

Exploring Deliberate Leader Development in Higher Education: Do We  
Ensure the Right Leaders are in the Right Place at the Right Time?

A dissertation submitted by

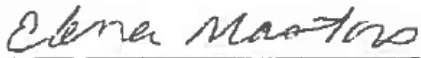

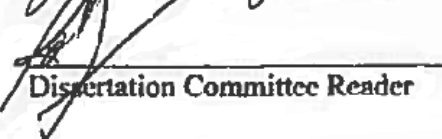
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## **Abstract**

Not all leaders in higher education will become college presidents, but all college presidents must be leaders. Despite an impending presidency crisis, prescriptive activities to cultivate a deep pool of ready, tested and willing candidates are nonexistent. Leadership is both science and art, requiring a holistic developmental approach that is lacking in academe. The purpose of this mixed method study is to identify how to best align leader development activities with the needs of the presidency position. Survey and interview data indicates some leader development activities are present, however they are informal and unevenly applied. Leaders are identified early, then lost in the system due to lack of career path, mentoring and succession planning activities. Human capital management activities are negligible. Presidents are unprepared for the most daunting tasks, and often must individually procure and fund training and education. This study proposes a new deliberate development model for higher education to cultivate and prepare leaders to meet the demands of the modern presidency.

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*“If I have seen farther than others, it is because I was standing on the shoulders of giants.”*

~Isaac Newton

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## **Chapter 1: Introduction**

Not all leaders in higher education will become college presidents, but all college presidents must be leaders. The president is essential to the effectiveness, relevancy and continued prosperity not only of his or her institution, but the higher education enterprise at large. The duties of the office are broad, ranging from fund raising and alumni relations, to providing a rich, meaningful education that positions students for success in their careers and communities. In these uncertain times of fiscal constraint, rising costs, and increasing demands from the public for accountability and transparency, the role of college president has perhaps never been more significant or stress filled. Presidency scandals involving mismanagement, financial abuses, and known-but-disregarded felonious behavior from staff members have perhaps tainted the position, dissuading rising talented leaders from pursuing the top roles. Searching outside of the higher education realm for leaders is becoming increasingly likely as the pool of insiders is thin, unidentifiable, unprepared or even unwilling, yet there is little research regarding how to ensure suitability and a good “match” for the institution. Care must be taken when assuming the external hiring pool for the presidency will always be available, accessible and desirable, as this preconception may negatively impact human capital management efforts inside higher education.

These turbulent waves of change in academe require introspection and a broad look at what is required for the presidency position and how to best meet the need. Fortunately, “leaders and leadership are universal in the human experience” (English, 2008, p. 2), therefore the body of knowledge regarding leader development is considerable. For example, many corporations excel at succession planning, and have

targeted programs to identify and grow leaders for their executive positions. For vast institutions such as the military, leader development is not just “another program” but a mandatory activity required to cultivate a pool of leaders needed to fill positions ten and even twenty years in the future. The absence of a sound development program can create retention problems as employees do not see a path to the top, and subordinates become frustrated by mediocre leadership and leave the organization (Charan, Drotter, & Noel, 1998, p. 200). Therefore, higher education can certainly draw on experiences of other institutions to build a leader development program addresses and avert a potential presidency recruitment and retention crisis.

### **Leadership: Science and Art**

Leadership is both a science and an art (English, 2008). English (2008) argues that for the field of educational leadership to advance intellectually and practically, a better balance between the science and art of leading must emerge (p. ix). The abilities of a leader, which are derived from innate capabilities (the art) and further honed with experience, education, and training (the science), can be improved upon through deliberate development (AFDD 1-1, p. 23). A planned and paced maturation process allows leaders to grow into their responsibilities and increasingly complex and demanding positions of authority. Clemens and Wolf (1999) perfectly sum up the science/art theory stating that “...leadership is not solely about practice and technique. It also depends on the much more complex qualities of insight, compassion, moral perception, valued and emotional balance” (p. xv).

Whereas the science of leadership is easier to teach and measure, the art, or the “purposeful construction of self,” involves performance that is anchored in practice, and

is modeled, observed and carefully constructed (English, 2008). Deliberate development address both science and art, as a hands-on process to identify leaders early in their career, allow access to key broadening opportunities, and provide targeted and timely leadership training, practice and roles. This activity in higher education would result in a consistently robust pool of trained and “ready” leaders that are prepared to assume the role of college president. Deliberate development ensures the emergence of a leader is not by luck or happenstance and facilitates having the right leaders in the right place at the right time. Associated activities across the higher education enterprise would result in fair and consistent application of leader opportunities, and would likely robust the presence of women and minorities in leadership positions similar to results seen in the Air Force after implementing their new construct in 1999. Finally, deliberate leader development in higher education may result in the creation of a presidency vocation and transform the university president cadre from one with similar responsibilities to one with a sense of stewardship and shared responsibility to identify and cultivate future leaders.

### **Researcher’s Experience**

In 1999, I was part of the United States Air Force effort called “Developing Aerospace Leaders” (DAL). DAL formed in response to the Air Force Chief of Staff’s dismay over the small pool of eligible senior officers for key, critical positions in the Air Force. He asked for a list of contenders for a general officer position from which he could select, and was provided just one name. Upon further exploration, it became clear there was no deliberate development and associated policies to cultivate a pool of talent ready to assume higher positions of leadership. The system was found to be too stove piped within career fields, instead of encouraging and rewarding broadening efforts.

Forward progress was linear and lengthy, with talented employees leaving out of frustration at the long wait for promotion and boredom associated with career stagnation. The institution was also riddled with nepotism, resulting in favoritism and bias in the promotion system and marginalization of those who were not “insiders.” Consequently, there was a lack of diversity in senior leadership jobs that should mirror the organization’s diverse membership. Naturally, there were informal career paths and promotion waypoints, but no hands on cultivation to ensure several qualified employees were available for one top position in the inevitable and unpredictable case of attrition. Baseless assumptions were also present and part of the construct: most believed talented officers would stay, retention would always be high, and mediocre officers would eventually leave. Naturally, these assumptions did not hold true and the result was devastating; in certain career fields, there were no qualified or exceptional leaders in the pipeline to assume the senior positions in the Air Force, some of which were governed by laws regarding certain technical competencies.

Out of one hundred second lieutenants entering active duty, only one makes it to the rank of colonel, typically around sixteen year point for those on an accelerated leadership career path, or the twenty-two year point for those promoted “on time”, or at a regular rate. Then, of four hundred colonels, only one becomes a general officer. The general officer pool itself must be specially managed, to ensure new generals can navigate wickets and fill the proper developmental positions for ten additional years to assume the highest rank, that of four-star general. Failure is not an option in the military leader development construct; unlike other enterprises such as business and higher education, the military cannot import senior leaders, so they must be cultivated from

within, therefore human capital management is critical. Under the old system, although high potential leaders in the military, also referred to as “contenders,” were identified around the four to six year point of the career, some became lost in the system and others disenchanted by the lack of official guidance and mentoring regarding their future. Therefore a plan was devised to deal with the immediate problem of leader gaps, and create a culture and associated policy to prevent future crises. DAL discovered that at the strategic level, leadership is less about *what you know* than *who you are*, indicating the criticality of maintaining the art/science balance in developmental activities. The DAL effort culminated with Air Force Doctrine Document (AFDD) 1-1, the codifying policy governing the deliberate development of more than 70,000 officers in 22 career fields. The leader development construct now used in the Air Force grows holistic leaders and creates a deep pool of talent; elements of this system may be directly cross-applied to the higher education realm.

### **The Research Gap**

The development of effective leadership is crucial for performance and success not only in commercial organizations, but also in academia (Bensimon & Neumann, 1992). However, despite a looming leader crisis in higher education, and robust data pointing to emergent and negative trends regarding the size of the pool, age, and diversity, there is a lack of strategic level empirical analysis and prescriptive planning. Thought leaders in higher education now see leader development as a strategic imperative: “Given the complexity and dynamism of life in American colleges and universities, the development of leadership talent throughout institutions of higher learning is fast becoming a strategic imperative. Yet most institutions have never

analyzed their organization's leadership supply and demand" (Hill, 2005, p. 27). Braun, et al (2009) argue that "most universities have left the field of developing future leaders untouched and existing programs are rarely based on sound theoretical background" (p. 198). Further, Braun, et al (2009) notes the absence of systematic leadership development, and a major recommendation of their study is the need for strategic cooperation of leadership educators in higher education to share experiences and knowledge. Experts also believe the development of effective leadership is crucial for performance and success not only in commercial organizations, but also in academia (Bensimon & Neumann, 1992).

An exhaustive review of the body of work by Bryman (2007) reveals that leadership development in higher education is still an under-investigated field of research and application. Although much work has been done on pathways to the presidency, examining everything from childhood years, family decisions, career paths and styles, little has been explored in terms of what is needed in the role, and how leaders are developed to meet that need. Bryman (2007) asserts that "Literature on higher education leadership has become rather self-contained and makes relatively little cross-reference to wider leadership theory and research (in which the factors directly associated with effective leadership are well researched)" (p. 14). This is consistent with Tight's view of the field of higher education leadership research as an "atheoretical" community of practice (Tight, 2004).

### **Trend Analysis**

Several trends within higher education point to the need for an overarching deliberate leader development construct. Many experts are predicting a future presidency

leadership gap (Skinner & Miller, 2012), or even an imminent crisis (Appadurai, 2009) and (Eckman, 2010). The American Council on Education (ACE) seventh edition of the college president study, *The American College President 2012* (Cook and Kim, 2012), provides insight into current and future challenges within the presidency. The latest iteration of the study, which has been conducted every five years since 1986, is based on the questioning of 1,622 college and university presidents. The presidents' responses cover a wide range of issues, from the demographics, previous experience, and disciplinary backgrounds to the range of their priorities and daily activities.

### ***Changing demographics.***

One notable trend: the presidency is “graying.” According to ACE 2012, in 1986, just 13 percent of presidents were over the age of 60; however in 2011, 58 percent of presidents were older than 60. In fact, reported the average age of a college president as 61, indicating a likely approaching “bow wave” of retirements. One possible reason for the aging of the presidency, proposed by Cook and Kim (2012) is the “increasing complexity of leading a postsecondary institution.” The authors believe that as colleges and universities face a growing number of internal and external challenges, governing boards and search committees are likely looking for more experienced leaders. College presidents are increasingly serving in their second or third term: in 1986, only 40 percent of presidents held a presidency in their previous role however in 2011, 54 percent were in subsequent presidencies. The trend of multiple presidencies becoming the norm may indicate the presidency is becoming its own profession.

Interestingly, the average length of service for a college president is decreasing, falling from eight and a half years in 2006 to seven years in 2011. Factors contributing to

this decline likely include the aforementioned graying, as well as burn out and poor matching. The decreased time in the position certainly leads to more turmoil for Boards, as well as for the losing and gaining institutions. Also, the study suggests presidents increasingly spend their time fundraising and dealing with constituents from outside their institutions, factors that may drive dissatisfaction or at the least, the need for a different skillset than is typical for the role.

Another worrisome trend: 30 percent of college presidents are also tenured professors (ACE, 2012), with many of these appointments accompanying their presidency contracts. This type of tenureship, given without the standard probationary period, meritorious performance or scholarship, is a like a covenant between the school and the president. Not only does it take a tenured position away from the faculty, but it protects the president from being fired without due process, tying the Board's hands. In the leader development construct, tenureship for a college president may not be healthy from the perspective of being used as a condition of employment as it could undermine the all-important faculty relationships.

Underrepresented individuals are still not reaching the presidency, and their presence in presidential positions has actually decreased, as revealed by the ACE 2012 report. The percentage of minority presidents declined from fourteen percent in 2006 to thirteen percent in 2011. Furthermore, excluding minority-serving institutions, only nine percent of presidents belong to racial or ethnic minority groups. Illustrating that purposeful development of minority leaders must be an ongoing process, a 2008 ACE study (King & Gomez) suggested a possible reason for the continued lack of diversity in the presidency: there is a persistent lack of racial diversity among senior campus officials,



the typical recruitment pool. For example, in 2008, only 16 percent of senior administrators were people of color including just 10 percent of chief academic officers (CAO). Indeed, Cook and Kim (2012) note that minority presidents traveled different paths to the presidency than their white counterparts, with more promoted from within the institution, and fewer having served in the chief financial or student affairs officer positions. The data certainly indicates a need to tailor development to groups to ensure equal footing when competing for and assuming the presidency role.

Women are faring better than minorities in the presidency, according to the data collected by Cook and Kim (2012); the percentage of female presidents increased slightly since 2006, from 23 percent to 26 percent. Notably, female presidents are considerably less likely to be married than their male counterparts, 72 percent versus 90 percent. Almost 26 percent of women surveyed by ACE said they altered their career progression to care for a child, spouse or parent, whereas just 19.8 percent of men answered the question similarly. Also, 21 percent of women report making career progression concessions for their spouse or partner's career, whereas only 9.5 percent of men did so for their spouse. These statistics quite possibly reveal the difficulty women leaders have with work/life balance or the extra sacrifices, real or perceived, needed to climb the corporate higher education ladder.

Data from ACE (2012) indicates other trends that should factor into leader development activities. Perhaps as a nod to the difficulty with filling presidency positions, the use of external search consultants is on the rise; agencies recruited nearly 60 percent of presidents hired in 2011, up from 49 percent in 2006. Interestingly, the number of presidents coming from a non-higher education background is also rising,

from 13.1 percent in 2006 to 20.3 percent in 2011. Outside feeders to the position are varied and include government appointees, elected officials and military personnel (2.2 percent); business (1.9 percent); nonprofit (1.9 percent) religious (1.8 percent); K-12 (1.8 percent); legal (1 percent); medical (.8 percent). Unfortunately, 8.9 percent of the respondents in this category answered “other” and no further data was collected. Barden (2009) sees goodness in acquiring leaders external to higher education stating: “Bringing in leaders from other institutions is one of the only ways that our traditional colleges and universities can achieve an influx of new ideas and approaches. Leaders that are unbiased by precedent, personal loyalties, or organizational orthodoxy can inject creativity and energy into a college. Finding those leaders and bringing them on board is frequently one of the only ways to catalyze change within our purposefully slow-to-change environments.” However, Barden (2009) indicates the national search may disenfranchise worthy internal candidates.

As higher education looks outside of academe for candidates to fill the presidency, the importance of making a good “match” is becoming increasingly important as the number of vacancies rise, and the challenges of the role increase. A recent case involving a “bad match” regards a former Air Force four-star general who assumed a presidency at a large state university and failed. Unfortunately, the school kept the search process a secret and they and their external search consultants did not thoroughly assess his background. Those of us who worked for him in the military were not surprised at the eventual Board-forced resignation, as the reasons for termination were similar to why he was strongly disliked in the military. Atwell (2009) cautions about the search and fit, stating that “I have seen presidencies fail because the candidates’

weaknesses were not revealed during the search process or when the fit between the president and the institution was bad, unnecessarily sully the reputation of both parties” (p. 46). He further asserts that when the match is bad, there is a tendency to blame the search consultant, yet the institution is the one that sets the search parameters and makes the hire, thus the burden is ultimately on them (Atwell, 2009). Finally, secrecy in the departure and hiring process adds stress to the system as illustrated in the case above, although it is meant to keep turmoil on the campus to a minimum (Stripling, 2011). Deliberate leader development is a transparent process that would enlarge the pool of internal leaders, lowering the dependency on external searches and increasing the rate of successful matches.

### ***Changing path to the presidency***

According to the ACE 2012 report, the traditional career path of program chair-dean-provost/chief academic officer (CAO) is changing. CAO is still the single most common precursor, with 34 percent of sitting presidents having moved to the role from CAO or provost positions. Other feeders include the presidency itself, with 19.5 percent of presidents served in the same role prior. Almost 11 percent of presidents were prior deans or served in other executive higher education positions with 7.4 percent coming from finance and fundraising roles, and 4.5 percent from student affairs. Nearly 38 percent of current presidents have faculty experience.

In 2008, ACE sounded the alarm regarding the lack of permanent junior faculty in the professoriate, believing that most will not have time to earn tenure and then rise up the traditional administrative ladder to amass experience. ACE (2008) proposed three solutions: find ways to bring more young workers into the permanent faculty and advance

them through the academic ranks more quickly; alter the career ladder so people can skip rungs and rise to the presidency with fewer years of experience; or become more open to individuals from higher education areas other than academic affairs (ACE, 2008).

An emergent pathway trend is for higher education leaders to accept positions outside of academe, then return, or to take a sabbatical to pursue other interests, or simply rest and renew. This career pause is similar to parliamentary systems, and even our own congressional system, where career breaks are encouraged and embraced. Gonzalez (2010) states: “Academics who follow the pattern of Plato’s ideal leader, the “philosopher king” who combines action and reflection should be considered prime candidates for higher level positions.” Rothwell (2005), who studies succession planning, agrees with the rest period as well as broadening, stating that employees should have dual-career ladders and move back and forth between academic and managerial positions to grow their skillset. However, unless these philosophies are baked into the culture and leader development activities, high potential leaders could find themselves out of the mainstream and behind the promotion curve if they choose to broaden, or step away from the system on a sabbatical for too long or at the wrong time.

### ***Other considerations***

Regarding readiness for the presidency, one in five presidents indicated they did not have a clear understanding of some aspect of the campus or the job prior to assuming the role, indicating the need for additional education and experiential training (Cook & Kim, 2012). Although ACE, Educause and other higher education nonprofit organizations offer leader training and internships, these opportunities are perhaps not targeted at the right individuals, inaccessible by those lacking resources to attend, and/or

delivered at the wrong time in a career. Regarding the lack of preparedness among leaders in higher education, the problem starts at the lowest levels, according a study accomplished by Wolverton, Ackerman and Holt (2005). The authors suggest that when taking up their positions as heads of department, incumbents often do not possess the skills they need to be effective leaders. The study also noted that virtually every chair who responded to the survey wished they had known more about the complexity of the position and the sheer variety of roles they would need to balance. Also, the research indicated that knowledge of leadership skills were lacking among all chairs. Finally, exacerbating the leader development challenge, is the “dreadful lack of mentoring” in academe, uncovered by Dr. Rita Bornstein in her landmark work on succession planning for the presidency (Stripling, 2011, p. 1).

### **Research Problem**

The higher education enterprise is not only dynamic, but tied to our nation’s security and prosperity. To be successful in the current environment of fiscal stress and increasing demands from stakeholders for accountability and transparency, college presidents and other principals must be properly prepared for their roles. Thriving corporations and can’t-fail enterprises such as the military invest the resources necessary to ensure their leaders are identified early, placed on a specific career path and deliberately developed. The emergence of a high potential leader is thus not the result of luck and happenstance and human capital management is an important strategic imperative. However, despite an impending leader gap and crisis that is grounded in data from multiple sources inside and outside of academe, there is lack of similar deliberate development activities in higher education. Our college leaders must intuitively

understand how to address emerging issues, be prepared for the rigors of the position, and possess the right skill set to lead across a broad spectrum of responsibilities.

Furthermore, leadership is both science and art, thus requiring a multi-faceted, holistic developmental approach lacking in academe. Despite a plethora of data indicate current and emergent challenges, there has been no in depth exploration of how higher education can devise a deliberate leader development process that includes talent identification, mentoring, skill development, career broadening and succession planning. As a result, there is no strategic plan to address the coming bow wave of retirements or small pool of ready, tested and willing contenders.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study is obtain a deeper understanding of how to best tailor and align leader development activities in higher education with the needs of the presidency position to build an effective and rich pool of leaders. The research will examine the phenomenon of leader development in higher education by applying a sequential, mixed methods approach. Surveying and subsequently interviewing sitting college presidents will allow a deeper understanding of how to align leader development activities in higher education with the needs of their positions in order to build an effective and rich pool of leaders. Of particular interest is whether the presidents are identified as a future leaders in higher education. Also, the existence of an established career path and active mentoring is important and would indicate the presence of at least an informal leader development program. In addition to understanding how leaders are developed in higher education, it is important to assess the skills and attributes needed and valued in the role of a present day college president. A dialogue regarding the

subject's perceived "readiness" for the presidency will yield valuable insight into whether the present process is succeeding in preparing leaders.

