>
<td>The manner of communication and sensemaking of leaders necessitated the understanding of complex change in developmental education redesign.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theme 4</td>
<td>Leadership qualities and approaches facilitated acceptance, adaptation, and management of leading change in developmental education redesign.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Individual participant applied frameworks are shown in Tables 9, 10, and 11.

Table 9.

Dr. Hornyak: Hybrid Authentic-Adaptive-Agile Leadership Model Applied

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Element</th>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Application</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I. Authentic Leadership</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. Internalized moral perspective (family background)</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Genuineness and authenticity are her key leader qualities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Authentic convictions (mentors)</td>
<td>1a</td>
<td>Leader credited parents for instilling values, morals, strong work ethic and appreciation for higher education. Family background and expectations provided the strongest influence on the leader’s derived ethics, behaviors, and educational philosophy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. Relational transparency (open and honest)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Honesty, fairness, equality, and caring were key core values that helped the leader conceptualize change.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D. Balanced processing (explores others’ views)</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Conferring with Drs. Rivera and Burns before making decisions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II. Adaptive Reflection and Communication</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. Determines technical or adaptive change</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Sensemaking (reflection), open dialogue, ongoing communication facilitated understanding of the change. Quickly determined type of change and strategized accordingly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Observation and interpretation (reflection)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Engaged in research, literature reviews, and policy analysis to interpret meaning and distill information to manageable content</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. Intervention (communication and action)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Open and ongoing “listen with ears wide open and keep talking.”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### III. Agile Leadership Approaches and Constructs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Element</th>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Application</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Genuineness (authenticity), empathy, practicability, adaptability, and collaboration typified her leadership approach in managing the change planning process.**
| **A. Collaboration** | | |
| Collective team | 4 | Never referred to herself by professional title; met regularly with core leadership team to share feedback and strategize together |
| Share information | | Presented change initiative at all major college gatherings and provided timely updates to entire college community as they occurred |
| Encourage ideas | | Maintained openness by encouraging employees to call, email, and meet her individually with suggestions and ideas |
| Facilitate brainstorming | | Held regional brainstorming/planning meetings with other colleges |
| **B. Multidimensional leadership** | 4 | Genuineness (authenticity), empathy, practicability, adaptability, and collaboration typified her leadership approach in managing the change planning process. |
| Leadership schema | | Referenced past administrative roles in leading change initiatives at a community college within the Florida College System |
| Gender | | Took a more gender-neutral approach; focused on excellence |
| Communication | | Utilized stories to emphasize key points before and after meetings |
| Sensemaking and framing | | Used analogy of the glass half-empty or half-full to frame discussions and promote constructive dialogue |
| **C. AACC Competencies (Unique)** | | Characteristics |
| Organizational strategy | Unique | Analytical and adaptive thinking; pragmatic – focus on facts |
| Collaboration | | Collaborated with other Florida college administrators to address policy |
| Communication | | Used former state colleagues to gain early inside information |
| Resource management | | Organized mini-conferences, guest speakers, content experts, and vendors to dispel fears and facilitate understanding |
| Community college advocacy | | Feared new state policies may adversely affect open-access mission of community colleges and negatively impact vulnerable students |
Table 10.

*Dr. Burns: Hybrid Authentic-Adaptive-Agile Leadership Model Applied*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Element</th>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Application</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I. Authentic Leadership</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Genuineness, realness, and human are her key leader qualities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. Internalized moral perspective (family background)</td>
<td>1a</td>
<td>Family background provided positive influence for development of the core values and educational philosophy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Authentic convictions (mentors)</td>
<td>1b</td>
<td>Educational mentors and personal educational experiences provided the strongest influence for advanced professional development, although administration was not desired.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. Relational transparency (open and honest)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Genuineness, people-oriented, honesty, straightforwardness, passion, and excellence were the core values that helped the leader conceptualize change.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D. Balanced processing (explores others’ views)</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Conferring with other faculty before making decisions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II. Adaptive Reflection and Communication</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Sensemaking, research, open dialogue, and sharing personal story facilitated her understanding of planning change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. Determines technical or adaptive change</td>
<td></td>
<td>Immediately determined adaptive change as an organizational officer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Observation and interpretation (reflection)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Engaged in reading research, chunking information by comparing established theory to suggested new practices.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. Intervention (communication and action)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Used presidential section of an organizational newsletter to officially address calls for redesign in Florida and around the country.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III. Agile Leadership Approaches and Constructs</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Collaboration, empower the team, shared, participatory, and service characterized her leadership approach in managing the change planning process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. Collaboration</td>
<td></td>
<td>Collaborated with core leaders and departmental colleagues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Collective team</td>
<td></td>
<td>Stressed team approach between faculty, librarians, and tutors to work together as a collective group discussing redesign</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Share information</td>
<td></td>
<td>Shared insight from meetings to inform local discussions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Encourage ideas</td>
<td></td>
<td>“We don’t have all the answers,” openly solicited suggestions and ideas from colleagues, “there are no stupid ideas.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Facilitate brainstorming</td>
<td></td>
<td>Devised brainstorming activities for developmental education planning meetings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Multidimensional leadership</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Collaboration, empower the team, shared, participatory, and service typified her leadership approach in managing change planning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Leadership schema</td>
<td></td>
<td>Referenced her scholarship, teaching, professional affiliations with leading experts, organizational officer, and graduate internship project.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Gender</td>
<td></td>
<td>Mentioned studies and indirectly referred to servant leadership</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Dr. Burns: Hybrid Authentic-Adaptive-Agile Leadership Model Applied, con’t.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Element</th>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Application</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4. Sensemaking and framing</td>
<td></td>
<td>Used results of research studies to bring clarity and frame concepts</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

C. AACC Competencies (Unique)  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Application</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Organizational strategy</td>
<td>Locally-approached change planning through the eyes of faculty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Collaboration</td>
<td>Collaborated with organization (nationally) and institutional stakeholders (locally), including all faculty, librarians, tutors, researchers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Communication</td>
<td>Shared personal life story to drive home importance of the work. “I am my students!” Utilized college website and marketing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Resource management</td>
<td>Partnered with media unit to provide professional development video on developmental education strategies and structured pathways</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Community college advocacy</td>
<td>Open access is the reason why community colleges were created; wanted legislators to stop treating community colleges like universities</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 11.

Dr. Rivera: Hybrid Authentic-Adaptive-Agile Leadership Model Applied

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Element</th>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Application</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I. Authentic Leadership</td>
<td></td>
<td>Collaboration and authenticity (human place) represent the key leadership qualities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. Internalized moral perspective</td>
<td></td>
<td>Family background and sacrifices provided the strongest influence on the leader’s values and educational philosophy. Education is not to be taken for granted.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Authentic convictions</td>
<td></td>
<td>Professional mentors were the key influences to pursue leadership through structured administrative assignments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. Relational transparency</td>
<td></td>
<td>Service, people-centered, respect/fairness, honesty/integrity, and equity were the core values that helped the leader conceptualize change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D. Balanced processing (explores others’ views)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Conferred with other administrators, faculty, and other campus leaders before making decisions (i.e. deans, student affairs)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

II. Adaptive Reflection and Communication

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Application</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A. Determines technical or adaptive change</td>
<td>Quickly determined adaptive change, charged by college provost to lead change planning process on the ground</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Observation and interpretation (reflection)</td>
<td>Read, re-read legislation; developed PowerPoint to reflect, learn, and talk through with provost and core leadership for clarity; actively listened</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. Intervention (communication and action)</td>
<td>Coordinated PowerPoint and hosted weekly meetings with affected faculty and staff; used Power to explain legislation and answer questions</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### III. Agile Leadership Approaches and Constructs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Element</th>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Application</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A. Collaboration</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Collaboration, problem-solving, and consensus-building typified her leadership in managing the change planning process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Collective team</td>
<td></td>
<td>Referenced herself as facilitator and stressed collaboration and team effort amongst all stakeholders. We’re all in the same boat together.” Used inclusive pronouns – “we,” “us,” and “ours.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Share information</td>
<td></td>
<td>Utilized brochures, handouts, white papers, and research; presented at discipline/program meetings, trainings, conferences, President’s cabinet, leadership council, and board of trustees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Encourage ideas</td>
<td></td>
<td>Welcomed ideas and invited questions; everyone is learning; urged group to be a part of planning change with her</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Facilitate brainstorming</td>
<td></td>
<td>Divided people into mixed groups to exchange ideas together</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Multidimensional leadership</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Collaboration, problem-solving, and consensus-building typified her leadership in managing the change planning process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Leadership schema</td>
<td></td>
<td>Referenced experiences in leading developmental education redesign in creating the student assistance center four years earlier</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Gender</td>
<td></td>
<td>Portrayed leadership characteristics described as more feminine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Communication</td>
<td></td>
<td>Nurturing, supportive, maternal with confidence and affirmation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Sensemaking and framing</td>
<td></td>
<td>Invoked literary elements and poems to accentuate key points, asked for assistance and participation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. AACC Competencies</td>
<td>Unique Characteristics</td>
<td>Presented preliminary proposal to solicit ideas and feedback to move the process in forward-thinking direction; objectivity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Unique)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Modeled and led the process of building consensus through collaboration using unconditional positive regard and active listening</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Organizational strategy</td>
<td></td>
<td>Utilized literature to evoke visual example of an issue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Collaboration</td>
<td></td>
<td>Harnessed a wide range of people to create developmental education plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Communication</td>
<td></td>
<td>Never lost sight of community college as the people’s college</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Chapter 5: Summary, Conclusions, and Recommendations

The purpose of this study was to explore the personal perspectives of select community college administrators regarding the purpose, values, and beliefs they inherently espouse about leadership, developmental education, and academic success. Next, the second goal of the study was to examine the way these community college administrators led change through communication strategies from the leader to the stakeholders. Lastly, the third goal of the study was to identify professional leadership approaches and describe related management strategies of select state college administrators charged with leading the major redesign of a developmental education program at a large community college in Florida. Chapter Five presents a final summary of the study methodology, results, conclusions, implications for practice, recommendations for further study to culminate the research and study conclusion.

Methodology

The comparative case study method was utilized to obtain a well-rounded, content-rich, and in-depth view into the world of high-level administrators leading the developmental educational redesign efforts. The gathered data represented qualitative narratives that gave insight to the redesign from three unique lenses. These perspectives were gained to connect their worldviews to the way they approached guiding the redesign planning process (Merriam, 1998).

The participants included three college administrators involved in leading the redesign initiative at the college. They are identified as Dr. Hornyak, Dr. Burns, and Dr. Rivera. Dr. Hornyak was chosen because of her experience as a former administrator on the statewide level. She also served as a facilitator of a statewide group composed of
administrators from the 28 community and state colleges in Florida. Dr. Rivera was chosen because she served as the primary administrator tasked with leading redesign meetings and formulating the implementation plan for the college, while working in partnership with the former lead academic administrator. Together, they were viewed as leaders and regarded for their leadership in Florida. Dr. Rivera was also directly involved with leading the planning of the previous redesign of developmental education at the college, which led to the development of student academic support center dedicated to the needs of students for enhanced tutoring assistance.

As co-coordinator of the redesign plan, Dr. Burns served as writing and reading professor while serving on the board of an organization dedicated to the needs of students for assistance in these in these areas, during the year of nationwide calls for developmental education reform. She was regarded as an advocate within the developmental education field, on par with other key figures in the developmental movement over the past 30 years. All interview participants had experience in the higher education field for a minimum of 15 years.

Protocols. Participants were formally invited to participate by letter, followed by a short follow-up meeting to confirm their understanding of the project and to secure signed permission. After verification of participation, observations were conducted first, depending on the observation and the schedule of the participants. Observations were followed by the document analysis. The rationale for this design is that by starting with observations, a mental picture was formed, which helped to provide a context for the study. Observations allowed the researcher to document participants’ leadership styles by listening to voice tone, body language, inflections, and points of emphasis. It also
allowed the researcher to see facial expressions and use of physical movement during local and regional meeting facilitation. Third, each participant was observed in a natural work setting. During observations, the researcher functioned as an observer as the group engaged in the meeting discussion and activities. In this role, the group was unaware of the observer's status as a researcher to maintain the naturalistic essence of the event and group interaction.

Following observations, the three participants engaged in a 90-120-minute semi-structured interview consisting of 10-12 open-ended questions, follow-up questions, and responses to glean the internal thoughts and viewpoints of the participants regarding their role as executive administrators. Questions were used to record biographical information while highlighting background influences that contributed to the leadership development of each administrator. Data from each source was coded and triangulated to identify common themes, make comparisons, and draw conclusions. After initial interpretation of data and identification of emerging themes, a second round of interviews was conducted with participants to confirm themes and receive additional feedback from them for member checking. The second interviews also served to determine the researcher’s accuracy in summarizing interview data prior to writing up the study. In this stage, the researcher asked participants for reactions, corrections, and further insights, increasing data reliability (Marshall & Rossman, 2011). As a form of peer-debriefing, opportunities were made available by the researcher to obtain feedback from the participants regarding the case summaries during data analysis phase (Marshall & Rossman, 2011).

A two-hour follow-up interview was conducted after data analysis with two of the three participants to enhance the information and key themes identified by the participant
interviews. The third participant was unable to participate in the follow-up interview due to retirement. An extra individual member check was conducted with this participant, along with the other individual member checks. Questions were developed based on leadership and emerging themes from the interviews. In the follow-up interview, participants had the opportunity to share aspects of their leadership contribution to the redesign process to better highlight and understand how their collective leadership played a role in the redesign efforts. Emerging themes and triangulation of data were confirmed because of direct interaction among participants. The follow-up interview sessions were audio-recorded and stored on a secure server for subsequent access throughout the writing period.

Content analysis of selected documents was conducted to identify evidence for recurring themes, categories, and groups of information across documents. Analysis of the document sources included meeting agendas, meeting minutes, white papers, redesign plan, newsletters, presentations, a grant proposal, and selected portions of participant dissertations. This approach was important because the documents told an underlying story, captured the planning process of the leader, and revealed program priorities. Analysis of the content text also provided a way to research language and contextual meaning as communicated to faculty and staff.

Research Questions

Findings of the three case studies were presented through participant interviews regarding the primary research question and three sub-questions developed for research in this study. The primary research question was, *what are the strategies adopted by the select state college administrators leading a major developmental education redesign*
initiative within a community college? To further elicit the answer to this question, three sub-questions were designed, and were used as the research questions for the study.

**Sub-research question 1.** What influenced the leadership approaches adopted by the select state college administrators in leading the new developmental educational redesign initiative?

**Sub-research question 2.** What communication approaches were adopted by the select state college administrators in leading the new developmental education redesign initiative?

**Sub-research question 3.** How do the select state college administrators reflect on their own approaches in leading organizational change with respect to the new developmental education redesign initiative?