### **Hypotheses**

The overarching premise of the study is that deliberate leader development activities are negligible or nonexistent in higher education. Another important element of the research to assess readiness and desirability of the higher education system for deliberate leader development activities. To test these concepts, the following specific hypotheses were constructed:

1. H1 Deliberate leader development activities are negligible or nonexistent for the presidency position.
2. H2 There is a positive relationship between those who did not have a career path and their belief a career path would have been useful.
3. H3 There is a positive relationship between the absence of formal succession planning activities and the absence of a formal mentoring program.
4. H4 There is a positive relationship between the absence of leader identification and the absence of mentoring.
5. H5 There is a negative relationship between the leadership training college presidents received and the requirements of the president position.

### **Research Questions**

Research questions were carefully constructed to gather the appropriate data to test the study's hypotheses and to gather information on the emergent concept of enduring competencies.

**Phase 1:** For the quantitative phase of the study, the central question was the following:

*What are the factors of a leader development program that contribute to preparedness of university leaders and are they present in the current construct?*

Sub questions:

1. What deliberate development activities are present such as early career identification, career path knowledge and usefulness, succession planning activities, sabbatical utilization and search and job placement activities?
2. What is the state of mentoring in higher education?
3. What skills and attributes are needed and valued in the role of modern college president?
4. Of the skills and attributes identified as needed and valued in the role of modern college president, are they imparted by the higher education enterprise or must associated training and education be obtained and funded outside of the workplace?
5. What are the enduring competencies in higher education, and the state of the concept of the presidency as a profession, vocation or calling?

**Phase 2:** For the second, qualitative phase of this study, these are the overarching research questions:

1. How do the selected factors such as early identification, mentoring and the existence of a formal career path, identified in Phase 1, contribute to or impede leader development in higher education?
2. What are the unique skills, traits and training needed by the modern college president to succeed?



### 3. What is the current leadership environment in higher education?

The data gathered in Phases 1 and 2 may illuminate any friction between activities to develop a pool of future leaders and those skills actually needed for success in the current and future presidency role.

### **Relevance and Contribution to the Field**

The existing literature explores the traits of college presidents and their corresponding career paths. There is also a robust pool of data regarding pathways to the presidency in terms of demographics, education level, and job-related characteristics. However, little has been written about how the higher education enterprise systematically grows leaders and can form a strategic approach to their development. Several threads of research were used to frame this study including Brown (2010) regarding the effectiveness of mentoring for development of senior leaders in higher education; Freeman (2008) who examined the relationship between higher education administration programs and preparation for the presidency, and Duree (2010) who explored the competencies needed for community college presidents.

No previous work has identified the gap between leader development activities in higher education and what skills and attributes are needed for success in the role (and emergent role) of the presidency. A specific model for leader development in higher education does not exist. Data gathered through this study will yield a proposed model and a corresponding process to identify and cultivate high potential leaders (contenders), resulting in a deep and “ready” pool from which to select for the presidency. The analysis will identify the enduring competencies of the president position that persist despite external or internal environmental change, and should serve as a basis for holistic

leader development activities. The process for selecting presidents from outside of the higher education system may also be better informed by these enduring competencies, resulting in a better “match.” The study will identify and codify ongoing incongruent informal mentoring and leader development efforts, aligning those activities not only with current need but emergent challenges such as increasing diversity in leadership positions. The study will explore how a successful leader development effort can be measured across the enterprise through system stability, the existence of a pool of identified and “ready” leaders and individual goal attainment and career satisfaction. As the pool of ready and willing leaders emerges, Boards will benefit as the need for search consultants will be minimized and the secrecy and turmoil associated with replacing presidents will be exchanged for one of transparency and order. In summation, this body of work is important to obtain a deeper understanding of how to align leader development activities in higher education with the needs of the presidency.

This landmark study will also propose to redefine the college presidency as a separate profession; as such, the present and future cadre of presidents might be transformed into a high performing team, instead of solitary actors. Leaders throughout academe may have a renewed sense of stewardship as they mentor contenders on their journey to presidency, accomplishing the noble goal of cultivating their replacements.

### **Delimitations**

There are several delimitations of the study, as restrictions imposed to narrow the research. The Phase 1 survey is designed to only include college presidents, and data collected will reflect their personal experiences in higher education. There may be bias involved with responses, since their journey to the presidency was successful and any

leader development activities (or lack thereof) might be viewed as the obvious, correct process. Interviewing former presidents in Phase 2, those who can objectively reflect on their experiences, will mitigate this delimitation. Another potential delimitation is the fixed number of targeted elite interviews in Phase 2 due to time and resources constraint.

### **Limitations**

For Phase 1, random sampling is used, therefore equal distribution is not assured (Creswell, 2008, p. 153). Also, there is a potential limitation due to non-response error introduced through low survey return rate from busy college presidents, or those unwilling to participate in such a personal study regarding their own career development. A low response rate means the results cannot be applied to the larger population, and is only applicable to study participants. In Phase 2, interpretation of qualitative data requires sensemaking on behalf of the researcher, at which time personal views and reflections might be unwittingly used to assess findings (Creswell, 2008, p. 265). Also, due to the researcher's experience with leader development in a different enterprise, bias may be introduced into the interpretive part of the study and model development activities. Finally, the reader may come to his or her own conclusions about the need for a deliberate leader development program or its elements based on their interpretation of findings, and positive or negative experiences with leader development activities in their own career.

### **Definition of Terms**

The following terminology will be used throughout the study:

*Career broadening* is an activity where an employee temporarily works outside of his or her core skill to obtain a development skill. An example might be for an administrator to work in a budget position.

*Complete leader* is one who is developed and ready to assume the highest leader position in an organization.

*Contender* is a promising leader whose exceptional talent is identified early and is part of the deliberate development program, with the end state of being a senior leader, such as university president.

*Core skill* is the primary occupation specialty.

*Deliberate leader development* is a construct with processes to identify contenders and provide targeting career development, a specific career path, mentoring and specific training and education so they are ready, tested and willing to assume the role of university president.

*Developmental skill* is a secondary skill gained through career broadening.

*Doctrine* is a principle or body of principles presented for acceptance or belief by a profession.

*Dogma* is the official system of belief or doctrine held by a group of professionals.

*Enduring competencies* are the timeless personal and leadership qualities common to all successful university presidents.

*Mentoring* is the process of guiding, counseling and coaching through a mentor/mentoree relationship.

*Native or indigenous leaders* are leaders who are part of a specific culture and arise with the customs, practices and traditions of the culture.

*Partial leader* is a leader who is not fully developed to assume a senior leadership position, whether internal or external to the higher education enterprise.

*Succession planning* is a predictive process that includes the systematic identification and development of potential successors for key positions in an organization.

*Tenets* are principles, beliefs, or doctrine generally held to be true and in common by members of an organization, movement, or profession.

## **Chapter 2: Literature Review**

Critical practice involves learning how to engage in serious and sustained examination of methods and the underlying assumptions and theories that support them (English, 2008, p. ix). The critical examination of leader development activities in higher education required a two-pronged approach, an extensive literature review and a search for models to support the proposed leader development methodology.

When executing the literature review for this study, it was useful to start with broad, overarching concepts and move to more finite features of leader development activities. Several prominent threads emerged during the literature review process, establishing a conceptual foundation for the study.

### **Talent Identification**

Despite emergent models of “flat” organizations and distributed leadership, it is undeniable that leaders are still needed in society. After completing a study entitled *Leading Minds and the Anatomy of Modern Leadership*, Gardner (1995) admitted “I readily acknowledge my belief that individuals matter and that a few individuals matter a great deal” (p. 295). Prior to discussing talent identification, a working definition of leader and manager provides context. Kotter (1990) asserts that managers make the current organization function better, whereas leaders engage in organizational change activities (p. 6). Managers can then be viewed as leaders who choose to work inside the organization and accept the boundaries, rules, and relationships within them (English, 2008). Further, Deming (1986) believed that internal managers have too many vested interests in the status quo, which is why organizational transformation requires distinct leaders. Building on these theories, English (2008) proposes that within higher

education, refinements are left to managers, but reform is undertaken by leaders.

Therefore, the high potential leaders are those who have the capacity, talent and desire to transform the organization and lead change. They must be identified, culled from the organization, and then placed on an appropriate pathway to senior position. Higher education may be failing in the area of talent identification and the absence of a pathway to top leadership positions, could contribute to apathy. ACE reported in a 2009 survey that the talent pipeline of potential administrative leaders in academia is lacking, as less than a third of all sitting chief academic officers are aspiring to presidencies or chancellorships (Eckel, Cook & King, 2009). According to an interview with Dr. Bornstein, another barrier to succession planning is “the egalitarian nature of colleges and universities; it just doesn't come naturally in academe to single people out for leadership potential early in their careers, leaving others behind” (Barden, 2009).

All organizations have natural leaders from the mail room to the boardroom. However, these natural leaders may not be “complete” leaders, lacking the holistic development activities that take them from partial leadership to complete leadership (English, 2008).

### **Leader Development**

Leader development and preparation in higher education is the subject of several books and scholarly articles. Day (2000) defines leader development as the “purposeful investment in human capital” that typically emphasizes “individual-based knowledge, skills and abilities of (future) leaders” (p. 584). He differentiates leader development from *leadership* development which are activities directed towards groups of people in an organization, increasing its collective capacity. Leader development, on the other hand,

is personal and tailored. However, a common mistake is to train leaders; “training focuses on best practices, while development focuses on next practices” (Myatt, 2012). Hill (2008) articulates a unique challenge with growing leaders in academe: “Their professional identity and sense of satisfaction from work are derived principally from their professional expertise and accomplishments. They are not recruited for their leadership potential, but rather are selected and rewarded for their research, course development, and/or teaching” (p. 27). As such, academics may feel conflict between their professional obligations and growing as leaders, two activities must be synonymous in a deliberate leader development construct. Hill (2008) further states that “Leadership development, however, is probably less complicated in the business world because individuals tend to be less ambivalent about leading in business than in academic quarters” (p. 28).

The literature explores how the higher education culture must change to fully develop its leaders. McCall (1998) states: “The first step in executive development is moving from a system of “selection of the fittest” to a “development of the fittest” (p. 17). However, current higher education efforts to fill presidency positions seem to be weighted and resourced more towards the selection process and less with the cultivation of leaders. English (2008) discusses the need for holistic cultivation efforts, postulating that for educational leadership to advance intellectually and practically in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, there must be greater emphasis on developing administrators with a focus on both the science and art of leader development. Murphy (2006) provides an overview of the three key dimensions of leadership preparation in school administration: understanding the history of how we arrived; performing a critical analysis of the current



state of affairs; and developing an agenda for improvement. Gonzalez (2010) speaks to the current career limitations on deans as “up, out, or back” (p. 7). In a deliberate development construct, where broadening is not only encouraged but embraced, deans could also move “across” the organization.

The document entitled *Air Force Doctrine 1-1, Leadership and Force Development* (2011) provides an outstanding template for deliberate development, enduring competencies and the need and methodology for succession planning in large, can't fail organizations. The major milestones of DAL which might be cross-applied to higher education include the identification of a pathway for each career track along with specific waypoints for leadership building. Broadening is also built into the timeline, moving the employee through key competencies such as diversity, technology and financial positions. Targeted continuing education opportunities should be sourced for high potential leaders, and sabbaticals or rest periods encouraged. The result of DAL efforts was a published, agreed upon career path for every discipline, leading to the top leadership positions. The transparency allowed officers to understand specific requirements to ascend the leader ladder, and trust was restored between members and the promotion and hiring systems. Annual developmental boards now convene for each of 22 career tracks, chaired by the senior leaders in the career field. The group discusses individual officers, who do not appear in person, but can communicate their career intentions and personal needs directly and confidentially to the board. After a review of this correspondence and the official records including annual appraisals, high potential leaders (those likely to become general officers) are identified and placed on the right track to the top.

The new leader development construct in the Air Force had unexpected benefits, such as the ability to “rescue” officers who take time off of the fast track for personal reasons, or accept a nontraditional job within the organization. The comprehensive and transparent career board review process also discourages and suppresses the cronyism formerly present in the Air Force system for decades. High potential minorities are assured equal footing and deliberately placed on the right track to ensure diversity in leadership positions. As a result of the new process, retention increased and the result was a robust pool of developed, diverse, “healthy” and “ready” leaders from which the senior managers could select for key positions. The Air Force’s groundbreaking leader development work offers a structure that might be duplicated within the higher education enterprise, whether on a smaller scale within a school system, at state level or nationally.

Finally, educational leadership in the 21<sup>st</sup> century requires an emergent skill set. For example, Pounder, Reitzug, and Young (2002) state the need for managers with the knowledge, skills and dispositions to push agendas, establish an environment where all can excel and collaborate within the community. The authors believe it is time to “recast” leaders in education in order to meet changing needs across the enterprise. Kezar and Eckel (2008) explore whether transformational or transactional leaders, or a combination of styles would help create a campus environment more supportive of a diverse populace of students, staff and faculty. Also, according to Barden (2013). “Scholar-leaders” with the necessary knowledge, ability, and mindset to think strategically and act boldly are becoming increasingly rare. Thought leaders are clearly calling for a new leadership style in higher education to address emergent challenges.

## **Succession Planning**

The body of literature concerning succession planning in higher education is quite small, but very useful to this discussion. In a study on leadership, diversity and succession planning in academia (Gonzalez, 2010) asserts that higher education has not borrowed one of the best attributes of business culture, which is its tradition of developing leaders through succession planning. According to Gonzalez (2010), the lack of succession planning leads to the underutilization of talent. She further asserts that succession planning must not be confused with the activity of replacement hiring and that it “provides an organization with a surplus of talent by helping members realize their potential, which should not be confused with performance” (Gonzalez, 2010, p. 2). Indeed, succession planning is important to large institutions; Peter Drucker observed that “Japanese top management may spend more time thinking about management succession than on anything else,” an activity that gave them significant competitive advantage before U.S. business luminaries copied their activities (Drucker, 1980, p. 229).

As discussed previously, the ACE 2012 report shows a marked increase in the use of search consultants. Atwell (2009) presents evidence that the lack of succession planning in higher education has directly led to an increased need for headhunters to recruit and secure administrators. Also, according to Gonzalez (2010), progressive thinkers in the higher education realm are questioning the wisdom of national searches and are proposing internal solutions. James J. Duderstadt, former president of the University of Michigan, believes governing boards should demand their institutions engage in succession planning and Dr. Bornstein is a proponent of presidential preparedness through internal talent development programs. The University of Notre

Dame provides an excellent case study regarding internal succession planning and associated activities that mirror those found in the business world, according to Gonzalez (2010). For example, five years before one of their presidents stepped down, several promising leaders already serving at Notre Dame were identified, trained and cultivated for the position, with one ascending to the position from the assistant provost role. The new president of Massachusetts Institute of Technology was formerly its provost. However, not all institutions embrace internal candidates for the presidency, instead looking outside for fresh insights, or imposing a “waiting period” between leadership roles for individuals at the school in the institution. Interestingly, Parkman and Beard (2008) assert that due to a lack of active succession planning in universities, “imposters” are filling key positions in higher education. An imposter for this purpose is a person who believes their accomplishments were the result of luck versus skill and talent, thus introducing self-doubt and a lack of confidence in the leader. The researchers propose that succession planning and having an adequate pool of developed leaders will reduce this phenomenon, thus increase the likelihood of placing a successful leader.

### **Mentoring**

The term *mentor* comes from Greek mythology in which Odysseus, who was away on travel, entrusted the care and education of his child to a friend, Mentor (Homer, 850, Book II). In the workplace, mentoring provides, first, an instrumental or career function (sponsorship, coaching, corporate culture instruction), and second, an intrinsic or psychosocial function (serving as a model, a confidant, a friend) (Cunningham, 1999, p. 443). Mentoring is also a power-free partnership between two individuals who desire mutual growth, and one of the individuals usually has greater skills, experiences, and

wisdom (Weinstein, 1998, p. 11). According to Gibbons (2000), “mentoring is a protected relationship in which learning and experimentation can occur, potential skills can be developed, and in which results can be measured in terms of competence gained rather than curricular territory covered” (p. 18). The person offering the mentoring is usually referred to as a mentor, while the recipient or partner may be identified as a mentee or protégé. Mentoring is also a way of protecting the institution; there is “less likelihood that persons will fall prey to personal or professional bad decision-making or moral failure if they are in an open, caring, ongoing mentor relationship” (Penner, 2001, p. 45).

Levinson et al. (1978) assert that mentoring is extremely underdeveloped in the setting of higher education, stating “Our system of higher education, though officially committed to fostering intellectual and personal development of students, provides mentoring that is generally limited in quantity and poor in quality” (p.334). Few case studies illustrate the power of mentoring and growing leaders in higher education; for instance, Parker and Scott (2010), illustrate the importance and positive impact of mentoring while following a professor and his mentor over the course of 4 years, from pre-tenure to full tenure. However, there is a tendency in the literature to treat mentoring in higher education as a program, whereas leader development activities make it a process, wedded with daily activities. Canton and James (2008) compiled best practices in mentoring in higher education, giving a good overview of terminology and relationship maintenance, however not addressing mentoring and leader development synonymously. Other higher education-based studies explore athlete mentoring, mentoring through

student affairs activities, and faculty mentoring, yet stop short of tying mentoring to the college presidency pathway.

Although mentoring may result in higher productivity, one aspect of mentoring as related to leader development is the transmission of knowledge, organizational culture, wisdom, and experiences (Hall, 2002). Much like tribal activities, the transference of cultural artifacts such as language, traditions, informal rules and storytelling would serve to strengthen any profession and foster stewardship and camaraderie. Although vast, it is quite possible to see higher education as a large enterprise with one culture that transcends individual missions. Furthermore, it is helpful to view postmodern organizations not through management charts or physical buildings and activities, but as processes of human behavior (Diamond & Allcorn, p. 61) or as “socially constructed realities that rest as much in the heads and minds of the members as they do in concrete sets of rules and relations” (Morgan, 1998, p. 135). Viewing higher education as a system that transcends the university walls and mentoring for success of the entire profession would create a core group of contenders ready to assume the presidency at any institution.

### **Enduring Competencies**

This study introduces the concept of enduring competencies to higher education. Enduring competencies are foundational and do not change with time, institution type or environmental factors; they are the personal and leadership qualities and values that are likely common to all leaders in academe. For instance, today’s college presidents share certain competencies with their predecessors, such as ethical leadership, social responsibility, and a hardiness of spirit. Enduring competencies don’t define leadership

styles; it is still possible to be the passionate traditionalist or pragmatic visionary at a Liberal Arts institution, or the global ambassador or thought leader at a research university as envisioned by Skinner and Miller (2012). Enduring competencies transcend leadership styles and skills, and should be identified and factored into the deliberate leader development construct since the pool is cultivated early -- and similarly. Activities to identify with, and hold true, a set of enduring competencies results in cohesion and a presidency profession will likely emerge.

Competencies are not values, although both are closely related to the culture of the profession. There is a small body of work regarding values in higher education although it is topic-specific such as religious based education, or degree-specific challenges such as academics working in cutting edge fields such as genetics research. Most colleges and universities have their own core values, although there are certainly threads that connect all schools such as access, affordability and upholding academic freedom. Understanding enduring competencies in higher education is also important when bringing in “outsiders” to the presidency, to ensure they demonstrated similar ideals in their previous occupation and ensuring a good fit with academia.