The sub-questions followed a continuum of thought by reflecting on different dimensions of leadership. Thus, the questions began with exploring the internal qualities, influences, and communication of the leaders as individuals, followed by their approach in leading planning efforts for broader organizational change. The rationale for sequencing the questions in this manner was done to build a foundational context and to understand leadership development as a means of scaffolding additional ideas in which to identify or build a supportive framework.

**Results**

The influence of a leader’s past experiences of parents and mentors contextualized the approach to leading change in developmental education redesign. Overall, the pursuance of examining the leaders’ previous life and leadership experiences provided a contextual landscape whereby to frame her approach to leadership, also
known as a schema. Past experiences situated the leaders’ thinking and provided a mental reference point to benchmark current actions based on leaders’ actions and decisions from previous situations. In turn, lessons learned from previous experiences provided initial ideas and a mental framework in which to address new adaptive challenges and lead complex change initiatives.

The leaders’ internal values and intrinsic beliefs formed the foundation to conceptualize change in developmental education redesign. Examining family and other background influences provided deep insight into the factors, values, and other views that contributed to the formation of the leaders’ worldviews and eventual development of educational philosophies. These early and cumulative experiences laid the foundation for the actions and behaviors which characterized the leader’s approach to addressing life issues and educational considerations, such as the leader’s beliefs regarding the mission of the community college and learning. Internal values and beliefs aided the leaders to further conceptualize or visualize the change planning process and to believe in the possibilities the changes could potentially provide to the faculty, staff, and students impacted by the change in legislation. The leaders realized that their intrinsic beliefs and deliberations could either positively or negatively affect the way they led change. Therefore, self-acknowledgement of these beliefs and values were paramount for the leaders to balance internal values with external responsibilities to shepherd others through the change process in a constructive manner.

The manner of sensemaking and communication of a leader necessitated the understanding of complex change in developmental education redesign. Communication played an essential part of leading the change planning process as it rang
true in the participants’ leadership of the developmental education redesign.

Sensemaking, or the ability to make sense of the change, proved even more critical. It was incumbent on the leaders to fully understand the new legislative requirements to accurately explain, summarize, and interpret the policy for the impacted faculty, staff, and students. Leaders understood the importance of being prepared to answer questions accurately, address concerns confidently, earn respect, and maintain credibility from colleagues to keep the process moving in a forward-thinking direction. Communication was factual, sensitive, ongoing, open, and timely. Communication was also bi-directional for the leader to distribute information as well as receive information, ideas, and suggestions from the team. Thus, the open process of communication facilitated collaboration and consensus-building among the key leaders as well as the larger group of faculty and staff involved in planning the redesign.

**Leadership qualities and approaches facilitated acceptance, adaptation and management of leading change in developmental education redesign.** The leadership qualities and approaches of each leader demonstrated the importance of inclusivity, adaptive elements, and collaboration in leading and managing the change planning efforts. Because developmental education redesign was considered an adaptive challenge, there was no prescribed way of responding, coupled by a variety of instructional strategies to consider. The impact of the potential redesign overlapped with instructional departments, student success departments, and nuanced aspects of administration. The leaders worked in a flexible way with a variety of stakeholders to adjust existing strategies, create new protocols, and integrate competing interests into one cohesive plan to ultimately benefit students. Therefore, leading in flexible and collaborative ways
allowed for mutual interaction and group participation in the process, which in turn fostered gradual acceptance of the impending change.

Conclusions

Although developmental education contextualized the study, it failed to resonate at a level originally anticipated, and therefore receded in importance as a primary focus of the research. The original focus on developmental education was used to situate the study because of the emphasis placed on legislation which mandated the redesign. The purpose of the study remained the same, which was to explore the leadership style of college administrators leading the redesign of developmental education at a specific college. Findings bore out that developmental education failed to rise to the level of prominence and only served as one of the background topics. This leadership study might have been situated in other departments or areas of the college. However, one of the goals of this research was to contribute to both the scholarship of administrative leadership as well as the scholarship of developmental education leadership given the scarcity of articles centered on leadership in developmental education conducted through the library databases.

A need exists for authentic, adaptive, and ethical leadership in society, especially in situations whereby leading change can either help or hinder the progress of an institution. This study aimed to contribute additional research surrounding authentic leadership as the desire for authentic leadership continues to increase. Previous corporate, political, and even educational scandals drove the need to require enhanced accountability of executive leaders. Increased pressure from external forces in the higher education community precipitated greater cause for college personnel
to band together to advocate for their institutions and students, given the passage of high-stakes legislation which could negatively impact the very students for which community colleges were created to serve. Leaders should be mindful that their communication and actions are presented genuinely and ethically to stakeholders to minimize opposition and cultivate problem-solving. The results of the study suggested that leaders must be genuine and set the tone for the way employees respond to the external forces. Leaders should address change planning in a productive and meaningful way, even if there is fundamental disagreement about the reason and rationale for the change.

**Clear, honest, timely, and accurate communication remains essential for leading change.** The importance of clear, honest, timely, and accurate communication of information provides the bridge under which change is operationalized. When a change is announced, it is incumbent for the leaders first to acknowledge initial concerns and questions from vested stakeholders. After acknowledgement, leaders need to take time to make sense of the change for themselves, reflect on its meaning, and prepare a plan of ongoing communication sharing through both formal and informal means. They should be available as much as they are needed to show they care about the concerns, fears, and well-being of the stakeholders impacted by the impending change. Truthful and honest responses are key to this process, even when the leader lacks complete information. Stakeholders appreciate and desire that their leaders admit that change presents a learning opportunity for everyone, including the leaders. Follow-up to unanswered questions is essential for leaders in maintaining trust and cooperation with stakeholders. The absence of timely, accurate, and ongoing communication creates distrust, tension, and opposition.
Adaptive leadership is essential for leaders who oversee major change initiatives. Collaboration provides the bridge to achieving consensus for group problem-solving and decision-making. Adaptive leadership is characterized by the leader’s flexibility in sharing responsibilities and information to lead people through the stages of the change process. In this study, the executive leaders, although chosen for certain aspects of leading the initiative, referred to themselves as facilitators more so than executive leaders. In doing so, they cultivated a collaborative team experience based on the collective contributions of the faculty and staff working together to achieve a common goal. Collaboration emerged as a major construct of leadership because leaders were able to facilitate brainstorming, build consensus, and point the group toward problem-solving within each planning meeting. Thus, communication was the glue that held the bridge of collaboration together as way of achieving incremental goals and broad objectives throughout the course of the change planning process.

Leading change not only depends on the leader’s values and communication technique, but leadership qualities play an equally important role leading complex change initiatives at a community college. Ultimately, the success or failure of the change rests on the practices of the leader. Regardless of the approach, the appointed leaders carry the organizational responsibility and ultimate accountability of the success or failure of the initiative. However, the extent to which stakeholders become committed and invested in the work relies on the way in which leaders attend to the elements of leadership qualities, approaches, and communication efforts. Authentic, honest, adaptive, ethical, and collaborative interactions with stakeholders cultivated broad-based
participation and cross-institutional collaboration as acknowledged in the college’s Developmental Education Plan (2013).

**Limitations of the Study**

While study findings from Chapter 4 revealed rich data about leadership approaches of these participants, results from this comparative case study represented a small sample of three college administrative leaders. Additionally, the researcher focused on the specific leadership experiences and approaches of a small sample located at one institution. However, these participants were chosen as they represented the administrative target demographic intended for this study because of the researcher’s interest in how their unique backgrounds impacted the way certain executive-level college leaders lead change planning processes. The comparative case study option was selected as the most appropriate method by which to account for the small, yet unique, sample size and type.

Furthermore, using developmental education redesign as a context for studying leadership and change planning was intentionally unique due to the lack of dissertation research conducted on this aspect of developmental education. Typically, when scanning research in developmental education, most of the studies focused on instructional strategies, student performance, and related academic support services that contribute to student success, retention and completion. It was rare to find research studies that highlighted the role of leaders and how leadership approaches contributed to the mission or goals of developmental education as an academic discipline, just like other academic disciplines and fields of study, such as the physical sciences, humanities, and social behavioral sciences. Results of this study may help elevate the regard for developmental
education and its critical importance to the academic landscape as a respected pathway for underprepared students to pursue their goals as reflected in the mission of the community college.

Lastly, the three leaders recruited for this study brought certain experiences to the study due to their unique leadership roles on statewide and national levels. One leader was the former administrator with the department of education while another leader was leader involved with an organization dedicated to the needs of students for enhanced learning assistance. The third leader brought extensive experience of having co-led a previous initiative, which led to the creation of a college wide student assistance center with a specific focus on developmental education redesign. For that effort, the college earned recognition from an association which supports community colleges. It was the only state college in the state college system recognized for this tremendous initiative and came to be known as a model program of practice for developmental education. No other state college in the state can lay claim to this combination of leaders and experiences.

Therefore, the results of this study may not be considered generalizable to other locations. However, leadership insights and conclusions produced from the research may hold some transferability to similar institution types for other leaders tapped to lead a complex change project, whether departmental or institution-wide, regardless of the scope or discipline area. Consideration of additional qualitative research might include insights from other faculty and staff to study their leadership approaches rather than concentrate solely on the leadership of administrators.
Recommendations for Practice

Based on the findings of the study, seven recommendations were identified to contribute to the field of higher education, with specific relevance to community colleges.

Study findings may support new employee orientation regarding understanding and the importance of embracing the community college mission regardless of whether new hires previously attended a community college or were employed at a community college. Being familiar with community college history enables staff and faculty, particularly faculty coming directly from a university experience, to gain greater insight into the college mission and the student population community colleges were designed to serve. This idea is a key point given the great variance in academic preparation and work experience that often characterizes the student population.

Recommendations from the study may assist community college leaders in addressing challenges from external forces and develop realistic strategies to address community college advocacy efforts. With increasing influence of state legislatures in the affairs of public colleges and universities, it is imperative that faculty and staff stay abreast of policy discussions to understand the extent to which policy and related changes can impact both the instructional and operational aspects of a community college. S.B.1720 (2013) was passed as a legislative mandate for colleges and universities to conduct a complete redesign of all state-funded developmental programs without any consultation with the colleges and universities. Thus, advocacy efforts from all levels of employee groups are needed to work on committees, speak to legislators on behalf of colleges, and to offer appropriate insight and suggestions regarding the impact of these policies on students.
Study recommendations might be used to support ongoing professional development for current and new developmental education faculty and staff in other educational settings. Findings may contribute to efforts to more closely align and integrate the concerns of faculty teaching developmental education with those of faculty teaching general education courses. Between these two groups, a gap in collaboration and communication continues to exist due to a lack of knowledge about developmental education and its historical role in the development of community colleges. Unfortunately, academic snobbery and elitism from some faculty teaching credit-bearing courses has added to this chasm when most developmental education faculty hold the same education level and are held to the same credentialing standards as any other faculty. What gets lost in the conversation is the notion that when students successfully finish developmental education, they migrate to credit-bearing courses and perform on par or better than students who start directly in credit-bearing courses. Although this research study focused on leadership, the implication of leader actions in the developmental education field is key to bridging this communication gap.

Colleges can utilize the Hybrid Authentic-Adaptive-Agile Leadership Model as an approach and practice for facilitating strategic planning and implementation of organization change initiative. Because of the comprehensive nature of this model regarding values, communication, and leadership approaches in change planning, institutional leaders may wish to consider using some of the suggested principles and techniques for leaders and other personnel involved in strategic planning or other types of negotiations. Regardless of the project or initiative, some goals are universal, including clear, honest, and open communication; sensemaking and accurate interpretation; and
collaboration, consensus-building, and problem-solving. This framework may provide visual reference for leaders who lead planning, as well as offer reasonable expectation of the leaders for the participants also involved in planning.

Study recommendations may illustrate that leaders and other college professionals should never underestimate the role professional mentors play in their leadership development. As exhibited in this study, the role of professional mentors served a crucial role in the leaders’ identities. Moreover, mentors influenced how the participants saw themselves as potential administrators in the community college system. Furthermore, the referenced mentors also played an essential part in the leaders’ development by planting, inspiring, motivating, and supporting their leadership development and promotion. By providing specific leadership training and opportunities to expand their leadership skills and experiences, mentors played an active role in preparing new leaders as future administrators.

Study findings may encourage college leaders to explore connections to interest-based bargaining as a model for collaborative practice for other types of negotiation (Appendix F). Interest-based bargaining represents a negotiation strategy in which parties collaborate to find a win-win solution, focusing on mutual interests including the needs, desires, concerns, and fears important to each side (Spangler, 2003). Dr. Hornyak utilized the principles of interest-based bargaining while serving as lead facilitator during faculty collective bargaining negotiations. In her role, she was responsible for leading the group through a similar process as the developmental education redesign. The researcher observed her in this role and discovered surprising similarity in the principles and
strategies used to facilitate collective bargaining negotiations compared to the principles and strategies in the Hybrid Authentic-Adaptive-Agile Leadership Model (Figure 1).

In conclusion, study findings and recommendations can provide a way forward to explore additional pathways in which the Authentic-Adaptive-Agile Leadership Model may be used in other venues. Because of the broad-based nature of the findings, it is possible that K-12 leaders may consider utilizing this framework for educational theory and practice as well as pedagogical content to support leadership programs in non-educational industries.

**Recommendations for Future Research**

The findings of the study yielded additional recommendations for future research applicable for leadership theorists, as well as researchers studying leadership in the context to other disciplines and subject areas.

The study provided the need for additional research in authentic and ethical leadership in all areas of education, given growing pressure from, and involvement of, external forces in educational policymaking. Additional research connections to interest-based bargaining as a framework for collaboration might be explored.

The study may hold implications for researching student success stories featuring college graduates who started in developmental education to illustrate value and worth of community college as an essential part of student matriculation. Research on correlation between organizational leadership and student success might also be explored.

Finally, all participants may wish to consider the possibility of writing a book individually or collectively focusing on effective organizational leadership. Such a publication could serve as a type of professional handbook based on their work for
current and emerging leaders, as well as provide a unique aspect of the history of community colleges in Florida. Through this study, the participants came away with a heightened awareness of the role they also play as mentors to emerging college leaders.

**Conclusion**

In conclusion, the purpose of this study was to explore the personal perspectives of select community college administrators regarding the purpose, values, and beliefs they inherently espouse about leadership, developmental education, and academic success. Secondly, the study examined the way community college administrators led change through communication strategies. Finally, the study identified administrators’ leadership approaches in leading a major redesign of a developmental education program at a large community college in Florida. The following primary research question was explored. What are the strategies adopted by the select state college administrators leading a major developmental education redesign initiative within a community college?