### **A Critical View of Leader Development in Higher Education**

Not all employees in an institution want to rise to leadership positions, including those in higher education. Fortunately, higher education does not share the “up or out” promotion system with the military, therefore employees can stay in their current positions indefinitely, especially tenured faculty. Deans may even move back to faculty positions instead of forward to a Provost role without penalty, and usually without reduced salary. Therefore, a formal leader development system may not be embraced, as

employees do not want to signal career intentions or feel forced along a continuum they do not wish to travel. Barden (2013) asserts that institutional and faculty culture in higher education work against leader development. Department chairs are seen as a temporary position, or even a demotion from a full time faculty position, even if it is the best grooming job for a dean position. Furthermore, the “academic culture tends to be suspicious of faculty members who desire administrative responsibility” (Barden, 2013) which means that leader identification and career broadening activities enacted as part of a development construct might not be embraced or valued. Decision-making structures in higher education also contribute to limited leadership development for faculty members, and fiscal management and fundraising remains mysterious to faculty members (Barden, 2013). Also, the faculty culture is such that those who aspire to executive leadership are not treasured, but denigrated. Barden (2013) states that “even traditional leaders - people who started out as faculty members and colleagues - are vilified for the very act of attempting to lead. Mentors regularly advise graduate students to avoid administrative responsibility.” Faculty want leadership that emerges from their ranks, yet they don't encourage (and often actively discourage) peers and assistants to develop the skills, knowledge, and desire to lead. Barden (2013) even cites antipathy towards leadership among professors that is counter to leader cultivation activities.

Therefore the culture of higher education may need to change before accepting a deliberate leader development construct. Factoring in faculty unions, the concept may be further jeopardized. Unions often sit on steering and selection committees for leadership positions, and are even making leadership decisions at some public institutions; for example, in the Minnesota State College system, the union has voted for the director of



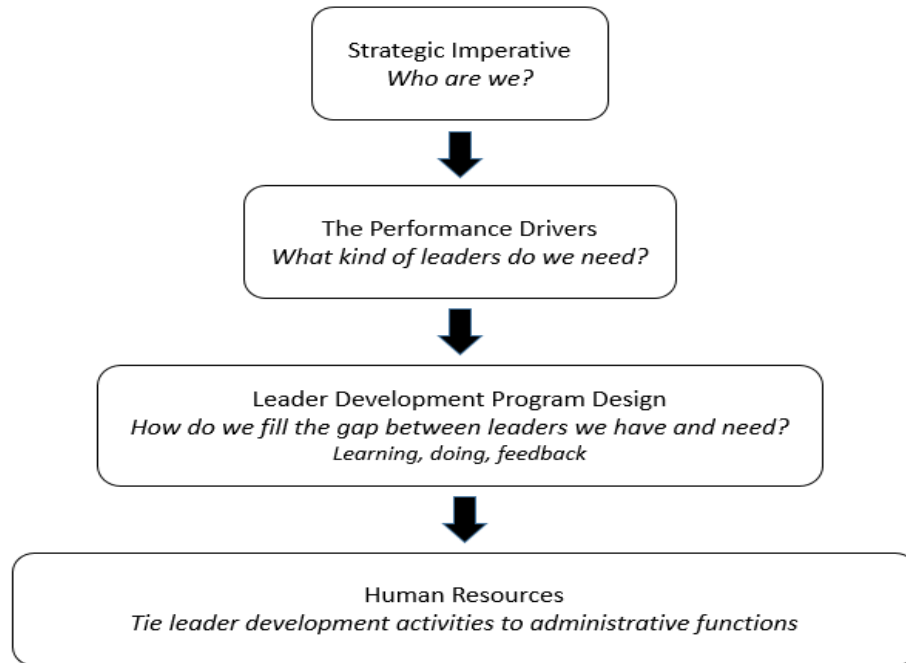
the Center for Teaching and Learning for the last decade (Milne and Springboard, 2010). The combination of an unwillingness to lead, the unpopularity of being on a leadership track, and internal culture of shared governance are challenges that are not insurmountable to the leader development construct in higher education, but daunting.

### **Conceptual Foundation**

The literature review reveals that the leader development topic has multiple perspectives and thus requires a logical structure and framework prior to undertaking research. Lacking a model specific to leader development in higher education, a broad search of models from other enterprises yielded three that that could be adapted to this leader development study. In line with Camp, 2001, the models provide a conceptual framework using what has been learned to best explain the natural progression of a phenomenon being studied.

### **Model 1: Leadership Development with Impact**

The first conceptual framework that guides this study is “Leadership Development with Impact” (Vicere, 2001). The model best summarizes the components that influence the impact of leader development programs.



**Figure 1: The Vicere Model: Leadership Development with Impact (Vicere, 2001)**

The Vicere model presents four key steps for an organization (or enterprise such as higher education) to consider while building processes to develop leaders. Instead of moving immediately to the design phase, as most organizations do when designing a leader development system, the Vicere model encourages going back to the basics. Step one is Strategic Imperatives, in which the organization revisits the foundation for the whole leader development process. Questions asked during this stage include: What is the strategy of the organization? What are we trying to accomplish? What are the core competencies we're trying to leverage? Where are we trying to go? How are we trying to grow? These key strategic imperatives must be understood before designing the leader development initiative.

The next step in the Vicere model is to define the Performance Drivers, the types of leaders and capabilities needed to drive and accomplish the imperatives. Questions at

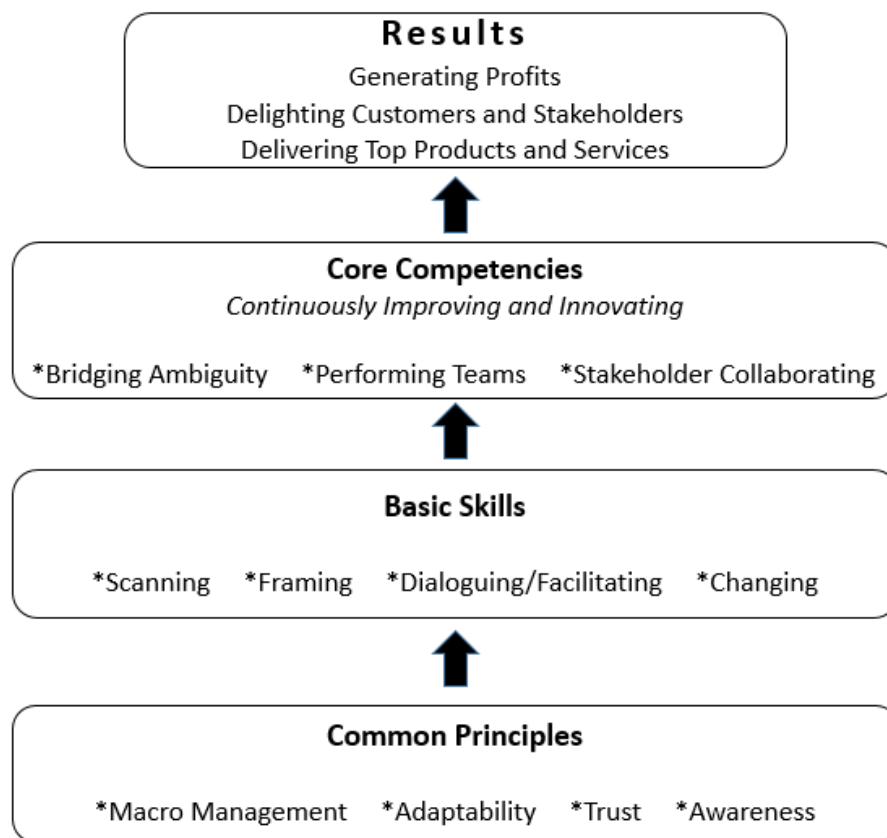
this stage include: Who do we need to deliver the imperatives? What does a leader in our enterprise need to “look like?” What are the skills, capabilities, and perspectives they need to develop? Answering these questions enables the assessment of the existing talent pool for high potential leaders who can best serve in leader roles.

After the strategic imperatives are defined, leader competencies clarified and contenders culled from the organization, then the Program Design phase initiates with three major components: learning, doing and feedback. First, training and education programs are developed to fill gaps between the identified leader pool and what is needed to drive the organization’s objectives. Education must be provided so the high potential leaders learn; however, they also need practice and testing by putting those new skills in play. A key component in the design phase is to construct experiences that will grow leaders with the core competencies needed for the senior positions. Action learning or simulation events are a must for the newfound knowledge to truly take hold and the ability to relate the new skills to the job. Finally, the organization must give feedback in the spirit of continuous improvement.

In the final step of the Vicere model, Human Resources systems are aligned with leader development activities through the identification of high potential talent, the reward system, and succession planning activities. Vicere (2001) asserts that if an organization has the links illustrated in the model in place and it pulls those threads all the way through, as an organization, the result is an effective leadership development initiative.

## Model 2: Agile Leadership Model

A swift, responsive leader development construct would serve higher education well during these times of change and transformation. The Agile Leadership Model (Spielhofer & Kaltennecker, 2012) is a continuous development model urging new skills education centered on emergent core competencies. The authors are organizational design experts from the fast moving information technology world, which has also become a large part of the higher education enterprise. The Agile Leadership Model (ALM) was constructed in line with the systemic theory of German sociologist Niklas Luhmann, who sees organizations as a complex network of diverse elements which cannot be reduced to a single law. Also, the network is self-organizing and adaptive at the same time.



**Figure 2: The Agile Leadership Model (Spielhofer & Kaltennecker, 2012)**

The model's authors state that a more customer-oriented world is forcing senior managers to shift their effort from their organizational strategy to addressing the concerns of their customers, who are increasingly demanding. Also, they assert organizations are becoming more, not less complex, therefore managers must be enablers, not autocratic in nature. The underlying theories that support the ALM certainly apply to higher education. For instance due to the turbulent and uncertain environment, boards are more engaged and demanding than ever. The increased governance significantly sharpens the tension for leaders who must maintain full control and transparency while working in complex environments with empowered teams. Illustrating the symbiotic relationship between higher education and industry, the ALM was designed to help executives lead their agile organizations towards success, instead of being “squeezed between anvil and hammer” by their work teams and their boards (Spielhofer & Kaltennecker, 2012).

The ALM consists of four layers which build upon each other: results, core competencies, basic skills, and common principles. The foundation is laid by the common principles shared by staff and management, then basic skills are identified and form the basis for the leadership core competencies. The ALM introduces the concept of the adaptive value chain, which links customer needs to results. In higher education, common principles might be providing a rich learning experience, in an affordable and accessible manner, within an environment of academic freedom, while providing transparency and accountability to stakeholders. Results from this effort might be ensuring student readiness to enter the global marketplace; the development of an informed, responsible citizen; and “pleasing” stakeholders including future employers,

parents, and tax payers. Finally, the ALM stresses the need to manage change and continuously improve the leader development process.

According to Spielhofer and Kaltennecker (2012), the skills including in the ALM model are a must for all effective leaders, regardless of enterprise, in the 21st century.

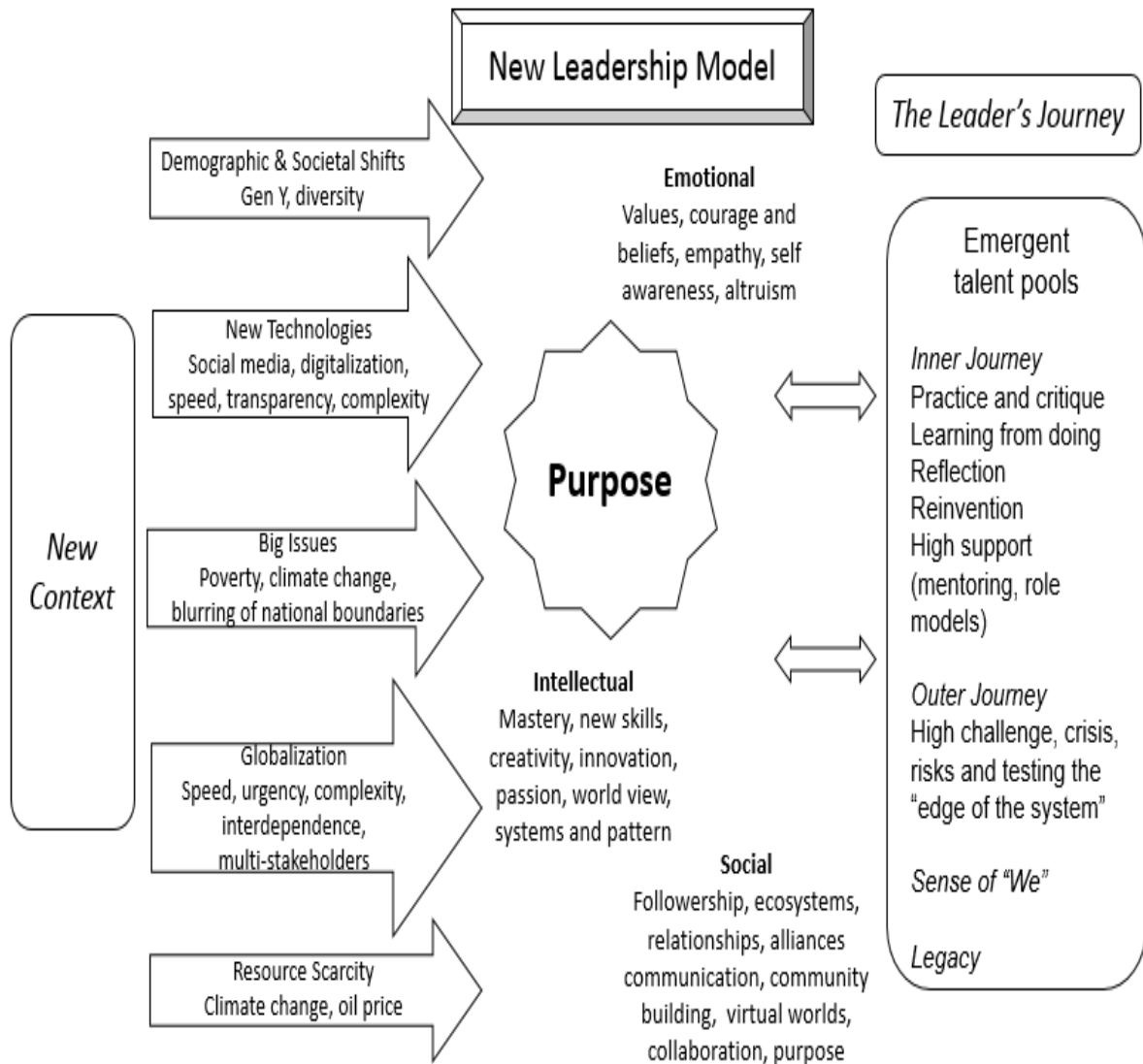
1. Scanning. Scanning is a complex skill, needed in an agile environment, and encompassing an appropriate perception of self, colleagues, the organization and the market. Moreover, these perceptions are not limited to pure observation, but are stimulated by all senses, including intuition.
2. Framing. An agile leader must set the framework for success; thus providing specific direction and the appropriate work environment. Open communication and trust building are key elements of framing activities.
3. Dialoguing & Facilitating. Communication is at the core of each basic skill. Dialoguing and facilitating are needed for collaboration, also known in the ALM as “Agile Facilitation.”
4. Changing. The leader must have the ability to adapt to change. He or she must be reflective; respond openly to unexpected events; resolve current conflicts whether they are at the content level or at the relationship level by applying professional mediation skills; and drive innovation.

Finally, the authors state that the most effective way to reduce uncertainty, as well as complexity, is through trust (Spielhofer & Kaltennecker, 2012). The ALM also reflects the work of Denning (2010) in that it presents a new model of a “radical” leader in the modern complex workplace, and builds on post-heroic leadership theory, which

encourages shared or distributed leadership (Crevani, Lindgren & Packendorff, 2007) and (Fletcher, 2004).

### **Model 3: Leadership as a Journey**

Taking a more strategic view of leadership in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, The World Economic Forum's Global Agenda Council on New Models of Leadership met in 2012 to address the "profound shift in the context in which leadership takes place and in what it takes to flourish as a leader." The diverse council consisted of leaders from various industries and leadership development experts from within corporations, academia, non-governmental organizations and sports authorities. The following participants represented academia: John Maeda, President, Rhode Island School of Design; C. Otto Scharmer, Senior Lecturer, Organization Studies, MIT – Sloan School of Management; Lynda Gratton. Professor of Management Practice, London Business School, United Kingdom and Daniel Goleman, Co-Director, Consortium for Research on Emotional Intelligence in Organizations, Rutgers University. The model depicted in Figure 3 describes the Council's collective assumptions about new models of leadership.



**Figure 3: New Model of Leadership, WEF (2012)**

According to WEF (2012), there is a “quantum change” in the context in which leadership is taking place defined by “significant demographic and societal changes, fundamental technological advances and continuous globalization, as well as complex multi-stakeholder issues and resource scarcity.” As a result, there is a “new leadership space that contains tensions and balances.” This space is defined by a leader’s profound sense of purpose, which can be described in three ways: through the emotional capacity of the leader (values, courage, self-awareness, authenticity); by their intellectual and



cognitive development (creativity, innovation, world view, systems thinking); and by the extent and depth of their social relationships and networks (community building, alliances, collaboration, and virtual worlds). The Council believes developing this new leadership space will require a profound leader journey. At the heart of this journey is an inner and outer journey; the inner journey describes how the leader learns through reflection, mentoring and practice and the outer journey describes the testing experiences in which leadership is forged and includes challenge, risk and working at the “edge of the system.”

Clearly the New Model of Leadership provides context for and informs new leader development constructs in higher education. Every aspect depicted in the “new context” section on the left of the model applies to higher education, and the resource scarcity section could be expanded to include constraints such as decreased state funding to higher education and inability for parents to pay rising tuition costs. The inner and outer journeys depicted on the right side of the model must be facilitated by higher education to connect the emergent leader to the organization and their future role as a senior leader and president. Finally, the model depicts the art/science blend leaders must achieve for optimal success in modern, complex organizations and environments.

### **Chapter 3: Methodology and Procedure**

This mixed-methods study provides a better understanding and more complex picture of leader development activities in higher education. The subjects of this study were identified as university presidents, current (Phase 1) and a mix of current and prior presidents, and board members (Phase 2). All data was gathered with the explicit permission of the participants. The Benedictine University Institutional Review Board guidelines were followed and approvals obtained prior to starting this project.

To address the research problem of how higher education can devise a deliberate leader development process that includes talent identification, mentoring, skill development, career broadening and succession planning, a sequential explanatory mixed method design was employed that consisted of two distinct data collection and analysis phases. Although this multi-faceted approach required significant time and resources to execute, it best addressed and illuminated the myriad facets of the research problem. The methodology consisted of first collecting quantitative data, which provided the general picture of ongoing leader development activities and skill and education requirements for the presidency. In Phase 2, qualitative data refined, elaborated upon and explained the quantitative findings as well as capturing the unique journey of the president and rare insights of former presidents and board members. The final part of the study was analysis of the findings and recommendations for future studies. The procedures and products of each phase of the study are portrayed in Table 1.

**Table 1. Sequential Explanatory Mixed Methods Design**

<b>Phase 1</b>	<b>Procedure</b>	<b>Product</b>
Quantitative Data Collection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Use of the Department of Education's Database of Accredited Postsecondary institutions and Simple Random Sampling to identify subjects</li> <li>- E-mail web-based survey to N=72</li> </ul>	Numeric Data
Quantitative Data Analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Data Cleaning, Accounting</li> <li>- Data Screening</li> <li>- Use of SPSS quantitative software</li> </ul>	Descriptive and Inferential statistics <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Frequency, central tendency, variance</li> <li>- Standard deviation, frequencies</li> <li>- Point-biserial correlation</li> </ul>
Case Selection for Phase 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Purposeful selection of elite survey participants for interview (N=10)</li> <li>- Maximal variation sampling</li> </ul>	Cases (N=10)
<b>Phase 2</b>		
Qualitative Data Collection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Individual, in depth telephone semi-structured interviews with participants</li> <li>- Collection of documents and artifacts</li> <li>- N=14               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>10 sitting presidents from Phase 1</li> <li>2 former presidents</li> <li>2 current board members</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Text data</li> <li>- Transcripts</li> <li>- Documents</li> <li>- Artifacts</li> </ul>
Qualitative Data Analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Use of HyperResearch coding software</li> <li>- Thematic analysis by hand</li> <li>- Within case and across case thematic development</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Codes</li> <li>- In vivo direct quotations</li> <li>- Themes</li> </ul>
<b>Phase 3</b>		
Interpretation of All Data and Analysis	Integration of Phase 1 and 2 results	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Discussion</li> <li>- Prescriptive recommendations</li> <li>- New model for leader development in higher education</li> <li>- Recommendation for future studies</li> </ul>

## **Phase 1: Quantitative Research Design and Data Collection**

The research designs were carefully selected and tailored to the target group, busy college presidents and board members who are difficult to access and time constrained. The result was a web-based survey that was easy to access and complete, and semi-structured interviews scheduled by the subjects at the day and time of their choosing.

### **Research Questions**

For the quantitative phase of the study, the central question was the following: *What are the factors of a leader development program that contribute to preparedness of university leaders and are they present in the current construct?*

Sub questions included:

1. What deliberate development activities are present such as early career identification, career path knowledge and usefulness, succession planning activities, sabbatical utilization and search and job placement activities?
2. What is the state of mentoring in higher education?
3. What skills and attributes are needed and valued in the role of modern college president?
4. Of the skills and attributes identified as needed and valued in the role of modern college president, are they imparted by the higher education enterprise or must associated training and education be obtained and funded outside of the workplace?
5. What are the enduring competencies in higher education, and the state of the concept of the presidency as a vocation or calling?

## **Variables.**

Independent Variables. Several independent variables emerged while investigating the research problem.

1. Carnegie type and size of school
2. Gender
3. Experience in presidency positions and higher education writ large
4. Early identification of leadership potential.
5. Existence of a career path.
6. The existence of a formal mentoring program in higher education.
7. Evidence of active succession planning.
8. The traits and skills needed for the modern day college president and how they are obtained or developed.
9. Replacement activities relating to the search

These questions were addressed with nominal and categorical data, as well as attitudinal surveys with use of Likert scales. Although information was collected concerning the type and size of school, as well as gender of the president, it was not included as variables in the study since the proposed deliberate development construct is not tailored - it is institution and gender blind. Furthermore, using these factors, in addition to other data such a term length of the presidency and “journey” data gathered in Phase 2 interviews could lead to inadvertent disclosure of participants. However, broad demographic descriptive data is provided in Chapter Four for context and all survey data will be retained for use in future meta-studies.

Dependent Variable. The dependent variable for the quantitative study is the presence of deliberate development activities in higher education. Therefore, if a president is part of a formal leader activity, such as early identification, a career path, mentoring, enterprise-provided leader education and sabbaticals, and succession planning this is defined as deliberate development. The presence of informal leader development activities was not ignored, and was construed as an indicator of readiness and need for a formal construct.

Control variable. Only current university presidents were surveyed.

Nominal-type variables. Nominal variables in the study included name, institution, whether this was the first presidency and highest degree held. Continuous variables included years in the current presidency, years in any past presidencies, and years in the higher education career field.

### **Data Collection Approach**

Phase 1 of the study began with the careful development, distribution, collection and analysis of an elite survey instrument addressed specifically to the sitting college president. The survey instrument was divided into five main thematic areas.

*Demographic data* was collected to identify the current institution by Carnegie classification. Further questions determined the respondent's experience level and cumulative time spent in higher education. Respondents were also queried about their terminal degree and professional background with regards to path to the presidency.

*Evidence of deliberate development activities* was gathered through questions related to talent identification activities; existence of a career path; succession planning and search activities; broadening opportunities; and use of sabbaticals.

*The traits and skills needed for the modern college president* were identified through Likert scale questions rating the importance of key leader traits and skills. Respondents were also asked to identify whether they received the appropriate training for proficiency in the skills and whether the training was self-procured and/or funded.

*The existence of a formal mentoring program* was assessed through questions related to participation in a formal mentoring program at present time or at any time in the career; evidence of informal mentoring activities; and asking the respondent whether he or she was mentored. Mentoring is a key component of a leader development program, thus garnering its own section of the survey.

*The identification of enduring competencies* area of the survey sought to isolate traits the presidents believed were enduring over time and shared with colleagues in the categories of personal leadership, leading people and teams, and leading the institution. A knowledge assessment about the concept of enduring competencies and a question asking whether presidents believe the presidency is a vocation or calling assessed openness to these emergent concepts to support future work in this realm.

### **Survey Administration**

College presidents are senior executives who are difficult to access and have extreme time constraints. Therefore, the survey was designed to be easily accessible, with a pleasant look and user-friendly format. Further, it was intended not only to gather data, but to spark interest and excitement about new leader development concepts, with the hopes that presidents would agree to conduct a personal interview for Phase 2 of the project.

The president's survey (Appendix A) included 29 questions, with the first 11 nominal questions constructed to gather demographic information such as name and school; length of presidency or presidencies; information about the highest degree held; whether their hiring came from outside of higher education, and length of time serving in higher education positions. The remaining questions were divided into threads: Career Path and Succession Planning; Traits and Skills Needed to Succeed; Impact of Mentoring on Career; and Enduring Competencies of Higher Education. The traits and skills questions were either Yes/No, or constructed on a Likert scale with a 5-point scale (1-Not needed; 5-Very important). The Likert questions assessed the skills needed for the presidency, if the subject received the appropriate education and training and if so, whether it was self-procured and funded. The survey was pretested with 4 doctoral students, 2 university deans and 2 former university presidents. Based on their input, minor adjustments were made to the wording and ordering of survey questions.

The survey was constructed in SurveyMonkey<sup>TM</sup>, a web-based tool which allowed immediate transfer to the IBM SPSS program, the software used for statistical analysis in this study. The offices of all subjects were personally contacted to obtain an accurate email address. An email was crafted with an invitation to participate, explanation of the study and a link to the survey. In situations of sluggish survey response, such as experienced in this study, Dillman (2000) suggests a process wherein subjects who have not responded one week after receiving the survey link receive an e-mail reminder, along with more information about the researcher and importance of the topic. Two weeks later, a second e-mail reminder is sent and another two weeks later, a third and final request. In addition to using the Dillman (2000) process, all emails contained a



personalized introduction to the study, information about the research and requested help with partnering for success.

### **Population and Sample**

The study focused on the 3,156 regionally accredited 2 and 4 year colleges and universities in the United States as taken from the Department of Education's Database of Accredited Postsecondary Institutions. After determining the population, the sample size was calculated. Sample size is related to precision and accuracy, with respect to applying the results against the entire population. However, it was discovered during pre-testing and follow on research there was "survey fatigue" among the presidents, who receive an overwhelming amount of surveys from doctoral students, associations and education think tanks. Furthermore, a distaste for mass surveys was indicated, as well as frustration with recent inundation of leadership-related questionnaires.

Therefore, taking the challenging survey environment into account, as well as the need to individually tailor emails and establish personal contact with presidents and staff to ensure survey participation, a sample size of 72 was deemed manageable for purposes of this study and its resource limitations. To generate the sample, the list of 3,156 schools was copied into an Excel spreadsheet and using a randomizer, 72 schools were selected for the study. The sample was scrubbed to ensure adequate representation of school Carnegie type, geographic location and inclusion of Historically Black Colleges and Universities. After school selection, demographic information was gathered regarding the current president to assist with forming the relationship necessary to elicit survey response.

A 95 percent confidence rate was established on the sample; there was a 95 percent possibility the entire population of presidents would select the same answer to a question plus or minus the 11.3 percent confidence interval, or margin of error. This margin of error was introduced and test power sacrificed to obtain participation and in the interest of limited resources such as time. The small sample size and margin of error meant results could not be applied across the entire population, however may be used to guide for future studies on the topic.

As a group of senior executives with national level impact, similar to political, military and economic leaders, college presidents were considered “elite” for purposes of this study (Mills, 1956). Elite survey samples are often small due to the reclusive, difficult-to-penetrate characteristics of the target group. In his work regarding “Real World Research,” Robson (2002) states that even though in some studies the survey of an entire population is feasible, there are also instances when “the population of interest is manageably small [and that] it should not be assumed, however, that a full census is necessarily superior to a well-thought-out sample survey” (p. 260). Therefore, the reliability and validity of the survey instrument was imperative to ensure data collection efforts were as thorough and pristine as possible.

### **Reliability**

Various reliability tests were considered for the survey. The test for equivalency was not possible, since this is the only survey of its kind. Reliability through test/retest was also not viable, with the difficult-to-access group. However, a third aspect of reliability is internal consistency, or homogeneity, which can be tested using Cronbach’s

Alpha. Cronbach's Alpha was run on question 19 which asked respondents to rate the importance of certain traits and skills for college presidents using Likert scales.

**Table 2. Cronbach's Alpha Reliability for Likert Scaled Question 19**

Cronbach's Alpha $\alpha$	N of Items
.924	12

Since  $\alpha \geq .9$ , the reliability for question 19 is "Excellent," which is important for the study since identification of traits and skills for the presidency position is a key part of forming a leader development construct.

Twenty questions on the survey are dichotomous with Yes/No answers with binary variables, scores as 2 (yes) or 1 (no) in this study. The Kuder Richardson formula 20, or KR 20 (Kuder & Richardson, 1937) provides a means for measuring reliability for index for dichotomous questions. The KR 20 is a special case of Cronbach's Alpha, and was applied to the 20 yes/no questions in the survey.

**Table 3. KR 20 Alpha Reliability**

Cronbach's Alpha $\alpha$	N of Items
.715	20

Since  $0.7 \leq \alpha < 0.9$ , the reliability for the dichotomous Yes/No questions is "Good." The remaining survey questions were either demographic in nature, or required participants to choose from a list of terms and concepts.

### **Validity**

Validity is a check for accuracy, therefore, the survey design was analyzed to ensure the questions had the necessary content and were asked in a manner that induced

the least amount of bias or error. In terms of content validity, questions were scanned to ensure they reflected the key variables in the study, were not extraneous or tedious, and would deliver the most thorough response possible. For internal validity, each question was tested to ensure answers could not have a double or contradictory meaning when combined with others. Finally, the survey was examined for external validity, meaning how well the results can be applied to the entire population. Since the sample pool in this study was limited, factor analysis was an inadequate test for validity, therefore the results from this study are applicable only to the respondent population. However, as analysis will later show, there are many relationships between the variables in which the positive strength of the relationship can be determined.

### **Survey Results**

The overall response rate was 32 percent (n=23), however two surveys were eliminated since subjects stopped answering questions after the demographic section.

### **Data Entry and Screening**

Survey data was downloaded from the online instrument into an SPSS compatible file. SPSS Version 22 for Windows (SPSS, Inc, Chicago, 2013) was used for survey analysis. Data was screened for errors using SPSS descriptives and frequency analyses. The “time in higher education” question was converted into scale data to allow for averaging. Variables were renamed and streamlined to allow for easier data computation with the SPSS software. Typically, missing data will be replaced with an average derived from responses to the question, as computed by SPSS. However, for purposed of this study, an average was not submitted for missing values. On personal questions about mentoring, leadership skills and institutional programs, questions may have been left

blank due to privacy concerns; therefore, submitting an average value for these missing records would have resulted in skewed data. Nominal data such as years in the presidency were collapsed into ranges for certain statistical computations. Finally, Likert scaled questions were deemed consistent and the values did not require transposing.

### **Phase 2: Qualitative Research Design and Data Collection**

Phase 2 of this mixed methods study was a qualitative design to gather data regarding the leader identification process and existence of a career path and succession planning; isolate the presence and importance of leader development activities such as mentoring; identify the attributes and skills needed in the modern college presidency and identify any knowledge gaps with the research cohort; and to assess the higher education environment and associated challenges for presidents. The survey also sought to capture the unique leader journey, to explore whether participants shared similar experiences and glean insight into the matching and fit process. The following describes the qualitative research design and data gathering activities.

### **Constructivist Grounded Theory**

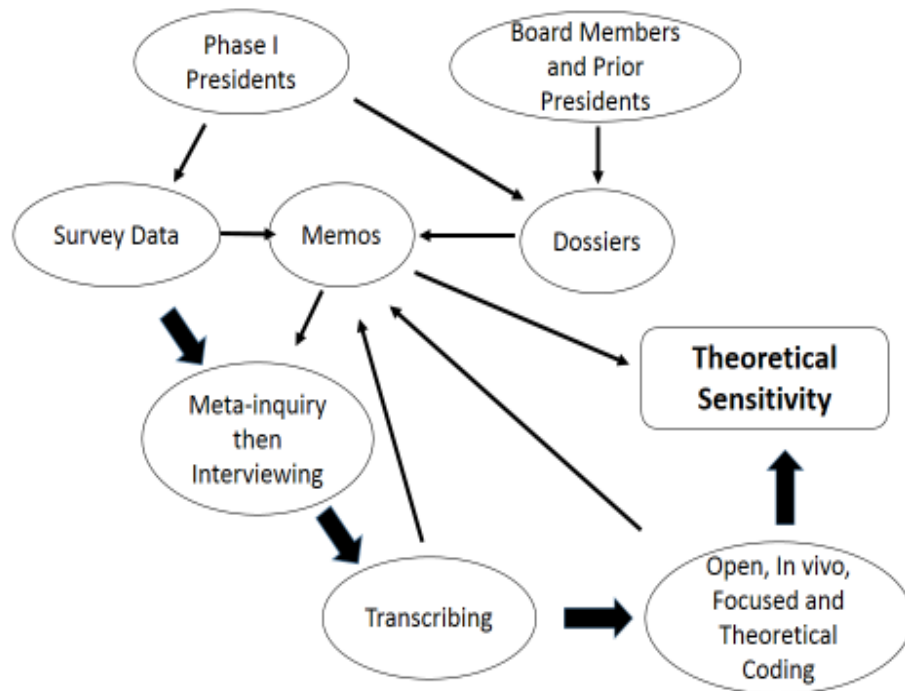
Grounded theory, first introduced by Glaser and Strauss (1967), provides an excellent framework for discovering emergent theory using comparative analysis. In order to get to the heart of how to develop a robust pool of leaders who are tested and ready for the presidency, understanding the skills and attributes necessary to navigate the current stormy waters of higher education is a necessity. Questions at the heart of this research include: What is it like to be a college president today? How did the journey prepare the president? Once in the chair, what skills were lacking? What are the joys and angsts associated with the modern presidency? Grounded theory methodology is the

best way to get to the core of these personal and thought-provoking questions regarding individual journeys and to identify common threads, concerns and challenges.

The ten sitting college presidents interviewed in Phase 2 completed surveys in Phase 1, therefore a relationship between researcher and subjects was previously formed and foundational data available and reviewed before the interview. The two prior presidents tested or sampled the survey, and information about their career paths, and those of the two board members, was readily available on the Internet. Furthermore, an initial relationship was built between researcher and subjects in both Phases 1 and 2 through a series of introductory and subsequent emails that discussed the researcher's experience and credibility, and shared concerns regarding leader development in higher education. In traditional research, the researcher/participant relationship is represented hierarchically, with the participant being subordinate to the researcher (Fontana & Frey, 1994); however reciprocity and a balance of power was created in Phase 1 of this study.

Therefore, the Constructivist Grounded-Theory (CGT) approach (Charmaz, 2006) was selected for the Phase 2 research, bringing power to the overall study with its inductive, comparative and interactive approach. The CGT framework was first constructed with purposeful sampling to continue building on early analysis of data and support on-going theory development. Throughout Phase 2, data collection and analysis took place in alternating sequences of induction and deduction (Strauss & Corbin, 1990) and (Miles & Huberman, 1994), with a constant comparison of data. Variables were not identified prior to data collection, but instead introduced by the interviewee and developed through coding by the researcher. Data was collected until theoretical

saturation, when no new or relevant data or categories emerged and relationships between categories were established (Strauss & Corbin, 1998).



**Figure 5. Research Methodology**

The concurrent data collection and analysis allowed for a theoretical sensitivity to the data.

Charmaz (2003) advocates for a mutual relationship between the researcher and participants resulting in the creation of a shared reality, allowing for the multiple truths and perspectives. The interviews were thus conducted in a way where knowledge was produced and sensemaking occurred throughout the process, for depth, feeling, reflexive thought, and to lend a “voice” to the data. As executive leaders, there was a mutual interest between research and subjects, as well as a sense of stewardship regarding the topic of leader development. The study did not ignore, but embraced opinions contrary to

the overarching concept of the need for a deliberate leader development construct in higher education. Several Phase 1 participants wanted a Phase 2 interview to illustrate, through their journey, how a formal leader development program would not have been helpful and how some of the skills portrayed in the study as critical were not. In grounded theory, the researcher needs to be cognizant of adopting a non-judgmental stance towards those they are listening to and resist the urge to assign values to participants' responses. Therefore, alternate opinions and nonconcurrence were encouraged during the interviews to cull forth the unique perspectives of this exclusive group. The overarching construct of this qualitative research was to let the data lead where it may, and try to understand what the participants see as being significant and important, yet employ more structure than classical grounded theory affords to keep the research moving forward.

### **Elite Interviewing Strategy**

Collecting data from elite subjects presents unique challenges and requires extra planning and careful execution, particularly when conducting personal interviews. A body of literature exists regarding elite research techniques related to developing the instrument, determining the sample size and collecting and analyzing the data. Zuckerman (1996), who regularly interviews Nobel Laureates, instructs the researcher to have an ultra-structured approach and tailor the interview to the subjects. Robson (2007) proposes that when deciding the size of the sample, the researcher should consider whether it would be more preferable to do a smaller number of longer, more detailed interviews.



“The harder-to-get may differ from the rest in important ways. This should be considered when drawing up the sampling size – perhaps you want to devote more resources to the actual data analysis than a difficult collection process.” (Robson, 2007, pp. 260–261)

Aldridge (1993) argues that when conducting elite interviews, an awareness of both commonalties and divergences better supports an effective dialogue.

Taking these aspects of elite interviewing into consideration, the instrument was pre-tested and structured. The sample size was manageable for conducting a lengthy interview, which was scheduled at the interviewee’s will. Finally, rapport was well established prior to the interview through information exchange and contact in Phase 1.

### **Use of Meta-Inquiry**

Due to the limited accessibility of college presidents and board members, and the virtual impossibility of follow up interviews, it was important to ensure the interview questions were well honed, directly related to the study’s overarching questions and would allow the subject to fully tell their unique story. Certainly, “if the questions one asks are not crucial, then differences in responses are not crucial either” (Creswell, 1998, p. 335). Meta-inquiry is also a form of theoretical conditioning, which Strauss and Corbin (1990) define as “the attribute of having insight, the ability to give meaning to data, the capacity to understand, and the capability to separate the pertinent from that which isn’t” (p. 42).

Consequently, the meta-inquiry methodology was employed prior to conducting the elite interviews. Meta-inquiry is “the coding, interpretation, and valuing of the initial responses garnered from a small homogeneous informant group through initial interviews, which include framing, main, and probing questions” (Carlson & McCaslin,

2003, p. 549). Meta-inquiry added rigor to the grounded theory approach, and bridged gaps to prevent taking a leap of faith when designing the interview plan. The activity also increased sensitivity to the environment (or human ecology), prior to executing the formal interviews. The process moved the research closer towards inductive reasoning, allowing that the conclusion a leader development construct is needed for higher education may in fact be false, even if all of the premises are true. Generally speaking, as the emerging theory in a study is conceptualized and generalized, it becomes abstract of time, place, and people from which the data are discovered and evolves from substantive to a higher level, or a formal theory (Glaser, 2001). Meta-inquiry in this study added “a reflective pause to hear and value the voices of key informants before formal interviews start” (Carlson and McCaslin, 2003, p. 551). In line with Glaser (1978) the discovery process was thereby entered with a minimum of predetermined ideas; confirming a preexisting hypothesis was not the goal of Phase 2, but rather the discovery of new knowledge relating to the phenomena.