Utilizing a qualitative approach, the methodology encompassed comparative case study method including interviews, observations, and selected document analysis. The Hybrid Authentic-Adaptive-Agile Leadership Model encompassed the Authentic Leadership Model (Walumbwa et.al, 2008), Iterative Decision-Making Model and the Adaptive Change process (Heifetz, Linsky & Grashow, 2009), agile leadership approaches based on collaboration characteristics (Chrislip & Larson, 1994), Multidimensional Leadership (Eddy, 2010) and leadership competencies identified by the American Association of Community Colleges (2013). Results of the study included four primary considerations: (a) the influence of a leader’s past experiences of parents and mentors contextualized the approach to leading change in developmental education redesign; (b) the leader’s
intrinsic values and beliefs formed the foundation to conceptualize change in developmental education redesign; (c) the manner of sensemaking and communication of a leader necessitated the understanding of complex change in developmental education redesign; (d) leadership qualities and approaches facilitated acceptance, adaptation, and management of leading change in developmental education redesign. Study recommendations suggested implications for new employee orientation, educational advocacy, professional development, strategic planning, mentorship and collective bargaining.
References


Van Engen, E. K. (2012). The role of communication and listening in leadership (Master’s Thesis). Available from ProQuest Dissertations & Theses. (UMI No. 511677)


Appendix A: Informed Consent

Informed Consent

Title: EXPLORING LEADERSHIP APPROACHES OF COMMUNITY COLLEGE ADMINISTRATORS: UNDERSTANDING LEADERSHIP AND CHANGE PROCESSES

Principal Investigator: Jametoria Burton

Department: UNF College of Education and Human Services, Education Leadership, Counseling and Sports Management

Explanation of Study

The purpose of this study is to identify leadership approaches utilized by community college leaders charged with leading change. Participants will be involved in semi-structured interviews and follow-up interviews, approximately 2-3 per person. Additionally, participants may identify and suggest documents for further data collection and content analysis to cross-reference the interviews. Documents will be accessed on a public website and could include the institution's developmental education plan using similar search terms. Participants will be asked to discuss their leadership approaches in leading people through complex change. The researcher is conducting this study as part of the requirements for earning her doctoral degree.

Procedures to be followed:

1. Upon IRB approval, the researcher will contact potential participants to set up initial individual discussions to discuss project. Following initial discussion, the researcher will send a follow-up email and make an individual appointment with each participant for the researcher and participant to agree to meet individually again at a scheduled time and location convenient for the participant. The researcher will introduce the consent form at this meeting, answer initial questions and give the prospective participant up to 2 weeks to determine participation.

2. In the meantime, the researcher will set another round of appointments with each prospective participant. During the next round of individual meetings, the researcher will answer any impending questions each participant may still have about the study and provide each participant with a consent form. At that meeting, the researcher will ask to obtain informed consent from participant by asking for participant's signature on the informed consent form. The signature will signify the participant's willingness to take part in the research study.

3. If the participant gives consent and agrees to participate in the data collection including semi-structured interviews and follow-up interviews, each interview will last no more than two hours.
4. A secure location for both obtaining informed consent and conducting interviews will be determined by each prospective participant.

5. Participation in this research study will be given voluntarily. A participant may discontinue participation at any time without penalty or loss of any benefits to which she may otherwise be entitled. Each participant will be given a copy of the signed consent form to keep for her records.

6. All interviews will be audio taped and will take place in the setting of the participants' choice. If a participant opts not be recorded, the researcher will use handwritten notes to document interview.

**Duration of the Subject’s Participation**

You have been invited to participate in a one-on-one interview and follow-up interview over the next 6-8 months as part of the data collection process. Interviews may last up to 120 minutes each per person. The researcher will provide the participant with a copy of the interview transcripts and summaries of the interviews. Participants will then be asked to give feedback as part of the member checking process of data analysis. If additional information is needed, the researcher may ask participant to for an additional follow-up interview for further confirmation of themes if needed.

**Risks and Discomforts**

There are no foreseeable risks to participating in the leadership study and pseudonyms will be utilized in order to protect the identity and confidentiality of the participants. Therefore, participants will not be identified directly or explicitly during the study to protect anonymity. However, should any adverse events occur, they will be reported to the IRB within three days. Participants will be allowed to cease participation in the study as they see fit.

**Benefits**

This study will contribute to the literature and knowledge base of the thoughts and actions of leaders working in community/state colleges and higher education overall. This knowledge can help leadership development programs, professional development, leading complex change initiatives in higher education, and succession planning, with a particular regard for current and emerging community/state college leadership. It will also capture the leader’s perspective which may provide useful feedback for the participant.

**Confidentiality and Records**

All research data, including interview transcripts, audio recordings and field notes will be stored on SkyDrive, a password-protected UNF secure server. Interviews will be recorded using a stand-alone digital recorder used solely for this project. Data from the interviews will remain until the end of the dissertation. Field notes will be handwritten, scanned and also stored on the SkyDrive immediately. Field notes will also remain on the secure site until the completion of the dissertation. No other external agencies will have
access to data. The recordings and field notes will be destroyed upon completion of the dissertation.

Contact Information

If you have any questions regarding this study, please contact:
Principal Investigator:
Jametoria Burton
Doctoral Candidate, University of North Florida College of Education and Human Services
Department of Educational Leadership, School Counseling and Sports Management
Phone: [redacted]
Email: [redacted]

Dissertation Committee Chair:
Dr. Jeffrey Cornett
University of North Florida College of Education and Human Services
Department of Educational Leadership, Counseling and Sports Management
1 UNF Drive
Jacksonville, FL  32224
Phone: (904) 620-1269
Email: j.cornett@unf.edu

I certify that I have read and understand this consent form and agree to be a participant in the research described. I understand that there are no foreseeable risks to me and no compensation will be awarded for my participation in the study. The study has been explained to my satisfaction and I understand that no compensation is available. I certify that I am 18 years of age or older. My participation in this research is given voluntarily. I understand that I may discontinue participation at any time without penalty or loss of any benefits to which I may otherwise be entitled. I certify that I have been given a copy of this consent form to keep for my records.

Signature: ____________________________________________

Date: ____________________________________________

Printed Name: ________________________________________
Appendix B: Institutional Review Board Approval

MEMORANDUM

DATE: August 18, 2015

TO: Ms. Jametoria Burton

VIA: Dr. Jeffrey Cornett
Foundations and Secondary Education

FROM: Dr. Jennifer Wesely, Chairperson
On behalf of the UNF Institutional Review Board

RE: Declaration of Exempt Status for IRB#676241-1:
“EXPLORING LEADERSHIP APPROACHES OF COMMUNITY COLLEGE
ADMINISTRATORS: UNDERSTANDING LEADERSHIP AND CHANGE PROCESSES”

Your project, “EXPLORING LEADERSHIP APPROACHES OF COMMUNITY COLLEGE
ADMINISTRATORS: UNDERSTANDING LEADERSHIP AND CHANGE PROCESSES” was reviewed on
behalf of the UNF Institutional Review Board and declared “Exempt” categories 2 & 4. Based on the recently
revised Standard Operating Procedures regarding exempt projects, the UNF IRB no longer reviews and
approves exempt research according to the 45 CFR 46 regulations. Projects declared exempt review are only
reviewed to the extent necessary to confirm exempt status.

Please make note of the three key items below:

- **Documents used for research:** In your IRB documents you indicated that participants may provide
  "documents for further data collection and content analysis to cross-reference the interviews. Documents
  will be accessed on a public website and could include the institution's developmental education plan
  using similar search terms." Please note that all documents for this research must be existing and either
  publicly available or recorded by the investigator in such a manner that subjects cannot be identified,
  directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects. If you would like to use documents, data,
  records, pathological specimens, or diagnostic specimens that are not already existing or that are not
  publicly available or recorded with identifiers, an amendment will be required prior to their use.

- **Interview and follow-up questions:** Additionally, if you would like to make substantive changes to the
  interview questions you submitted or if you would like to ask follow-up interview questions that pertain
  to topics different from the original interview topics, an amendment will be required prior to using the
  new or modified interview questions or topics.
• **Data storage:** In Attachment A you discuss using SkyDrive to store your data. However, please note that UNF no longer uses SkyDrive. OneDrive has replaced SkyDrive but is not considered a secure location for secure data storage. Please consider other secure storage options such as using encryption software (e.g., BitLocker) to protect your data. For more information about secure options for your data, please refer to the UNF IRB Guidance on Secure Data Storage. Because your study was declared Exempt from further UNF IRB review, it will not be necessary to update your data security plan in Attachment B.

Once data collection under the exempt status begins, the researchers agree to abide by these requirements:

• All investigators and co-investigators, or those who obtain informed consent, collect data, or have access to identifiable data are trained in the ethical principles and federal, state, and institutional policies governing human subjects research (please see the FAQs on UNF IRB CITI Training for more information).

• An informed consent process will be used, when necessary, to ensure that participants voluntarily consent to participate in the research and are provided with pertinent information such as identification of the activity as research; a description of the procedures, right to withdraw at any time, risks, and benefits; and contact information for the PI and IRB chair.

• Human subjects will be selected equitably so that the risks and benefits of research are justly distributed.

• The IRB will be informed as soon as practicable but no later than 3 business days from receipt of any complaints from participants regarding risks and benefits of the research.

• The IRB will be informed as soon as practicable but no later than 3 business days from receipt of the complaint of any information and unexpected or adverse events that would increase the risk to the participants and cause the level of review to change. Please use the Event Report Form to submit information about such events.

• The confidentiality and privacy of the participants and the research data will be maintained appropriately.

While the exempt status is effective for the life of the study, if it is modified, all substantive changes must be submitted to the IRB for prospective review. In some circumstances, changes to the protocol may disqualify the project from exempt status. Revisions in procedures or documents that would change the review level from exempt to expedited or full board review include, but are not limited to, the following:

• New knowledge that increases the risk level;

• Use of methods that do not meet the exempt criteria;

• Surveying or interviewing children or participating in the activities being observed;

• Change in the way identifiers are recorded so that participants can be identified;

• Addition of an instrument, survey questions, or other change in instrumentation that could pose more than minimal risk;

• Addition of prisoners as research participants;

• Addition of other vulnerable populations;

• Under certain circumstances, addition of a funding source

To submit an amendment, please complete an Amendment Request Document and submit it along with any updated documents affected by the changes via a new package in IRBNet. If investigators are unsure of whether an amendment needs to be submitted or if they have questions about the amendment review process, they should contact the IRB staff for clarification.

**Your study was declared exempt effective 8/18/2015.** Please submit an Exempt Status Report by 8/18/2018 if this project is still active at the end of three years. However, if the project is complete and you would like to close the project, please submit a Closing Report Form. This will remove the project from the group of projects
subject to an audit. An investigator must close a project when the research no longer meets the definition of human subject research (e.g., data collection is complete and data are de-identified so the researcher does not have the ability to match data to participants) or data collection and analysis are complete. If the IRB has not received correspondence at the three-year anniversary, you will be reminded to submit an Exempt Status Report. If no Exempt Status Report is received from the Principal Investigator within 90 days of the status report due date listed above, then the IRB will close the research file. The closing report or exempt status report will need to be submitted as a new package in IRBNet.

All principal investigators, co-investigators, those who obtain informed consent, collect data, or have access to identifiable data must be CITI certified in the protection of human subjects. As you may know, CITI Course Completion Reports are valid for 3 years. Your completion report is valid through 2/23/2017 and Dr. Cornett’s completion report is valid through 4/16/2016. The CITI training for renewal will become available 90 days before your CITI training expires. Please renew your CITI training when necessary and ensure that all key personnel maintain current CITI training. Individuals can access CITI by following this link: http://www.citiprogram.org/. Should you have questions regarding your project or any other IRB issues, please contact the research integrity unit of the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs by emailing IRB@unf.edu or calling (904) 620-2455.

This letter has been electronically signed in accordance with all applicable regulations, and a copy is retained within UNF’s records. All records shall be accessible for inspection and copying by authorized representatives of the department or agency at reasonable times and in a reasonable manner. A copy of this memo may also be sent to the dean and/or chair of your department.
Title of Research: EXPLORING LEADERSHIP APPROACHES OF COMMUNITY COLLEGE ADMINISTRATORS: UNDERSTANDING LEADERSHIP AND CHANGE PROCESSES
Researcher: Jametoria Burton

You are being invited to participate in a qualitative research study conducted by Jametoria Burton in fulfilment of a doctoral dissertation project. For you to be able to decide whether you want to participate in this project, you should understand what the project is about as well as the possible risks and benefits in order to make an informed decision. This process is known as informed consent. This form describes the purpose, procedures, possible benefits, and risks. It also explains how your personal information will be used and protected. Once you have read this form and your questions about the study are answered, you will be asked to sign it. This will allow your participation in this study. You should receive a copy of this document to take with you.

Explanation of Study

With the passing of Senate Bill 1720, the State of Florida mandated reform of its postsecondary developmental education programs for all community/state colleges and universities. Each institution must provide implementation plans to be compliant.

The primary purpose of this study is to identify professional leadership approaches and describe related management approaches of college administrators, charged with leading the redesign of developmental education reform. Additionally, the secondary goal is to explore the personal worldviews regarding the purpose, values and beliefs they inherently espouse about developmental education and academic success. Third, exploration of communication, meaning and sensemaking from the leader to stakeholders is considered for the ultimate benefit of all students, whose path to academic success is entrusted to these administrative leaders within the institutions they serve. Fourth, the significance of a case study on distributive leadership holds potential to influence positive organizational change by helping faculty and staff respond to the new mandates in a constructive and creative manner and prepare for timely implementation of the redesign plan.

Exploration of distributive leadership theory, competencies and roles and strategies, provide a multifaceted approach as a lens in which to research how organizational change may occur within the context of developmental education redesign. Second, a brief consideration to the leaders’ values and beliefs regarding their personal philosophy of education will be explored as a source input into their leadership approaches. Third, communication strategies will complete the triangular approach to examining the leaders responsible for oversight of substantial organizational change. These three elements are keys to successful planning and implementation of planned organizational change given the range of diverse perspectives, rationales and justification for the change.
Finally, regardless of where one’s opinion may fall on the agreement continuum, compliance with the legislative mandate is not optional, yet opportunities for success exist in leading the redesign effort. The quality of leadership exhibited at this critical juncture renders this process as a “make or break” moment if not handled with proper care and caution, while taking into account the interests of all stakeholders involved.

If you agree to participate, you will be asked to participate in a case study comprised of a 90-120 minute structured interviews, observation, and review select documentation including meeting agendas, reports and dissertation. You should not participate in this study if you feel your participation will have an adverse effect on your professional associations. Your participation in the study will last 3-6 months depending on the length of the data analysis phase.

Risks and Discomforts

Risks or discomforts that you might experience are readers who may be interested in your comments regarding implementation of the developmental education. Otherwise, no risks or discomforts are anticipated.