The meta-inquiry was tailored to the study, and initial test interviews conducted with one current president and one prior president. The major themes and sub questions were introduced, with the researcher remaining passive, thoughtfully considering the responses and capturing the subject’s emotions to the thread, noting response length. Following the meta-inquiry, informal coding was conducted to assess question validity, relevancy and support of the research problem. The “grand tour” questions emerged, those that would allow for the best depiction of the leader journey, and the interview instrument was finalized after some very minor refinement of verbiage and a reordering of questions to encourage more orderly, chronological story development. The addition

of theoretical conditioning through meta-analysis added a greater level of understanding regarding the interview environment, supplementing the knowledge previously gleaned from key literature and data collected in the Phase 1 survey.

## Research Questions

For the second, qualitative phase of this study, these were the strategic research questions:

1. How do the selected factors such as early identification, mentoring and the existence of a formal career path, identified in Phase 1, contribute to or impede leader development in higher education?
2. What are the unique skills, traits and training needed by the modern college president to succeed?
3. What is the current leadership environment in higher education?

Phase 2 began with as few predetermined ideas about potential outcomes as possible. However, "an open mind is not an empty head" (Dey 1993, p.229) and qualitative research does not necessarily have to start with *tabula rasa*, the epistemological clean slate. Therefore, the study was informed (not directed) by existing literature and theories identified in Chapter 2, and prior knowledge and experience of the subjects from conducting the Phase 1 surveys. Table 4 illustrates the main research threads and corresponding Grand Tour questions.

**Table 4. Interview Plan, Current and Former Presidents**

<i>Research Thread</i>	<i>Grand Tour Questions</i>
Do participants share similar experiences that led to their success?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Tell me as much as possible about yourself, family, educational and professional experiences.</li> <li>2. What concerns, if any, do you have regarding the start of your college presidency journey?</li> </ol>

How are leaders in higher education identified?	3. Were you identified early in your career as a future leader in higher education? 4. If so, can you explain how this process took place? 5. Alternatively, do you feel your success was a combination of hard work and happenstance or chance? 6. Did politics play a role in your selection?
How are leaders in higher education developed?	7. Did you have a mentor and what role did he/she have in your development as a leader? 8. Do you feel that you were “deliberately developed”? In other words, was there a plan? 9. Was there a specific career path to your present position? 10. What were the critical steps along the way?
What are the characteristics, qualities, and strategies of the present leader development programs?	11. Did mentoring play a role in your development? 12. Did you broaden and take jobs outside of your core specialty to purposely gain breadth and skills? 13. Did you attend professional leadership training or courses? If so, who sponsored this education?
What attributes are needed in a college president?	14. Specifically, what attributes does it take to succeed as a college president? 15. What do you view as enduring competencies those that persist throughout generations and over time? 16. In what ways is/is not the Presidency a calling? A profession?

Questions for Board members were tailored to their experiences relating to the hiring of college presidents and the unique perspective the presidency, as indicated in Table 5.

**Table 5. Interview Plan, Board Members**

<i>Research Thread</i>	<i>Grand Tour Questions</i>
How are leaders in higher education identified?	1. Do you believe leaders in higher education are identified early in their career? 2. Alternatively, do you feel their success is more likely a combination of hard work and happenstance/chance? 3. Are politics at play in the selection of college presidents?

How are leaders in higher education developed?	4. How might career broadening help? Through which positions? 5. How is mentoring playing a role in the development of College Presidents? 6. Is there a specific career path you consider more advantageous to the Presidency?
What attributes are needed in a college president?	7. What are your thoughts on the increased use of search agencies to find candidates for the Presidency? 8. What are your feelings concerning Presidents who come into the role from outside of higher education? 9. What do you feel are the enduring competencies of the President position that persist throughout the ages?

### **Data Collection**

Grounded theory methodology uses a type of purposeful sampling, theoretical sampling, in which participants are chosen according to specific criteria as informed by on initial findings. Charmaz (1990) suggests that theoretical sampling is best used when some key concepts have been discovered a priori. In Phase 1 of this study, the initial data collection occurred with a random group of presidents, who have all experienced some sort of leader journey. Collection of the initial data allowed broad concepts to emerge, providing the framework for the Phase 2 interviews. Theoretical sampling was then used to generate further data to confirm and refute original categories.

In the Phase 1 survey (Appendix A), question 29 asked for possible participants in Phase 2 of the study. Of twenty-one survey respondents, eleven presidents agreed to the interview, ten declined. One community college president was removed from the interview cohort due to overrepresentation. The final group included presidents at public (1), for profit (1), private liberal arts (2), private religious (3) and community colleges (3). There was a demographic mix of female (3), male (7) and one subject from an

underrepresented racial category. Two former university presidents familiar with the study volunteered to interview, one male and one female, both of whom who led private schools. Two board members were recruited for the study, one female from a private school who recently resigned, and one male from a large community college consortium. The resulting interview group was fairly diverse and represented the spectrum of higher education.

A personalized email introduction was sent to each subject thanking him or her for volunteering for the study, assuring of anonymity privacy protection, and asking for a window of availability for the interview. A dossier was created for each subject, including the survey response from Phase 1 for current presidents; a detailed biography; information about the institution of affiliation including Carnegie type, staff and student body demographics, location and programs offered; and a sample of their published material and anything else of interest gleaned from the Internet. Knowing more about the interviewee allowed for rapid rapport at the start of the interview, and a more open, trusting and fruitful dialogue. Clearly, topics such mentors, dealing with the board of directors and other sensitive issues required trust between participant and interviewer.

Consistent with constructivist grounded theory techniques, memos were constructed prior to the interview to note how the subject was similar or different to the researcher such as shared military or government service, a “latecomer” to higher education, age, geographic area, professional credentials. Specific notes were made about dissimilarities, as well as comments in the Phase 1 survey that dissented from the overarching premise of the study. The discussions flowed easily during interviews as information was shared, a relationship was constructed and knowledge created.

Interviews were conducted over the telephone, lasting from 25 to 55 minutes. All fourteen interviews were accomplished in a four week period. With participant concurrence, discussions were taped to assist with transcript development; audio files were given code names prior to transcription, and destroyed upon receipt and clarification of written transcripts.

### **Biases**

Research bias was introduced during Phase 2 of the study. Qualitative approaches to research are based on a "world view" which is holistic, with the belief there is not a single reality; reality is based upon perceptions that are different for each person and change over time (Joubish, et.al, 2011). Therefore, successful presidents may see their journey as the "right" one. This bias was somewhat mitigated by interviewing past presidents, who may look back on their career objectively and with introspection. Board members have yet a different perspective on the presidency based on their unique goals and expectations. Therefore, all study participants are influenced by their unique experiences, and see the value of leader development activities through their own lens.

### **Researcher's Role and Potential Ethical Issues**

In Phase 1 of this study, the researcher assumed the role of data gatherer and statistician. In Phase 2, there was a hands-on role by conducting the elite interviews, facilitating discussion, and participating in dialogue with the subjects. The researcher has worked with and interviewed senior leaders at the highest level of government, therefore was comfortable with the format and task at hand. As a former human resources executive, the researcher has extensive experience in leader development and all

associated terminology and nuances. There were no ethical issues or conflict of interest items to discuss.



## **Chapter 4: Quantitative Findings**

### **Introduction**

Phase 1 of the study examined the central question: *What are the factors of a leader development program that contribute to preparedness of university leaders and are they present in the current construct?* To fully understand these factors, Phase 1 required characterization of skills and activities needed, detection in the current construct, identification of missing elements, and explanation of the relationship among variables. Therefore, the quantitative analysis evaluated data gleaned from sitting college presidents to gather evidence of deliberate development activities; assess the state of mentoring in higher education; and identify the skills and traits needed in the modern college presidency and ascertain how proficiency is currently achieved. Finally, the study introduced the emergent concept of enduring competencies and proposed the presidency as a profession, vocation or calling and data from those questions will be retained to inform future studies.

### **Demographic Data**

Respondents represented at least 370 man-years in higher education, with 153.5 total years in a current presidency. Presidency term length ranged from 5 months to 24 years; 17 respondents were first term presidents and 4 were in their second presidency. All of the participants verified they were sitting college presidents at the time of survey administration. Although gender was not a specific variable in the study, the data was preserved and may be important to add context to future studies.

The presidents surveyed in Phase 1 of the study consisted of 12 men (57 percent) and 9 women (43 percent), somewhat consistent with the presidency at large which is 74

percent male and 26 percent female (ACE, 2012). The 21 survey respondents were geographically dispersed, representing 19 U.S. states. The Carnegie classification of the institutions led by the surveyed group was broad and included three public research universities; three private liberal arts colleges, five private religious institutions; one for-profit university; one Historically Black College or University; one not-for-profit four-year school; and seven community colleges. Additional data regarding the surveyed group is provided in the following tables to provide context and allow for easy reference.

**Table 6. Time Length in Current Presidency**

<b>Years</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
< 1	2	9.6
1-3	5	23.8
3-5	4	19.0
5-9	4	19.0
9-15	3	14.3
15-24	3	14.3
	Total: 21	100.0

**Table 7. Indication of First Presidency and/or Prior Presidency Length**

<b>First Presidency?</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Yes	17	81.0
No	4	19.0
Prior length: 20 years 7 years 3.5 years 3.5 years		
	Total: 21	100

**Table 8. Hired to the Presidency from a Field other than Higher Education**

<b>Response</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Yes Religious leadership (1) Philanthropy (2)	3	14.3
No	18	85.7
	Total: 21	100

**Table 9. Terminal Degree**

<b>Degree</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Juris Doctor (JD) and Doctorate of Education (EdD)	1	4.8
EdD	3	14.3
PhD - Education	7	33.3
JD	4	19.0
Other PhD, Musicology PhD, Human Development PhD, Public Administration PhD, Biblical Studies PhD, Theology MS, currently in EdD	6	28.6
	Total: 21	100

**Table 10. Cumulative Length of Time in Higher Education Positions**

<b>Years</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
20 or more	15	71.5
15 to 20	2	9.5
10 to 15	2	9.5
10 or less	2	9.5
Total	21	100.0

## Study Variables and Research Questions

Survey questions were carefully constructed to test each of the study variables to identity deliberate leader development activities.

**Table 11. Study Variables and Research Questions**

<b>Demographic Data</b>	
V1	Carnegie classification of school added by researcher
V2	School size added by researcher
V3	Male/Female added by researcher
Q4:	Length of time in current position?
Q5:	Is this your first presidency?
Q6:	If this is not your first presidency, second, third or more?
Q7:	If a prior institution president, length(s) and term(s) in years?
Q8:	Were you hired to this position from a field other than higher education?
Q10:	What is your highest degree held?
Q11:	How long have you served in higher education positions (cumulative?)
<b>Evidence of deliberate development activities</b>	
Q.12:	Were you specifically identified as a future leader in the higher education realm early in your career?
Q.13:	Are you aware that other large enterprises have an identification process very early in the member's career and then specifically manage these "contenders" for future critical leadership positions?
Q.14:	Did you have a specific career path, one that you knew would take you to presidency?
Q.15:	If not, do you believe a specific career path would have been helpful to you in terms of stability, experience, skills and predicting your potential for success?
Q.16:	Is there formal succession planning at your university?
Q.17:	Have you been expected to search or otherwise be involved with identifying your replacement?

Q.18:	Were you part of a national search effort by and external firm when selected for your current position?
Q.25	Have you ever been on a paid or unpaid sabbatical at a university or left higher education to pursue another career?
<b>Traits and skills needed for the modern day college president</b>	
Q.19:	Please rate the importance of the following traits and skills for a successful university president.
Q.20:	Please note whether you received the appropriate education/training for proficiency for these skills and whether it was self-procured/funded.
<b>The existence of a formal mentoring program in higher education</b>	
Q.21:	Do you participate in a formal mentoring program as a mentor?
	Do you informally mentor colleagues who exhibit leadership potential?
	Have you ever been part of a formal mentoring program in your higher education career, either as a mentor or mentee?
	Were you mentored?
<b>The identification of enduring competencies</b>	
Q.22-24	Please select the traits from the list below that you believe are enduring for Personal Leadership (Q.22); Leading People and Teams (Q.23); Leading the Institution (Q.24)
Q.26:	Have you ever thought about the concept of enduring competencies in higher education prior to taking this survey?
Q.28:	Do you believe the college presidency is a vocation or a “calling”?

Hypotheses were tested using survey items that gathered data on study variables.

**Table 12. Hypotheses Matrix**

<b>Hypothesis</b>	<b>Variables</b>	<b>Survey Items</b>	<b>Testing Method</b>
H1. Deliberate leader development activities are negligible or nonexistent for the presidency position.	Existence of early identification; existence of a career path; existence of formal mentoring; existence of formal succession planning; searching for own replacement; use of search agencies; ability to take sabbaticals	Q.12, Q.14, Q.15, Q.16, Q.17, Q.18, Q.25	Descriptive Statistics
H3. There is a positive relationship between the absence of formal succession planning activities and the absence of a formal mentoring program.	Existence of formal succession planning activities  Existence of a formal mentoring program	Q.16, Q.21	Descriptive Statistics
H4. There is a positive relationship between the absence of leader identification and the absence of mentoring.	Leader identification  Mentored during career	Q.12, Q.21	Descriptive Statistics
H5. There is a negative relationship between the leadership training college presidents received and the requirements of the president position	Leader skills required  Leader skill training received	Q.19, Q.20	Inferential Statistics: Point-biserial correlation

### **Descriptive Statistics**

Descriptive statistics were employed to describe the characteristics of the sample; check variables for violations of assumptions; and address the specific study research questions.

## Means and Standard Deviations

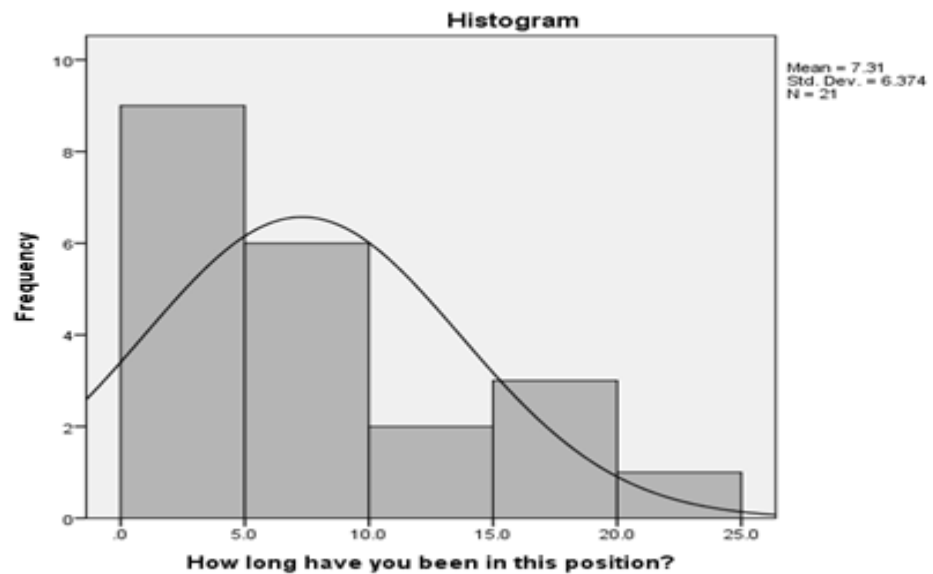
Several data trends and tendencies were noted regarding study variables.

Univariate analysis was performed on the survey responses regarding length of the current presidency. The mean, median, mode and standard deviation were calculated on the data set to assess the respondent population and contained acceptable values.

**Table 13. Time in Current Presidency**

N=	21
Mean	7.310
Median	5.000
Mode	3.0
Std. Deviation	6.3741
Minimum	.3
Maximum	24.0
Sum	153.5

A histogram provides a visual display of the data along with the normative curve:



**Figure 4. Histogram for time in current presidency**

Therefore, for N=21, the average time in the presidency position for study participants was 7.3 years, on track with the average length of service of all college presidents of 7 years in the position (ACE, 2012).

Next, means and standard deviations were run for the 12 Likert-scaled items on Question 19 of the survey, regarding traits and skills needed to succeed as college president. The question was were scaled from 1 = Not needed, 2 = usually not needed, 3 = Desirable, 4 = Important, 5 = Very Important. Responses were gathered from all participants to all questions.

**Table 14. Traits and Skills Needed for Presidency, Rank Ordered by Respondents**

N=21, no missing cases <b>Question</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Std. Deviation</b>
Ability to handle conflict and resolve disputes	4.52	0.92839
Good listener	4.48	0.81358
Able to keep balance in all aspects of life	4.14	1.01419
Intuitive understanding of the budgetary process	4.00	0.83666
Accomplished and poised speaker	4.00	0.83666
Innovative	4.00	0.7746
Understanding how to lead cross culturally	3.95	0.80475
Effective writer	3.90	0.83095
Understanding how to lead cross generationally	3.86	0.91026
Understanding how to lead cross gender	3.76	0.83095
Thorough understanding of human resources practices	3.43	0.74642
Proficient with technology, formal and informal (social)	3.19	0.60159

The data indicated that responses concerning ability to keep balance had the most variation around the average, and being proficient with technology, the least deviation. The most agreed upon necessary skill for the presidency was conflict resolution, followed by listening, life balance, budget, speaking, innovation and writing. Technology and an



understanding of human resources were the least valued skills. In addition to rating the skills, participants also indicated whether they received training and education and if it was provided or self-procured and funded; corresponding analysis occurs later in the chapter.

### **Frequencies**

Due to the small test group size, the use of frequencies was a powerful descriptive statistic used to drill deeper into the subjects' career paths and investigate the presence of deliberate development activities. Absolute frequencies (raw counts) were taken for each dichotomous variable, as well as relative frequencies (percentages of the total number of observations).

**Research Questions 1 and 2.** Research questions 1 and 2 of the study sought to isolate the presence of deliberate development activities including early leader identification, career path, mentoring, succession planning, and replacement activities.

**Identification.** Identifying high potential leaders, or contenders, is the initial step of any leader development construct. The data gathered in this study shows that over three quarters of the presidents surveyed were identified early in their careers as future leaders, or contenders.

**Table 15. Identification as a Future Leader Early in Career**

<b>Response</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Yes	16	76.2
No	5	23.8
Total	21	100.0

**Career path.** Following leader identification, a specific career pathway not only provides motivation, but structure and goals for the contender. However, after subjects noted the

strong tendency for early identification, a specific career path was put forth in only 14 percent of the cases. Of the 16 respondents identified early, 13 had no career path.

**Table 16. Specific Career Path to the Presidency**

<b>Response</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Yes	3	14.3
No	18	85.7
Total	21	100.0

Mentoring. Mentoring can fill in the gaps when a career path is lacking, thus it is the next element explored. A formal mentoring program indicates deliberate leader development activities. However, informal mentoring is also an important indicator, showing leader willingness to provide guidance to contenders, and perhaps signifying a feeling of necessity for the activity and readiness for a formal construct. Also, understanding the president's own journey sheds light on the current "health" of mentoring in higher education. Therefore, respondents were asked a variety of questions regarding mentoring activities to construct a holistic view of the data.

**Table 17. Mentoring**

<b>Question</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Do you participate in a formal mentoring program as a mentor?		
Yes	4	19.1
No	17	80.9
Total	21	100
Have you ever been part of a formal mentoring program in your higher education career, either as a mentor or mentee?		
Yes	9	42.9
No	12	57.1
Total	21	100

Do you informally mentor colleagues with leadership potential?			
	Yes	20	95.2
	No	1	4.8
	Total	21	100
I Was Mentored			
	Yes	10	47.6
	No	11	52.4
	Total	21	100

The data describes several important trends with the respondent group regarding mentoring. Almost 81 percent state they are presently not part of a formal mentoring program, yet 43 percent indicate they were involved in a formal mentoring program at some time during their higher education career. Although more study of this phenomena is needed, one possible explanation is that formal mentoring activities have decreased over time. Informal mentoring activities are present in 95 percent of the cases, indicating a strong desire and willingness on behalf of the presidents to mentor. Finally, slightly more presidents than not indicated they were not mentored in their career.

Succession planning. The presence of formal succession planning is also indicative of deliberate leader development. Presidents were also asked about informal succession planning activities to test for necessity and readiness for a formal construct.

**Table 18. Succession Planning at Current University**

Question	Frequency	Percent
Formal succession planning present		
Yes	3	14.3
No	18	85.7
Total	21	100.0

Informal succession planning present		
Yes	11	52.4
No	7	33.3
No response (from those w/ formal)	3	14.3
Total	21	100

The data indicated that 18 of the 21 schools represented in this survey do not have formal succession planning. Also, it is important to note that 5 of the 18 schools without formal succession planning also do not have informal succession planning. No trends were noted with regards to type of institution of the five schools completely lacking succession planning; there was one from each Carnegie category. The remaining 13 schools without formal succession planning do participate informally, indicating need for this activity.

Refreshment and renewal activities. Sabbaticals in higher education have always been used for faculty to step away from the classroom and pursue personal and/or professional goals. However, when sponsored by the institution, sabbaticals are also an investment in the employee and seen as “the promise of greater worth to the institution” (Heiges, 1954). Unless there is a deliberate development construct, those on the leadership fast track are typically not given such opportunities to refresh and renew, however it is arguably more important for this group. Subjects were asked whether they ever had a paid sabbatical at a university during their career; 8 presidents (38 percent) stated “Yes” and 13 presidents (61.9 percent) stated “No.”

Replacement activities. Replacement activities are important in senior executive positions, to create as little disruption to the organization as possible and ensure a good “fit.” Presidents were asked if they had ever been asked to help identify their replacement; only 3 (14 percent) said “yes.” The data may be interpreted as a sign of

“health” in terms of absence of nepotistic behavior. Presidents were also asked if they were part of a national search when hired for their current position and 62 percent stated yes, which correlates with data indicating that 60 percent of college presidents hired in 2012 were found through the use of an external search (ACE, 2012). The increase in external search activity may be an indication of the lack of a pool of contenders, particularly internal to the organization, or from local or regional institutions.

### **Descriptive Testing**

Viewing frequencies gave great insight into the data, however descriptive statistics were run to examine the strength of H1. Although a hypothesis cannot be proven or tested through descriptive statistics, it is helpful for future research to indicate whether the data supports the theory put forth.

**Hypothesis 1.** H1 states: Deliberate leader development activities are negligible or nonexistent for the presidency position. To examine this hypothesis, the percentage, mean and standard deviation were calculated for the six primary questions asked to gather information related to this hypothesis.

**Table 19. Summary of Descriptive Statistics for Hypothesis 1**

<b>Descriptive Statistics</b>						
	N	Yes = 1	No = 2	Mean	Std. Deviation	Support Hypothesis?
Were you specifically identified as a future leader in the higher education realm early in your career?	21	16 76.2%	5 23.8%	1.2381	.43644	<b>N</b>
Did you have a specific career path, one that you knew would take you to the presidency?	21	3 14.3%	18 85.7%	1.8571	.35857	<b>Y</b>

Do you participate in a formal mentoring program as a mentor?	21	4 19%	17 81%	1.8095	.40237	<b>Y</b>
Is there formal succession planning at your university?	21	3 14.3%	18 85.7%	1.8571	.35857	<b>Y</b>
Have you ever been on a paid sabbatical at a university?	21	8 38.1%	13 61.9%	1.6190	.49761	<b>Y</b>
Were you part of a national search effort by an external firm when selected for your current position?	21	13 61.9%	8 3.1%	1.3810	.49761	<b>Y</b>

**Hypothesis 2.** H2 states: There is a positive relationship between those who did not have a career path and their belief a career path would have been useful. Chi-square could not be computed since two cells had had an expected count of less than 5 cases. Fisher's Exact Test of Independence would not address the research questions since the goal is not to compare groups, just examine the desire for a career path. Crosstabulation of the two questions related to this hypothesis gives further insight – how does presence of a career path affect career path belief?

**Table 20. Career Path and Belief**

		Did you have a specific career path, on that you knew would take you to the presidency?	
		Yes	No
Would/does a career path help?	Yes	3 100%	<b>11</b> <b>61.1%</b>
	No	0	7 38.9%
Total		3	18

Therefore, a cross tabulation of the raw data shows that 11 of the 18 without a career path, or 66 percent believed one would be helpful, supporting the hypothesis that there is

a positive relationship between variables. Those who did not have a career path and indicated one would not have been helpful see their ascension to the top as the “correct” path.

**Hypothesis 3.** H3 states: There is a positive relationship between the absence of formal succession planning activities and the absence of a formal mentoring program. Chi-square could not be computed since three cells had an expected count of less than 5 cases. Fisher's Exact Test of Independence would not address the research questions since the goal was not to compare groups, but to examine the relationship between succession planning and mentoring. Typically, a succession plan indicates specific individuals have been identified and are being cultivated to replace top leaders, a situation which likely establishes formal mentoring relationships. Crosstabulation of the two questions related to this hypothesis gives further insight – what is the relationship between the absence of succession planning and the lack of formal mentoring activity by the presidents?

**Table 21. Formal Succession Planning and Formal Mentoring**

		Is there formal succession planning at your university?	
		Yes	No
Do you participate in a formal mentoring program as a mentor?	Yes	1	2 22%
	No	3	<b>15</b> <b>88%</b>
Total		4	17

The cross tabulation of the raw data shows that 15 of the 17 presidents at universities without formal succession planning, or 88 percent are also not part of a formal mentoring program as a mentor. Therefore, there is a positive, strong relationship between variables. The three respondents at schools with formal succession planning, who are not

in a formal mentoring program, indicated they participate in informal mentoring.

**Hypothesis 4.** H4 states: There is a positive relationship between the absence of leader identification and the absence of mentoring. Fisher's Exact Test of Independence would not address the research questions since the goal is not to compare groups, just examine the relationship between leader identification and mentoring. Chi-square could not be computed since one cell had an expected count of less than five cases. Again, cross tabulation gives insight into the relationship between these two variables.

**Table 22. Future Leader Identification and Mentoring**

		I Was Mentored	
		Yes	No
Were you specifically identified as a future leader in the higher education realm early in your career?	Yes	<b>10</b> <b>62.5%</b>	<b>6</b> <b>37.5%</b>
	No	0	<b>5</b>
Total		10	11

Ten of the 16 presidents (62.5 percent) identified as leaders early in their career were mentored, and only six (37.5 percent) were not. The hypothesis is not supported.

**Hypothesis 5 and Research Questions 3, 4.** H5 states: There is a negative relationship between the leadership training college presidents received and the requirements of the president position. The research questions in support of this theory regarded the skill or attributes needed and valued in the role of modern college president, and how they are obtained. If training and education are institutionally procured and funded for the leader, this would indicate the presence of deliberate development activities. In a deliberate leader development construct, targeted, timely training and education would be provided to contenders by the institution. Data was gathered to assess which skills were deemed



important and whether presidents were procuring and/or paying for their own training and education to maintain proficiency. A preliminary determination about the strength of this hypothesis was made through cross tabulation of data from respondents who felt that a skill or trait was desirable AND had received training or education.

**Table 23. Training and Education: If Trained, Self-Procured and/or Funded**

<b>List as Prioritized by Presidents</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Total trained</b>	<b>Support Hypothesis?</b>
1. Conflict Resolution Skills are Desirable/Important	3 27.8%	8 72.3%	11 100%	<b>N</b>
2. Good Listening Skills are Desirable/Important	7 63.6%	4 36.4%	11 100%	<b>Y</b>
3. Life Balance is Desirable/Important	6 75.0%	2 25.0%	8 100%	<b>Y</b>
4. Budgetary Skills are Desirable/Important	4 28.6%	10 71.4%	14 100%	<b>N</b>
5. Public Speaking Skills are Desirable/Important	4 30.7%	9 69.3%	13 100%	<b>N</b>
6. Innovation is Desirable/Important	5 55.6%	4 44.4%	9 100%	<b>Y</b>
7. Cross cultural leadership skills are Desirable/Important	4 33.3%	8 66.7%	12 100%	<b>N</b>
8. Writing skills are Desirable/Important	10 58.8%	7 41.2%	17 100%	<b>Y</b>
9. Cross generational leadership skills are Desirable/Important	3 30.0%	7 70.0%	10 100%	<b>N</b>
10. Cross gender leadership skills are Desirable/Important	5 50.0%	5 50.0%	10 100%	<b>Y</b>
11. HR skills are Desirable/Important	5 41.6%	7 58.45%	12 100%	<b>N</b>
12. Technology Skills are Desirable/Important	5 38.5%	8 61.5%	13 100%	<b>N</b>

Based on the cross tabulation, presidents are procuring and/or funding their own training and education in 5 of the 12 areas proposed as important by the research construct.

Budgetary training and polishing public speaking and writing skills are the main disconnects for presidents between what is required and what is provided.

Although not directly related to the hypothesis, a mini-pilot study was conducted using data from the elite surveys. The “time in higher education” and “time in the presidency” information was cross tabulated with skills deemed important to the presidency. Several trends were noted including that innovation and balance are valued more by respondents with less than 10 years in higher education than all the others, and speaking and writing skills are valued most by those with more than 15 and 20 years of time in service. These trends speak to the need to target, tailor, and deliver skill training and education to leaders at the right time in their journey, and to maintain the ability to flex as the external environment changes. The mini-pilot study data will be retained for future studies.

### **Inferential Statistics**

Inferential statistics are used to study examine relationships among multiple variables within a random sample and allow researchers to make predictions about the population. The introduction of the dependent variable allows for testing the probability of characteristics of the population based on the characteristics of the sample, and assessing strength of the relationship between the independent (causal) variables and the dependent (effect) variables.

Admittedly, it is impossible to generalize to a population of 3,146 with 21 data points, even when based on random sampling. However, generalization is not always the

point of using statistics, as data can reveal new structures and trends, particularly with a research problem not previously explored. Therefore, inferential statistics were used to further test H5, despite the low power.

**Hypothesis 5** H5 states: There is a negative relationship between the leadership training college president received and the requirements of the president position. As noted in the descriptive statistics, presidents are going outside of work to address self-perceived weaknesses in at least five skill areas deemed desirable, important or very important.

To test the hypothesis, ordinal logistic regression would ordinarily work with a dichotomous, binary question and an ordinal scaled question, however a minimum of seventy five cases are normally required to use this method. Therefore a point-biserial correlation coefficient was selected for the test to gain further insight into the association between data. Point-biserial correlation is calculated when either the independent variable or dependent variable is dichotomous while the other variable is non-dichotomous, such as interval ratio data. Point-biserial is a special case of the Pearson correlation, which is usually applied to two interval ratio scales and is indicated by *rpb*, "r" for the correlation coefficient and "pb" to indicate the test.

The presidents indicated skills needed in the position and whether they received training. Table 24 shows the prioritized list and the raw number of presidents trained in each skill, and indicates more training is needed in the top skill areas. The point-biserial correlation test looked at each individual response, and illuminated the disparity between how the president rated the importance of the skill and whether training was received (whether imparted by the workplace or self-procured/funded by the president). A high *rpb* indicates high need by the president and high training received by the president. H5

asserts there is a negative correlation between what the presidents need and what the presidents receive, therefore, to support this hypothesis, we look for a low or negative *rpb*, thus weak correlation.

**Table 24. Point-biserial Correlation of Skills, Training Needed and Received**

<b>Skill List as Prioritized by Presidents on a 1-5 Likert scale</b>	<b>Trained/% of N=21; no missing cases</b>	<b>Point-biserial correlation coefficient</b>	<b>Significance Level</b>	<b>Support Hypothesis</b>
1. Conflict Resolution Skills are Desirable/Important	11 52%	<i>rpb</i> =.446*	.05	<b>N</b>
2. Good Listening Skills are Desirable/Important	11 52%	<i>rpb</i> =.212		<b>Y</b>
3. Life Balance is Desirable/Important	8 38%	<i>rpb</i> =.184		<b>Y</b>
4. Budgetary Skills are Desirable/Important	14 67%	<i>rpb</i> =.619**	.01	<b>N</b>
5. Public Speaking Skills are Desirable/Important	13 62%	<i>rpb</i> =.000		<b>Y</b>
6. Innovation is Desirable/Important	9 43%	<i>rpb</i> =.509*	.05	<b>N</b>
7. Cross cultural leadership skills are Desirable/Important	12 57%	<i>rpb</i> =.07		<b>Y</b>
8. Writing skills are Desirable/Important	17 81%	<i>rpb</i> =.07		<b>Y</b>
9. Cross generational leadership skills are Desirable/Important	10 47%	<i>rpb</i> =.475*	.05	<b>N</b>
10. Cross gender leadership skills are Desirable/Important	10 47%	<i>rpb</i> =.398		<b>Y</b>
11. HR skills are Desirable/Important	12 57%	<i>rpb</i> =.510*	.05	<b>N</b>
12. Technology Skills are Desirable/Important	13 62%	<i>rpb</i> =.472*	.05	<b>N</b>

\*\* Very significant

\* Significant

## Quantitative Findings Summary

Data collected from the university presidents yielded valuable information regarding the present state of leader development activities in higher education.

Hypotheses 1, 2 and 3 were supported by descriptive statistics, Hypothesis 4 was rejected, and Hypothesis 5 was neither rejected nor accepted, with 50 percent of the cases supporting the premise.

**Table 25. Hypothesis Results**

<b>Hypothesis</b>	<b>Statistical Results</b>	<b>Test of Hypothesis/ Researcher's Position Supported</b>
H1. Deliberate leader development activities are negligible or nonexistent for the presidency position.	Frequency analysis: Data from five of six variables tested strongly indicate lack of deliberate leader development activities.	Supports position.
H2. There is a positive relationship between those who did not have a career path and their belief a career path would have been useful.	Crosstabulation for correlation: Positive correlation; 61.1% of those without a career path believe one would be helpful	Supports position.
H3. There is a positive relationship between the absence of formal succession planning activities and the absence of a formal mentoring program.	Crosstabulation for correlation: Strong positive correlation; 88% of presidents at universities without formal succession planning are also not mentoring as part of a program.	Supports position.
H4. There is a positive relationship between the absence of leader identification and the absence of mentoring.	Crosstabulation for correlation: Negative correlation; 37.5% of those identified early as leaders were not mentored	Does not support position.
H5. There is a negative relationship between the leadership training college presidents received and the requirements of the president position.	Point-biserial correlation: 6 of 12 cases show high need/low training	Supports position on 6 of 12 cases.

Overall, Phase 1 identified the likely need and readiness for a deliberate leader development construct in higher education.

### **Emergent Concept: Enduring Competencies**

Although a hypothesis could not be tested regarding a new concept introduced in this study, that of enduring competencies, valuable data was collected to support associated research questions and may be useful to those who study leader development in higher education. Therefore, the information and analysis is presented for future researchers and to begin a new body of research on the topic.

**Research question 5.** What are the enduring competencies in higher education, and the state of the concept of the presidency as a vocation or calling?

The “identification of enduring competencies” section of the survey sought to isolate traits the presidents believed were enduring over time in the categories of personal leadership, leading people and teams, and leading the institution. Additionally, a knowledge assessment about the concept of enduring competencies, a list of attributes, and a question asking whether presidents believe the presidency is a vocation or calling assessed openness to these emergent concepts collected data to support future work in this realm.

Presidents were first asked whether they considered the concept of enduring competencies, as related to the presidency position, prior to the study.

**Table 26. Previous Consideration of Enduring Competencies**

Response		Frequency	Percent
	Yes	9	42.9
	No	12	57.1
	Total	21	100.0

The data shows that 57 percent of the presidents were not familiar with the concept. Next, presidents were asked to select as many traits as they desired from a list of proposed enduring competencies and all 21 participated.

**Table 27. Enduring Competency Selection**

Trait	Selection	Percentage
<b>Personal Leadership:</b>		
Inspire Trust	20	95%
Exercise Sound Judgment	20	95%
Adapt and Perform Under Pressure	19	90%
Foster Effective Communication	19	90%
Lead Courageously	19	90%
Able to Critically Assess Self	18	86%
<b>Leading People/Teams:</b>		
Promote Collaboration and Teamwork	21	100%
Drive Performance through Shared Vision, Values, and Accountability	18	86%
Partner to Maximize Results	15	71%
Influence through Win/Win Solutions	12	57%
Mentor and Coach for Growth and Success	12	57%

Drive Performance through Shared Vision, Values, and Accountability	12	57%
<b>Leading the Institution</b>		
Attract, Retain, and Develop Talent	19	90%
Resource Stewardship	18	86%
Embrace Change and Transformation	18	86%
Drive Execution	15	71%
Command Organizational and Mission Success through Enterprise Integration	11	52%

Since mentoring is central to this study of deliberate leader development, it is notable that only 12 presidents, or 57 percent, believe that mentoring is an enduring competency as related to higher education leadership.

Presidents were then asked if they considered the presidency a vocation, or a calling. The concept might be central to future work to build a profession of the presidency, possibly with doctrine, value statements, and a code of conduct similar to other vocations such as the medical, religious, law enforcement and military fields. Fifteen of the presidents, or 71 percent, believe the presidency is a calling. Three stated “no” and three were “unsure.” Additional information regarding question of the presidency and higher education as a calling was gathered and analyzed in Phase 2 of the study.

Finally, an important element of a leader development program is to study other leaders, yet there are few case studies available in professional journals and books regarding successful, and perhaps more important to the learning process, failed



presidencies. Therefore, the presidents were asked whether they believed case studies would be helpful and 17, or 85 percent, stated “yes.”

## **Chapter 5: Qualitative Findings**

### **Introduction**

The quantitative data analyzed in Phase 1 of the study suggests the absence of a structured, formal leader development construct in higher education. Although some activities are present, they are mostly informal, not accessible by all, and inconsistently administered across the enterprise. Strong leaders are identified early, yet there is no pathway to the presidency and a lack of mentoring. However, data collected through the survey instrument to identify the presence or absence of certain activities is unable to tell the entire story, or the unique journey of each president. In addition to the gathering and analysis of data, leader development may be viewed as a phenomena requiring exploration, and providing a deeper level of understanding prior to the creation of a model or construct.

### **Data Analysis**

Data was analyzed through a 4 step noniterative process: memoing, open coding, focused coding, and theoretical coding.

### **Memoing**

Grounded theorists use memoing as a reflective tool to record the researcher's abstract thinking about the data (Strauss and Corbin, 1990). In line with constructive grounded theory, memos constructed prior to the interview were enhanced during the interview regarding how the similarities and differences between researcher and subject were played out in the interaction, potentially affecting the course of the research. During the data analysis, additional memos were generated for half thoughts when the

context was clear, or the subject was agreeing with or disagreeing with comments made by the researcher. The memos were not fixed or complete, but were always changing and morphing during the data collection and analysis phases. The assumptions and perceptions of the interviewer were also captured and processed. The use of memos in this study documented the development of theory and created an audit trail.