Benefits

The significance of a comparative case study on integrative leadership holds potential to influence positive organizational change by helping faculty and staff respond to the new mandates in a constructive and creative manner, in order to prepare for timely implementation of plan. Under the new guidelines which remove placement test requirements, the redesign plan will have direct impact on students in their first semester of college. However, on a broader scale, leaders who engage the organization in a collaborative way, will inevitably contribute towards overall student success as a result of nurturing shared vision and collective commitment amongst faculty and staff on the front lines of processing the nuts and bolts of the implementation plan.

Confidentiality and Records

In relation to data security and reporting, all consent forms, field notes from the interview, observation logs, and notes from content analysis will be included in the final report. Audio recordings will be immediately uploaded and stored in a secure, password-protected, and cloud-based server under the auspices of UNF. No video recordings will be used in this project. Use of the audio recording will be restricted to the professor, participant and student researcher conducting the project. Data will be transcribed from the cloud. The original audio recording will remain in the cloud only for the duration of the project.

The investigator conducting research on human subjects agrees to maintain in strict confidence the names, characteristics, questionnaire scores, ratings, incidental comments, and/or other information on all subjects and/or subjects' data encountered to avoid conflict with state and/or federal laws and regulations. Confidentiality issues will
be recognized and considered at every stage of the research process. These stages include the initial study design; identification, recruitment, and consent processes for the study population; security, analysis, and final disposition of data; and publication or dissemination of data and results.

Additionally, while every effort will be made to keep your study-related information confidential, there may be circumstances where this information must be shared with:
Federal agencies, for example the Office of Human Research Protections, whose responsibility is to protect human subjects in research;
Representatives of University of North Florida (UNF), including the Institutional Review Board, a committee that oversees the research UNF in the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs

[Insert sponsors of the research, if any, who will have access to identifiable data]
N/A

Compensation
No compensation will be given.

Contact Information
If you have any questions regarding this study, please contact
Jametoria Burton, Principal Investigator
Dr. Jeffrey Cornett, Committee Chair  j.cornett@unf.edu  904-620-1269

If you have any questions regarding your rights as a research participant, please contact, Institutional Review Board University of North Florida, (740)593-0664.

By signing below, you are agreeing that:
• You have read this consent form (or it has been read to you) and have been given the opportunity to ask questions and have them answered
• You have been informed of potential risks and they have been explained to your satisfaction.
• You understand University of north Florida has no funds set aside for any injuries you might receive as a result of participating in this study
• You are 18 years of age or older
• Your participation in this research is completely voluntary
• You may leave the study at any time. If you decide to stop participating in the study, there will be no penalty to you and you will not lose any benefits to which you are otherwise entitled.
Signature Page to Invitation and Informed Consent

Signature ___________________________ Date __________

Printed Name ___________________________ Date __________
Appendix D: Interview Questions

Title: Examining Leadership Approaches of Community College Administrators Leading Developmental Education Redesign in Florida: A Comparative Case Study

Interview Questions for Case Study (90-120 minutes)

1. Name, role at the college and responsibilities.
   2a. When did you begin your professional leadership journey in higher education? (org. chart or extant document)
   2b. How did you decide to base your professional career at a community/state college or within a community/state system?

3. What educational factors contributed most to your decision in continuing your career at a community/state college or within a community/state system?
   3a. What led you into administrative leadership?
   3b. Is your leadership position still the same or has it shifted?

4. When did the planning for developmental education redesign begin?
   a. What was your role in the creation of the developmental education plan?
   b. Why were those choices made?
   c. What was in it for you?

5. Who was a significant leadership role model for you? Why?
   5a. How would you describe your leadership style(s) or approach? Why?
   5b. Who or what contributed most to your leadership approach? How?
   5c. What qualities do you feel people appreciate most about your leadership approach?

6. What does collaborative leadership look like?
   6a. When have you used collaboration in your work as a leader?
   What makes it unique to your area?
6b. How have you used collaboration in your work with regards to developmental education redesign?

**Possible Considerations**: other administrators, developmental education faculty, general education faculty, learning support staff, student support staff, other groups, any combination of the above.

7a. How do you communicate when you are trying to build consensus amongst stakeholder groups?

7b. What communication strategies do you find useful in planning or implementing change.

7c. As an accomplished female administrator, do you perceive advantages to your leadership with regard to communicating change to the organization?

8. What would you consider to be the top 3 lessons learned as an administrator?

9. How would you describe your educational philosophy?

10. What is your perspective regarding the notion of educational access?

*Thank you for your time and consideration as a participant in this study.*
Appendix E: Research Log

Research Activity Log

July 2015

Received Institutional IRB approval letter – 07/27/2015

August 2015

Received UNF Notice of Exemption for IRB approval – 08/18/2015
Observation of Dr. Hornyak speaking at Convocation – 8/20/2015

September 2015

Observation of Dr. Hornyak launching Developmental Education Meeting – 09/24/2015
Observation of Dr. Rivera facilitating Developmental Education Meeting – 09/24/2015
Observation of Dr. Burns co-facilitating Developmental Education Meeting - 09/24/2015
Dr. Hornyak Initial Interview – 9/30/2015

October 2015

Dr. Burns Initial Interview – 10/01/2015
Dr. Rivera Initial Interview – 10/05/2015
Dr. Hornyak – Retirement Event – 10/23/2015

November 2015

Observation of Dr. Hornyak - Conference
Opening Remarks – 11/6/2015

Observation of Dr. Burns - Conference
Workshop Speaker – 11/6/2015

Observation of Dr. Rivera - Conference
Event Host and Facilitator – 11/6/2015

Observation of Dr. Hornyak – Statewide Meeting -11/11/15

Observation of Dr. Hornyak Meeting Remarks – 11/20/2015
Observation of Dr. Rivera facilitating Meeting – 11/20/2015
Observation of Dr. Burns co-facilitating Meeting 11/20/2015

January 2016

Interview Transcription Completed
February 2016

Follow-Up Interview with Dr. Rivera - 02/03/16
Follow-Up Interview with Dr. Hornyak - 02/08/16
Observation of Dr. Rivera and Dr. Burns FSU Research Site Visit – 2/18/2016
Follow-Up Interview with Dr. Burns - 02/23/16

March 2016

Follow-up Interview with Dr. Rivera and Dr. Burns - 3/03/2016

April 2016

Observation of Dr. Rivera facilitating Developmental Education Meeting – 04/15/2016
Observation of Dr. Burns co-facilitating Developmental Education Meeting - 04/15/2016

Follow-up Member Check with Dr. Burns - Reviewed Interview Summary – 4/26/2016
Follow-up Member Check with Dr. Rivera - Reviewed Interview Summary – 4/26/2016

May 2016

Follow-up Interview - Dr. Hornyak - 5/03/2016
Follow-up Member Check with Dr. Hornyak - Reviewed Interview Summary – 05/26/2016

June 2016

Follow-up Member Check with Dr. Rivera – Feedback from Interview Narrative - 06/6/2016
Follow-up Member Check with Dr. Burns – Feedback from Interview Narrative - 06/16/2016

July 7, 2016

Observation of Dr. Hornyak – Facilitating Collective Bargaining Meeting - 07/08/2016
Follow-up Member Check with Dr. Hornyak – Feedback from Interview Narrative - 07/20/2016