### **Open Coding**

Charmaz (2006) metaphors the coding process as one which “Generates the bones of your analysis...Integration will assemble those bones into a working skeleton” (p .45). In grounded theory, coding is the analytic process of examining for significant events, experiences, feelings that are then denoted as concepts (Strauss & Corbin, 1998) and abstract interpretations (Charmaz, 2000). In open coding, the concepts emerge from the raw data and are later grouped into conceptual categories. The open coding process itself ensures the validity of the work, as it is built directly from the raw data. Active coding was employed in the study, where possible, staying true to the constructivist guidance to look at the data in action (Charmaz, 2002, p 685). The overarching goal in Phase 2 was to code in a manner where processes and activities would emerge.

Transcripts were first uploaded into HyperResearch software and coded line-by-line with simultaneous “in vivo” coding to preserve rich, informative quotes from the subjects. After 2 passes through the interviews, a total of 101 distinct codes were recorded from 533 interview excerpts.

**Table 28. Sample of Open Coding Text**

Respondent Answers	Codes
Well, I guess my path it wasn't planned, you know I started as a faculty member. I was asked fairly early in my faculty career to move into the position of associate dean. And I really didn't want to do it, I enjoyed teaching and my research and so I declined at that point. (Sitting president)	Creating a career path Understanding fit
So I sort of knew this territory very well, but didn't know much about higher education, except this model here. (Sitting president)	Originating from local community Leading at same institution attended
So I am more about matching the skill set and I am not bothered by candidates who come from outside. Now there is one caveat there. If that person has a good skill set for the need, but thinks what they are going to do is just come in and treat the campus like the corporation they are used to, then it will not work. They have to recognize they have a new context to learn -but what I am really saying to you is I think it is easier to learn the context than it is to cultivate the requisite skills after hire. (Board member)	Observing from a Board perspective Matching "outsiders" Cultivating skills Understanding fit

Many notable quotes greatly informed the study and provided unique, rare and candid insight into the modern presidency. Coding in vivo, (Latin for "within the living") allowed the researcher to stay engaged in the story, bring forth the "voice" of the subjects and helped with sensemaking during the theoretical coding process. Thirty-seven direct quotations gave rich illustrations about the participants' unique journey and were preserved intact and also coded. Finally, during the transcript coding process, emotions, pauses and tone of voice were also noted to provide additional context, inspired by the axiom "There's the story, then there is how the story was told" (Robson, 2002).

## Focused Coding

The process of focused coding allowed for further sorting and synthesizing of the 101 codes, to identify centers of gravity and patterns related to the research threads.

Code frequencies, as related to the entire data set, are noted in Table 28.

**Table 29. Focused Coding Frequencies**

Code	Frequency within 101 codes
Leader Development	n=43 (42%) Early Identification, Pathway (N=14) Professional Development (N=11) Matching, Fit (N=5) Mentoring (N=5) Succession Planning (N=5) Refreshment/Renewal (N=3)
Culture of Presidency	n=18 (18%)
Personal Journey	n=14 (14%)
Skills and Traits	n=14 (14%)
Unique Challenges	n=12 (12%) Change (N=6)

The coding activities painted a picture of the activities and behaviors associated with presidential leader development, as well as challenges associated with their current operating environment. The result of focused coding for this study was a descriptive, multi-faceted framework for subsequent thematic development.

## Theoretical coding

Whereas open and focused coding serve to “fracture” the data, theoretical coding weaves the story back together again, as codes are related and a hypothesis is integrated into theory (Glaser, 1978, p.72). In line with Glaser (1978), questions were applied to the

data set to assess what was happening, the conditions, and what the activity may signify as related to the overarching research question regarding deliberate leader development. During focused coding, which required a flowcharting process to accurately group and assemble codes, there was an emergence of a core category, leader development. The core category of leader development is more abstract than the others, and accounts for most of the variation of data with its five sub-categories. However, the other categories clearly relate to the core in some way.

Theoretical coding was accomplished by a thorough review of memos and coded transcripts, sorting and connecting them through the in vivo quotes and rich narratives gathered from the presidents regarding their journeys. To give holistic insight into the problem, themes were not only developed from within cases, but also across cases. The purpose was not to tell stories, but to identify patterns of activities, actions and behaviors, looking for parallels or contrasts and remaining theoretically sensitive and connected to the data. Board member interviews provided much needed perspective as the “hiring and firing” authority, and grounded the presidents’ perspective in the reality of governance in this turbulent environment and how school executives might be best postured for success.

An important note is that the analysis of the presidents’ journeys is not meant as a commentary about what was right, appropriate or inappropriate, but to provide rare insight extract data used in the proposed the leader development construct in Chapter 6.

***Leader development:*** The leader development code set (42 percent) was the most prevalent and naturally aligned with areas explored in Phase 1 of the study. Of course all of the presidents successfully navigated a path to the top position, however their stories

are replete with happenstance, coincidence, and self-guidance/assessment, with very few cases of any deliberate development.

Early Identification and Pathway. Fourteen percent of the codes dealt with leader identification and career paths. Eight of the twelve presidents were identified early as future leaders, however only one had what was considered a career path to the presidency. It is important to note that none of the twelve current or past presidents interviewed for this study aspired to the presidency.

1. “I did not want to be president. This may be a little forward, but this was never an intentional journey. I didn’t set out to be a college administrator or a college president.”
2. “Nor did I desire to be a president, by the way.”
3. “I did not expect to be president, so when I took the position prior, it really was not with the presidency in mind. It was more about staying in the community.”
4. “Within eight months of graduate school, my lifetime dreams and my goal of becoming of a dean of students had been achieved.”
5. “At no point in all of these career moves in Higher Education, did I ever think I will be a President.”

Regarding pathway, of the twelve presidents interviewed, two were hired to the presidency from outside of higher education, both solicited through business colleagues who were aware of upcoming presidential vacancies. They have each served more than ten years in higher education, one having two presidencies. Of the ten career educators, nine did not have career paths, and seven of those indicated a career path would have been helpful. The president who had a career path was groomed for the presidency of a

community college, and believed the structure of his journey and mentoring helped him go from high school drop out to college president. Comments from career educators indicate the informality, non-linearity and self-directed nature of their paths:

1. “I didn’t ask for (the presidency) at all. It was laid down right in front of me.”
2. “They never expected that I would be a president.”
3. “I made a career out of doing the next fun thing.”
4. “Every decision that I made along the way was a decision not to eliminate the possibility of the primary years of my life in higher education.”
5. “It was not linear but I was accepting positions that were challenging to me and that I had a confidence I could deliver.”
6. Things were working well. I was very comfortable in my position (as finance director). Everybody was doing fine. I began thinking, ‘Well, okay this is either going to be it, or shouldn’t you try to keep going?’ And I just made the decision that I had never been willing to settle really for anything, why would I do that now? And began to – just proceed to presidency.”

The interviews also capture data regarding the myriad paths to the presidency. Two members of the group with a higher education background had what might be viewed as a traditional path, faculty, chair, dean and vice president, which was preferred by the two board members interviewed for the study. As one stated: “Moving Vice Presidents up is best - you are off and running. You can carry the football instead of studying the charts.” The other presidents interviewed had less traditional paths, emerging from student affairs, academics and diversity areas. Based on the interviews, it would be impossible to choose between a traditional or nontraditional/unique career paths to the presidency, as each was



completely different. One subject accurately captured this phenomena: “I was on the student affairs side of the house versus the academic affairs side of the house, but today given how many presidents are coming from outside the industry, I’m not so sure either of those two things are unique anymore.” Persistency also emerged as a career path factor, as three of the presidents interviewed previously competed in unsuccessful presidency bids (one not selected three times), and two ended up in the positions later due to the failure of those originally selected over them.

There also appears to be an accelerated path to the presidency, and missed opportunities for growth or “waypoints” along the way.

1. “A concern regarding my college presidency journey is the fact that my teaching career was so brief, it ended up being a significant impediment.”
2. “I missed a lot too. I missed all of the “middle stuff” they do at the school.”
3. “I was still a little bit of an anomaly; I came in from the outside, I was female, I was young, I was 41, so I was not the typical president there. So the internal staff and faculty had some resistance, many of them had been there a long time.”

A major finding of the study is there are several different kinds of presidents such as turnarounds and legacies. These types of presidents may experience different challenges and demands, thus requiring a unique set of skills and talents. For example, the study yielded three examples of turnaround presidents. Although corporate turnaround leaders are typically in the position two to three years, the turnaround terms seem to be much longer in college presidency, perhaps averaging around seven years before departure. The research also indicated a new niche occupation in higher education that parallels industry, where leaders are making careers out of turning campuses around.

1. “There is a model for short presidencies where you come in and just burn all the afterburners.”
2. “You look at most corporate turnarounds and they’re not accomplished by people who are currently in the organization.”
3. “The place needed a shake up from top to bottom. And so he brought me in cold, okay? I mean I wasn’t inside the system. I hadn’t grown up in that in the system. I owed nobody nothing. And so it was duck and shoot going in, duck and shoot while I was there, and duck and shoot on the way out. But my job was to rebuild the place.”
4. “And I was willing to roll the dice because I figured at that point I had nothing to lose. I liked the people I met, I thought it was an organization that had a lot of heart, but no direction and it was worth a shot. So that’s really how it started, so it started as classic turnaround.”
5. “He learned early on that what his strength was and he can mobilize the troops. He walks in, they are about to lose their job, they think the place is about to close. He has a very entrepreneurial mindset. He can really go into what most like a dark dreary place with no hope and he says ‘we could make this work’ – and he has been hugely successful.” (Regarding a turnaround expert who held several presidencies)

Legacy presidents have a different path and challenges. The data showed they are cultivated from within and are typically a “known” entity to the school and community. There was one example of a legacy president with a 24 year career and ascendancy to the presidency at the same school. Another legacy president summed up the unique pressure

by saying: “I’m the fourth president in almost a hundred years. The heroes of my life had been a former president, and I didn’t want to mess up the legacy.”

All of the presidents interviewed seem to exhibit different leadership styles to accomplish their jobs.

1. “But there’s a danger with a charismatic leader because when that person goes (away), the organization is not in such good shape. So I thought that was not a good model.”
2. “I did conceive the work military-wise. I put up tracers to see where my enemy was, bringing the heavy carpet bombing to lay down some suppressive fire, then we would take the land. You know that was the only way you do it.”
3. “I felt like 70 percent of my time should be spent worrying about what’s coming next, not fixing the boilers in the place. If I had to fix a boiler, I needed to get a person in charge of it; that was their job, not mine. The president really does have to see what’s coming from the future and then figure out how to get the crazy place to move towards it.”

In summary, there different type of presidents, needed in varying situations, and their styles differ.

Professional Development. Eleven percent of the codes related to professional development, and encompasses activities that broaden capabilities and expose presidents to best practices and failures through peer-to-peer interaction, formal study programs and professional reading such as case studies. Data from this group indicated very few opportunities for important interaction with colleagues, aside from annual conferences. It is important to note that not all presidents are able to attend ACE conferences, the

Harvard program or other developmental and networking events due to resource constraint.

1. “I think one of the biggest shocks for me in my early years as a college president, and those were the most difficult by the way, there were not a lot of opportunities to meet and talk unless you were willing to go to meetings; at that point I couldn’t be gone for five days from here, because I didn’t know who the hell was going to run the place. We were running on a pretty short string with not very many VPs and not a whole lot of folks who knew what the heck was going on.”
2. “He was the only one that reached out and I did rely on him, he kind of steered me through some of the academic things that I didn’t have the knowledge of.”

Leadership case studies are a way to share knowledge and are used extensively by other professions, such as the military. Case studies and their self-study can fill in mentoring gaps, yet are lacking in higher education. Data collected in Phase 1 indicated the desire by presidents for case studies as learning tools. The interviews further explored the need for more studies regarding both brilliant and flawed leadership examples in higher education:

1. “I think quite a number of us carry some negative stories that we have seen and watched , and while we have not – in a disciplined and formal way analyzed case studies, they certainly inform what we do and those failed presidencies haunt our memories.”

2. “Case studies - I would study them and that doesn’t necessarily mean I have a direct relationship with them. I think I have read, I don’t know maybe over a hundred books about leaders and in effect those hundred authors are part of the people who have mentored me as a leader.”

Although ACE data is lacking on failed presidencies, a new book boldly illuminates the issue. Entitled *Presidencies Derailed: Why University Leaders Fail and How to Prevent It* (Trachtenberg, 2013), the author examines case studies of 16 failed presidencies.

Six of the twelve presidents interviewed attended a leader development program or institution. None were ACE fellows and two attended the New President’s School at Harvard, both anecdotally considered to be the best development programs available. The study revealed niche area leadership schools for ascending presidents at religious institutions and for-profits. One career educator chose to go outside of higher education for his leader schooling to gather perspectives from business, medical and military leadership. Notably, the majority of these development opportunities were paid for out-of-pocket, a phenomena discussed earlier in Chapter 4. Those who did not attend cited time or money constraints.

Finally, in terms of career path broadening, many of the presidents interviewed traveled a linear path (academics, student affairs, etc.) and noted knowledge gaps once assuming the presidency. One president purposely went outside of the traditional path and broadening from academic administration to fundraising and another, into diversity. Neither move was specifically made with a presidency in mind, yet the knowledge gained has immensely impacted their effectiveness. The data showed that “extracurricular” activities such as acting as a peer evaluator for accreditation teams, membership on

policy working groups and efforts to start new programs were beneficial for broadening the skill set. Also, the dean and vice president position were noted as prime president-growing roles for their breadth of activities such as budgeting, course development and supervision of faculty and staff.

Matching and Fit. Five percent of the codes related to the presidential matching process and “fit.” The importance of the match has emerged as a key issue: specifically, understanding the skills needed for the position, and then hiring the right person. Bad matches and quick turnovers invariably cause turmoil for the organization. Search agency-related issues are discussed later in the chapter, however in terms of leader development, the presidents themselves certainly play a role in the matching process. Critically assessing capabilities and identifying readiness to lead a certain type of school in a particular geographic is critical, yet difficult to accomplish if there is no career path, mentoring or self-reflection activities and the presidency is an enigma.

A major study finding that emerged from the interviews is that graduates of certain types of colleges will gravitate towards a presidency in the same environment. For instance, the three community college presidents interviewed for the study were all community college graduates. Perhaps not as surprising, two of three presidents interviewed who lead private religious institutions were graduates of the school they now lead. Furthermore, those who served multiple presidencies tended to stay with schools in the same category, for instance going from one private liberal arts institution to the next. Insight into these types of trends would help with identifying the leader pool and providing tailored career path, also assisting firms with the search and matching process.

Those interviewed indicated a cultural nuance with the presidency regarding the haste to get the first presidency “under your belt.” One board member stated: “The research will show you if you have one presidency, even if it is a failed presidency, you have better chances of getting the next presidency than if you don’t have one” and another concurring, “If they are offered a job, they will take it, even though the candidate himself or herself may not see it is as best fit. They see it as a foot in the door.” The pressure to take a presidency even if it doesn’t feel “right” surely contributes to a bad match and requires extraordinary effort for the president and the organization to make things work.

Interestingly, the data showed examples of the Board “experimenting” with presidents, perhaps in search of the right match.

1. “Prior to my arrival there had been a longstanding president who had stepped down. They hired somebody that only lasted nine months. They had three interims and then I was hired five years later. They had some very significant instability and we lived with that for a long time. I mean they lost some serious ground during those five years and that it probably cost us the first year or 6 years of my presidency to get back into a place where we felt like we were at least on the road to knowing what we were doing.”
2. “And in retrospect I think what they were doing is figured if they brought somebody in from outside of the area and had a different background and it didn’t work, then the board was going to be able to say, “You know we tried that, we tried to do something different and it just wasn’t meant to be.” And if it did work, then everybody kind of came out a hero.”

3. “If you have a really successful President who has been there for quite a while and they retire, almost nobody is going to fit well the first go around. There almost needs to be a “sacrificial lamb” to come in and take some heat and then leave. Then the next person has a much better chance to be turning into the college and faculty is in a whole different mindset.”
4. “Our schools are still fairly young, so that we just, in the last 10 years, cycled through the founding presidents; a number of those second presidents weren't there very long.”

A major finding of the study is that data is not currently tracked regarding the potentially high number presidencies that actually have some kind of mismatch and quickly fail. Trachtenberg (2013) estimates there were at least 50 failed presidencies in 2009-2010, although specific data is not collected and maintained by a central clearinghouse such as ACE. The 16 case studies covered in his book illustrate a variety of failures and would constitute excellent mentoring material for prospective and current presidents.

Although the presidents may be at fault for stepping into a position that feels “wrong,” the board has been identified as a key source of the poor match by both presidents and board members. For instance, a board member highlighted the specific issue in his state: “Turnover - we have really been turning over presidencies in a hurry and there are several reasons. One is burning out, but I think the biggest problem is a poor fit. It's more a failure on the boards of trustees to really think deeply about what the needs are in their schools.” Board perspective on the matching process greatly informed the proposed leader development construct discussed in Chapter 6, specifically what types of leaders to bring into higher education and how to properly assess their skills and



personality traits for a good fit. Presidents do indicate that when the fit feels right, everything seems to click.

1. “It was a pretty big decision but as I was driving up into the mountains, I was thinking, ‘there is no way in hell I’m taking this job or have the experience.’ There was a three day interview experience and as I was leaving and driving back home, I was hoping they would offer me the job.”
2. “It was because of what I learned and the skills and the interests that I have which lined me up perfectly with what this college needed at the time.”
3. “It’s a small rural college and so people would come in, be president for a while and they’d be looking for the next thing to go to. Whereas I have established roots in the area and that’s not necessarily what I’m looking to do. I haven’t really thought past this job if things go wrong, because this is the job I’d always kind of dreamed of over the last years and this is the area that I chose to live in.”

Mentoring. Five percent of the codes dealt with mentoring. Of the ten sitting presidents, six were mentored and six were not. The stories ranged from a direct, positive approach by mentors, to indirect mentoring, poor mentoring and self-mentoring.

Direct positive mentoring:

1. “He took me under his wing and immediately trusted me with stuff and set me on things. He made me his surrogate and pushed me into leadership of that institution.”
2. “He was one of those people that we all need in our lives who believed in me much more than I believed in myself.”

Direct, ineffective mentoring:

1. “None of that exists in this Higher Ed world (regarding good mentoring). I remember times where I would spend an afternoon a week with the president. And those were wonderful times, but it was really a process of his downloading, getting his box empty so that mine could be full. And much of the downloading was a mixed bag of helpfulness and just that - he needed to download.”

Somewhat direct, somewhat effective mentoring:

1. “And he described for me the person he thought would succeed him, and it sounded like me. I thought ‘Do I take this guy this seriously, why is he telling me this?’”
2. “I didn’t think my mentors were necessarily pushing me into the presidency.”
3. “I don’t know that we did it verbally, but he did encourage me into the presidency and he did help me with very significant professional development activities that helped me become successful in that pursuit (presidency).”
4. “An indirect model – I traveled with him (the president), maybe we’d be out for a week and a half or two weeks, and so I had a chance to work with him. We had a wonderful personal relationship, but I can’t say that there were very many occasions when he would ever talk with me about, or I would be in on, what he was actually working on. I was at least once or twice removed from that level.

No mentoring or bad mentoring:

1. “No real formal mentoring really just collegial relationships and conversations.”
2. “No mentors - I kind of learned what not to do. I saw mistakes that presidents made and I decided that being a good president, a large of it is the way you treat people. In fact most of the mistakes I saw people make had to do with either

taking themselves too seriously or not respecting somebody else or thinking they were better or doing something that they hadn't thought out very well."

3. "I have known a lot of people who go at mentoring just saying "let me tell you how I would do that -- let me tell you how I would do that" and that's not good mentoring."

Some of the presidents interviewed, whether recipients of good or bad mentoring, related that they themselves enjoy being mentors, and gave solid examples of ways mentors can succeed in higher education, such as identifying talent and nurturing it. One indicated that "Professional development of others is probably my favorite piece, the thing that kept me working with faculty because I could see them as having unlimited leadership potential where they saw themselves as I am already now a full professor, what else is there to do -- you know there is a lot to do." Finally, those that did not receive mentoring themselves indicated an uneasiness with the process; for instance, one president stated "I would say I still believe in mentoring, but I'm not sure I've been a good mentor."