August 15, 2016

End of Data Collection
Appendix F: Interest-based Bargaining Ground Rules

Interest-Based Bargaining Ground Rules

Adapted by Dr. Hornyak

1. Titles and job positions will be left at the door. First names will be used during negotiations and related meeting sessions.
2. It’s ok to disagree, but not personal attacks!
3. There will be one and only one conversation at a time; no side conversations.
4. All agreements will be by mutual consensus of the core bargaining teams.
5. Team members will not sit in the same seat or next to the same person 2 sessions in a row.
   Members will bargain from a roundtable configuration and alternate seating.
6. There will be no ownership of ideas; be open and honest.
7. All resources, data and information used to inform issues should be shared and made available to bargaining teams in advanced of scheduled negotiation sessions, allowing time to review and become familiar with resources regarding issues.
8. Breaks will be taken as necessary.
9. Full participation by all core bargaining teams and members sitting at the table is expected.
10. Process concerns should be raised and addressed when the occur.
11. Freedom to brainstorm without criticism or evaluation is expected.
12. Interests may also be addressed during the evaluation stage.
13. Caucuses should be kept at a minimum. Any caucus exceeding 20 minutes required notifying the other group of the approximate length of time needed.
   When returning, the group taking the caucus is to share the reason and general of the discussion.
14. No article/item shall tentatively-agreed-upon the same it is first discussed.
15. Negotiations should focus on the issues not personalities and with a focus on the present and future, not the past.
16. All adopted ground rules may be revised by consensus.
Appendix G: Curriculum Vitae

Jametoria Burton, MLIS, AHIP
jametoria@gmail.com

Education

2011- Ed.D. EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP – Completion: 2017
UNIVERSITY OF NORTH FLORIDA, JACKSONVILLE, FL
DISSERTATION: EXPLORING LEADERSHIP APPROACHES OF COMMUNITY COLLEGE
ADMINISTRATORS: UNDERSTANDING LEADERSHIP AND CHANGE PROCESSES

2002 - MASTER OF LIBRARY AND INFORMATION STUDIES, MLIS
UNIVERSITY OF RHODE ISLAND, KINGSTON, RI

1987 - BACHELOR OF ARTS
SPELMAN COLLEGE, ATLANTA, GA
MAJOR: ENGLISH
MINOR: SECONDARY EDUCATION TEACHER PROGRAM

2017 – Present Associate Director of Program Development, Curriculum and Instruction/
Center for Civic Engagement

2012 - 2017 Associate Director of Program Development, Office of Arts, Sciences and
Articulation

2012-2014 College-wide Coordinator, General Education Assessment

2010 -2012 Chair, Center for the Advancement of Teaching and Learning

2006 - 2010 Director of Library Learning Commons

2002 - 2004 Academic Research Librarian and Medical Librarian

2000 – 2002 Graduate Library Reference Assistant

1997- 1998 Membership and Marketing Specialist

1993- 1997 Director of Residential Services

1990 – 1993 Supervisor, Residential Services

Conference Training and Selected Conference Presentations:

- American Association of Colleges and Universities Diversity, Learning, and Student
  Success Conference 2017
  Co-Facilitated: Student Voices Panel – Men of Color: The Community College Experience

- Collegewide Professional Development Day -2017
  Co-Presented: Team-Building for Creative Collaboration
• Association of Florida Colleges Annual Conference 2016  
  Presented: “Responsive Student Support Services & Impacts on Student Retention/ Degree Completion”

• Association of Florida Colleges Region 2 Conference 2016  
  Presented: “Leveraging Administrative Leadership for Student Success”

• American Association of Community Colleges – National Council of Black American Affairs  
  Southern Regional Conference 2015  
  Presented: “Student Support Services and the Impact on Student Retention and Degree Completion”

• Association of Florida Colleges Annual Conference 2015  
  Presented: “Lincoln: The Constitution and the Civil War Exhibit”

• Reimagine Assessment Mini-Conference 2015  
  Co-Presented: “Curriculum Mapping: Does your Program Really Provide Students the Opportunity to Learn and Practice every Learning Outcome?”

• State Assessment Meeting 2014  
  Presented: "Trends in Outcomes and Plans of Academic Programs”

• Georgia International Conference on Information Literacy Conference 2014  
  Presented: “Information Literacy: Librarians Connecting the Dots as Institutional Leaders”

• International Conference on Teaching, Leadership, Excellence 2013  
  Presented: “Academic Librarians Are Academic Leaders! Consider Our Worth”

• National Alliance of Concurrent Enrollment Programs Conference 2013  
  Panel Organizer and Moderator: “Effective Advising and Communication with Students”

• Community College Conference on Learning Assessment 2013  
  Presented: “Adapting AAC&U’s Project RAILS (Rubric Assessment of Information Literacy Skills”

• AAC&U General Education Assessment Conference 2012  
  Presented: “From Holistic to Analytic: Adapting VALUE Rubrics to Individual Campus Contexts”

  Presented results of a national project involving 5 institutions to improve rubric instruction. Institutions included University of Washington-Bothell, Belmont University, West Virginia University, Dominican University, and Syracuse University. Project RAILS- Awarded Grant- Rubric Assessment of Information Literacy Skills is a partnership between American Association of Colleges and Universities (AAC&U), Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL) Institute for Information Literacy, Syracuse University School of Information Studies, Institute for Museum and Library Services (IMLS), and Waypointe Outcomes.

• Sunshine State Library Leadership Institute Graduation (2011-2012)  
  State of Florida Division of Library Services  
  Presented: “The Capstone Development Project”
• **International Conference for College Teaching and Learning Presentations (2008-2016)**
  - **Workshop Facilitator:** True Colors Training (2016)
  - **Presented** “Deadly Medicine: A Multidisciplinary Learning Community” (2012)
  - **Presented** “Learning Communities Across the Curriculum: Measuring Student Learning” (2011)
  - **Presented** “Creative Collaboration: Library Learning Commons & Faculty Resource Center” (2010)
  - **Presented** “Experience the Library and Learning Commons: A New Space Fostering Collaboration, Innovation and Transformation in Learning” (2009)
  - **Presented** “Information Literacy Standards and Outcomes: Making the Connection” (2008)

**Awards:**
- Association of Florida Colleges – Chapter Unsung Hero Award (2016)
- Certified Community College Professional - Association of Florida Colleges (2015)
- Employee of the Month (2008) and (2014)

**Community Board Member:**
- NE Florida Center for Holocaust and Human Rights Education
- Learn To Read

**Certifications and Professional Development:**
- Title IX Compliance Training (2017)
- Mental Health First Aid Training (2016)
- ALICE Incident Prevention Training (2016)
- Certified True Colors Workshop Facilitator (2015)
- Board of Director Training – Blueprint for Leadership (2015)
- Institutional Effectiveness and Accreditation – SACSCOC Summer Institute (2012)
- Cooperative Learning Instruction (2009)
- Budget and Purchasing (2006)
- Foundations of Cooperative Learning – Southeastern Center for Cooperative Learning (2009)
- Sirius Instructor Orientation and Training (2009)
- QPR Suicide Prevention Gatekeeper Training Program (2011)

**Additional Specialized Professional Development Certifications and Training:**
- Florida Association of Community Colleges Leadership Training (2010)
- Leadership Institute for Academic Librarians – Harvard University (2010)
- High Level Leadership Program (Cohort Two) – (2009-2011)
- Sunshine State Library Leadership Program – Florida Division of Library Services (2011)
Ongoing Professional Memberships:

American Council of Academic Deans
American Association of Colleges and Universities
Association of Florida Colleges
American Library Association
Medical Library Association
Association of College and Research Libraries