Succession Planning. Succession planning information appeared in five percent of the codes. Of the ten current presidents interviewed for the study, eight do not have a formal succession planning process at their schools. Several good examples of informal succession planning came forth during the interviews:

1. "So the idea is that the five individuals who report to me, who are considered in the "Presidents Circle" that at any given point, if something should happen to me or as we like to say, if I should win the lottery or get hit by the bus, that any one of them could take on the presidency. If I wasn't here to make this decision, what decision would you make?"

2. “I took a couple months (sabbatical) during my seventh year, which then actually proved to everybody this place could exist without me there, which I knew.”

However, data gathered in the Phase 1 surveys showed that leaders in higher education are rarely asked to provide input regarding their replacement, and this cultural disconnect could impede attempts to instate succession planning as a developmental activity. One board member stated “I think it is seen as bad form, and I am absolutely sure as sitting president would not feel comfortable suggesting anybody for their job.” A former president who felt forced out of the position offered “No, they (the board) made sure I had nothing to do with my replacement.”

Naturally, succession planning is good for the higher education enterprise writ large, even if the board decides to bring in an external candidate and good employees that have been cultivate with school resources depart for another institution. Notable quotes regarding this topic include “you have to build up leadership so that even if these people can’t be inside, there’s enough opportunities outside, and they will have a range of experience to be able to be successful in the presidency” and from a board member” “Our Vice Presidents are pretty much all capable of being Presidents.” A former president tied succession planning to change: “If what you’re trying to do is incremental change in the organization, a succession plan is actually critical.”

Refreshment/Renewal. Three percent of the codes were about refreshment and renewal activities, such as sabbaticals. Leader development programs typically contain activities that allow the employee a leave of absence from the workplace to rest and renew. The word “sabbatical” is derived from the Latin *sabbaticus*, meaning a ceasing, or rest from work. Although faculty are encouraged to take paid sabbaticals to complete research,

publish, and attend development courses, administrative employees are not always given the same opportunity, especially as they take positions of increasing responsibility. Of the twelve presidents interviewed, six have taken sabbaticals in the presidency.

However, the length is not the standard and preferred year given to faculty, but typically just a few months and not always restorative. For example, in two cases, presidents used the sabbatical to complete a dissertation for a doctoral degree in education and in another instance, to take care of a medical problem. Insights from the presidents indicated the lack of consistency regarding sabbaticals and the variety of ways they are utilized, as well as concerns about being away from the workplace and getting off of the career track.

1. "I think it's one of the smartest things anybody could do, is to build in a sabbatical the last year." (Taken to encourage succession planning)
2. "I think that time away is particularly important if you are transitioning out of a position. If you're about to return to the faculty, for example, you need some time to readjust." (Taken as a transition tool)
3. "I had a significant health scare, it forced me to step back and think through and what I wanted to do with the rest of my life. I think you can explain (the break) if you are honest. Just honestly what did the break mean to you, what was the purpose for taking it and what did you get from it, which will go a long way. But the people who just hope a search committee isn't going to notice, they are kidding themselves." (Taken to address a health issue)
4. "I think having a sabbatical, or sometimes we call it "executive leave," is really very acceptable thing these days, but I don't think it is done on the regularity that I see with the academic folks. I've taken 1 in these 24 years."

5. “I just thought that I should do it (sabbatical.) My goal was to be on process of sort of reinventing, I’ve always thought I would be a better second president than a first. And maybe it would be an opportunity to step away so I could do some reflection.” (Taken between presidencies)
6. If you leave and you are away too long, it is very, very hard to get back into academia. (Never had a sabbatical)

Breaks in “service” are typically not viewed as opportunities for development or broadening, and some presidents reported being chastised for stepping away. One president was consistently passed over for the presidency at the university, and left a dean position to lead a small company in crisis that supported the school in the same small town. Instead of being supportive, board members expressed their “personal disappointment” to the subject for taking another opportunity instead of staying around for a try at the presidency. Expressing emotion while recounting the story, the respondent stated “At the moment there was a need and I was asked to fill it and I felt like it was like my family calling on me to help save the family farm.” The subject eventually went back to the school and is currently the president.

Regarding second presidencies, there was an expected sense of confidence upon taking the position. One two-time president stated: “For other people, I think they’d have to worry about their next job as president or how long they are going to keep the job. I was quite happy to leave two days after I got there, and I was surprised I lasted 11 years.” However an interviewee on a second “turn around” presidency felt stressed by yet another daunting task, and ended up leaving shortly into the term. These vignettes indicate that it might be of interest for future studies to investigate the length of second

and third presidencies and examine unique skillsets. The trend of multiple presidencies becoming the norm may indicate the presidency is becoming its own profession and vocation within the higher education realm.

To summarize, data collected in the interviews showed that leader development activities are sometimes present, although they are not consistent, formalized or accessible to all.

***Culture of the presidency.*** The culture of the presidency code set was the second prevalent, comprising 18 percent of the codes. Although not an interview question, significant information brought forth regarding the unique culture of higher education was an unexpected and significant development, adding a holistic perspective to the environment in which higher education leaders are developed. A recurring theme was the ego and elitism of higher education.

1. “People need to think about it. Do I think you need to acknowledge the event, absolutely, it’s as important internally as externally, but given all the problems in the world, I think we need to be really careful.” (regarding multi-day inaugural events for new presidents on campus)
2. “You definitely had the sense being president of the university, you are above the rabble, let’s put it that way. Because I was president, I got invited to the city executive club which meant all the CEOs of the big corporations and it was the same - you look down from the clouds on the situation in the kingdoms, and decided what should happen in the kingdom. You weren’t part of making it happen.”
3. “It’s a little pretentious, it’s very elitist.”

The issue of salary also emerged as a part of the unique presidency culture:

1. “I think it’s up to the person who’s going to take the job not be affected by power and the glory and the money.”
2. “At private institutions you’re looking at salaries of three quarters of a million and above, so you know even if it’s a bad job, three quarters of a million dollars, I can live with it.”

One board member perceived that some faculty aspired to be administrators as a way to increase their salary level and thus needed testing to ensure the reasons for advancement were in the best interests of the institution. A president offered that pay does not incentivize upward movement in the organization since there is a flat pay structure as his school.

The lack of the presidency as a profession was noted, as well as non-collegial behaviors:

1. “There really is no cohesive professional group.”
2. “There is a kind of winner-take all mentality.”
3. “I’ve met people where it consumes them, they have to get that school’s presidency at all costs.”
4. “We have, in academics, a lot of passive aggressive people who are nice to your face then, you know spin around, get up and go the other direction right away.”

The topic of politics was a lightning rod for the presidents who offered examples of how politics was involved with their hiring, firing and hindered daily activities.



1. "I think the difference in public institutions is what I would call 'political pressure' which seems to lead to a shorter average tenure in a presidency than at an independent institution."
2. "Some presidents are way better than others that are dealing with that (political) situation. Some of them just hunker down and ignore state politics."
3. "Behind the scenes, one of the functions of the President was always community relationships, and those kind of lined up with the politicians, the local politicians who are state representative, state senators and so forth."
4. "Where I saw politics enter is if the board was 50 members strong, and the board doesn't agree on what is needed, then you are going to have politics in terms of which one dominates, which ones doesn't - and that's when you can see really strange things happen." (Regarding a college football coach being fronted as a possible candidate for a presidency)
5. "Ego and politics are part of all senior leadership."

Dealing with tenured and/or unionized faculty is one key leader challenge in academia. There was mention of the faculty as a "tribe" and the "line" of demarcation between faculty and the rest of the administration.

1. "Well I really much appreciate faculty, but faculty in leadership... they often don't have a very good big-picture view."
2. "We have a faculty that is really quite different than most. These folks will step up do whatever you ask them to do. But we don't have tenure."

3. "Faculty are individual contributors who basically want to do their own thing and not be told what to do or where to do it."
4. "The last thing they want (faculty) is to be managed or led. And they'll throw themselves in front of the train and make sure the engineer never gets on the train."
5. "They look to the 13th century for their templates." (Regarding resistance to change by Liberal Arts faculty)
6. "The full time faculty still hasn't come over to the dark side. You know they still want to teach between 9:00 and 5:00 on Mondays to Thursday afternoon and maybe Friday morning, but never Saturday and Sunday. Never out in one of the satellite campus and never online, thank you so much."
7. "I think you know we've had a joke about the "great divide." And if you cross over, if you been a teaching faculty and you accept the deanship are you now one of "them."

Difficulties of Presidency. The difficulties of the presidency related to the lifestyle of living on campus, being recognized at airports and malls, and the lack of privacy in general was a topic of conversation. One president said: "You get overwhelmed by the daily demands, and it's really hard to keep your head up and above and have any kind of strategic or alliance ideas." Several spoke about the austere financial times on campus and the difficulty with cutting personal and terminating faculty. Interaction with press was cited as another stressor and an area where more training would be helpful. Several presidents spoke of physical stress such as health problems, the inability to decompress, and the need for strong stamina to withstand long work days and a continuous stream of

evening on and off campus events. Loneliness was discussed, as well as the need for a “thick skin” and to “not take everything personally.” The intense workload was a popular topic, with one president stating “you can never end a day feeling your work is done. It’s always more; you can always work longer, always work harder.” The pressure to “be perfect” was mentioned by one president, as you “become so identified with the institution that the negative effects from them reflect negatively on the institution as a whole.” Finally, one interviewee stated: “If something goes wrong, even if you had nothing to do with it everybody blames you.”

The symbolic nature of the presidency was a recurrent theme. One president said “I already knew I was going to be miniaturized and dwarfed by the job.” Another said “You know, you kind of are the institution.” Words associated with the presidency included the “star;” “the face;” “the figurehead;” “the voice;” and “the image” of the organization.

Another unforeseen thread and significant finding emerged during the interviews regarding why leaders in the organization don’t aspire to the presidency.

1. “I have a chain of VPs I don’t think there is anybody in those ranks that wants to be the next president, that may certainly change when I announce my retirement, but I don’t see it.”
2. “I’ve had more bad presidents than good presidents. I’ve only had a few examples of what I would call really good solid leadership. It’s astonishing they keep getting hired.”

3. “I was an ACE fellow and that experience taught me a lot about the presidency. One of the things it taught me was it was a position I never wanted to hold.” (A former Dean and board member)
4. “Our fulltime faculty look at our administrators thinking that we’re all idiots because we work like dogs.”
5. “We get no recognition or appreciation. It’s just a thankless job.”
6. “I think that some of them may be interested today and the future president, presidency, but many through the years have simply said, “Look, I know are you people live in this, I’m not interested.” They said “no thanks.”

Certainly, observations about the presidency, whether real or perceived, may be impacting the inability to cultivate leaders from within higher education.

The Board. Surprising data emerged during the interviews regarding the presidents’ frustration with their boards, a topic not covered in the Phase 1 surveys. Although not appearing in the line of questioning, the word “board” was mentioned by respondents 33 times in 14 interviews. Instead of being partners or catalysts for success, president-board relationships are often contentious, some from the first day of the presidency. Data also emerged about the board “flying blind” about major problems at the college regarding financial position and their dysfunction.

1. “Yeah, some boards are just pitiful.” (From a board member)
2. “I mean we were about to close. Oh by the way, I did not realize that when I got here because they (the board) didn’t realize it, because they didn’t have as good an understanding of their financial situation as they thought they did.”

3. “I went and complained to board members who weren’t strong enough to take him on. Ultimately he got me out and that was fine. I was fine with it.”  
(Regarding a board issue that led to resignation)
4. “I had a board member literally saying to me, ‘well it wasn’t like that when so and so was here’ (previous president), and I said, ‘Excuse me, I’ve been here for 30 days.’ They didn’t want to hear about it.”
5. “The board did not know how bad - even though they knew it was bad, they had no clue how bad.”
6. “So, there was very little oversight on the board in terms of finances and understanding enrollment, and understanding pricing, and tuition pricing and even a real good grasp on positions that were vacant.”
7. “Investment, financial aid and enrollment, they are your three financial drivers. That’s where the board spends their time and energy. Do they spend a lot of time on curriculum, no. Do they spend a lot of time with the faculty, no. And I guess I’m okay with that.”
8. “They had their own agendas.”
9. “This was a social club. It was a group that got together and enjoyed partying and socializing and all, they never understood governance.”

However, for one president, there have been no challenges: “I’ve only had one board issue in my 20 years in the job.” Another, who came into the presidency from a CEO position at a health service company, stated “Because I’ve been as chief executive officer before, dealing with the board really wasn’t all that different, just a little different setting.”

Several presidents expressed regret over not being “adequately prepared” to deal with the board. One stated “It is probably the one area where I would have liked more mentoring.” Another offered: “This is the area where I’ve had anxiety.” Many expressed the difficulties with communicating with the board and managing the amount and type of information they share. One lamented over the amount of time spent with the board: “It’s such a dynamic kind of relationship and it needs a lot of attention, maybe more attention than many of us give it.”

The Joys. Although this study did not focus specifically on the how much the presidents enjoyed their jobs, there are naturally many joys associated with the presidency and those also came through during the interviews. Several presidents mentioned their greatest joy was being with the students whether in a classroom setting or on campus grounds. One stated that graduation events were a huge “booster shot of energy,” seeing students complete their academic goals and their proud and happy parents in the crowd. Another mentioned completion of an academic building that he raised funds for over a five year period, and the sense of satisfaction at being able to cut the ribbon and recognize a major goal. Certainly the pool of potential leaders must see the joys and rewards of the position if we hope to keep them interested in ascending the leadership ladder.

***Personal journeys.*** Information about the personal journey was reflected in 14 percent of the codes. The New Model of Leadership discussed in Chapter 2 illustrated how the inner and outer journey of leaders is critical to self-awareness and understanding purpose.

Every president had a different life story. One was a high school dropout who received a GED and enlisted in the military; after serving a 4 year tour, the subject took a minimum wage job and a customer asked how the subject planned to use the GI Bill. The

chance conversation led to a visit to a community college campus, taking a job in the veteran's office, starting school and then continuing onward to an EdD. The respondent felt a strong pull to be a community college president, to give back to the institution that gave a start in life. The president of a large religious institution was first a monk, then served a stint in the military in Vietnam as a medic, and ended up in higher education as a way to search for meaning and answer religious questions. The president of a for-profit university was a "C" student in college who also spent a tour in the military before traveling a fast path to the presidency. Another community college president was TRIO disadvantaged student who received government subsidized education. All four of the leaders highlighted above were from low income families and were first generation college graduates.

Three presidents interviewed for this study are serving at the institution from where they and other family member graduated, one relating that his former college instructors now work for him. These presidents are thriving since they are known entities, and intuitively familiar with the school and its community; however, all indicated great pressure not to fail in a "legacy" role.

One of the presidents interviewed is an Ivy League grad and long term president of a small liberal arts college in the Northeast. Another interviewee is a lawyer who served two presidencies and earned an EdD in the process, and another is a successful CEO from the health services industry who obtained a PhD in education. In a lighthearted moment, a former president with a theology degree stated: "I didn't use it (the degree) a whole a lot when running the job, but I did pray a lot." One subject was a prominent leader in the community and "drafted" to the presidency.

Finally, building on a question from the Phase 1 survey, interviewees were asked whether they believe the presidency to be a calling. Several illuminating quotes came forth:

1. “It seemed to be the coming together of the calling, the light that I’d been pointing to.”
2. “If I had my druthers I would prefer to spend my time as a scholar and a teacher, but the fact was I felt a higher calling (to the presidency), a divine and Godly sense.”
3. “There is a heightening of that sense of calling both the terms of the religious and educational commitments it represents, and also to carry the family story. It’s a calling is, and a big deal for me.”
4. “I feel like it’s a calling. You have to look at yourself in service to the institution and its students.”
5. “It is a calling, it disrupts your whole life and you have to be willing to really serve the institution and take the kinds of intense feedback you get all the time.”
6. “No, I don’t see this as a calling. I mean, it’s just an administrator type job that can bring about significant change in the organization and in the community.”

While researching the calling aspect of the presidency, a new term emerged in the study, that of servant leader, or one who puts service to the organization and its members above self. Three presidents, all at the religious institutions, mentioned servant leadership as an enduring competency in higher education. A survey respondent who declined an interview made contact through email to express her concern that servant leadership should be captured in the study.



***Skills and Traits.*** Skills and traits comprised 14 percent of the codes in the study.

During the interview process, the presidents and board members were asked about the needs of the position, with the overarching goal of identifying gaps in training and education. The results are separated into two distinctive categories – skills (leadership science) and traits (leadership art).

Requisite skills:

1. Risk taking: “I was jumping into the deep end of the pool 18 feet and learning how to swim which I love – I love those kinds of challenges.”
2. Business acumen: “In our current world you need “business acumen,” and I lacked it, I did not have business acumen;” “I really have had to work hard to get myself up to speed in enrollment management and some aspects of institutional finances;” “a one-week seminar is not going to be sufficient; it needs to be a much more formative, thoughtful process to develop the next generation of leaders, we need to make them, you know force them to do zero based budget and explain it.”
3. Academic credentials were mentioned by four presidents as a must for gaining faculty approval and support.
4. Stamina: “I don’t have a lot of energy for dinners with different people every night.”
5. Fundraising: “Presidents today do very different things. They are into fund raising. They are working out contracts” and “Fund raising is the one thing that I was helping some of my senior team develop, I realized those were the skills that needed training and background that many of them did not have.” Also, “The

danger now is not having lunch at your desk, the danger is you having to go to lunch every day of the week for some event you're supposed to be at."

6. Willingness to engage off campus: "We are into city and campus relationships. These are two very different skill sets. We can be actually off campus more than on."
7. Confidence: "It takes a person with a particular confidence; there's ego involved, there's a sense of, "I can" in a very complex situation, with all sorts of interlocking and concerting dynamics make a difference. It takes a special kind of person."
8. Enjoying people: "A strong leadership skill is to be able to enjoy different people so much that you don't mind giving them all of your personal time. That is a skill set of leadership needed of a presidency, especially in a larger campus, and I don't have that."
9. Broad understanding: "My vision of a good Community College President is he or she needs to be a liberal arts kind of person in most cases. They need to have fingers in a lot of pies, they need to read and they need to read different things, not everything in the same area. They need to be able to deal with the humanities and the technical parts of the college, both parts are important going forward in the long term."
10. Corporate leadership skillset: "Education has become a massive business and there's infrastructure that has to be managed, like the challenge of any corporation. You have entertainment, you have to manage quality, athletic community, the athletic sports, you have hoteling, you have food industry, and

you have academics in there somewhere. You have security, you have property, and you have all the management. It's the infrastructure of an academic institution, and an extraordinary amount of different businesses, fundamentally. And there's no way you can be an expert at any of those, you know."

11. Learning how to delegate responsibility: "You've got to drive responsibility through the organization, through the leadership of the organization. That's one of the key things I did learn."

Informed by the Air Force's journey to develop holistic leaders, learning that success in strategic leadership is less about *what you know* than *who you are*, the art of leadership was also discussed. One long term board member in a large system of schools offered his philosophy about the traits a president should bring to the position:

"There are four categories that I can think of: focus, passion and compassion. They need to be doing things that enhance their intelligence, bring out their gift of focus and then think about how much passion they put into their work. And to always think about whether they are compassionate or not. That compassion part is one huge sort of soft skill that is just so critical in the long term, big picture success of an organization or even a nation. If you don't have compassion, you are in trouble. For those who don't have all four, how do you cover up for your weaknesses? That's basically the question."

Stewardship was mentioned in three interviews, with one president emphatically stating that "Leadership is stewardship." Passion was also discussed in four interviews, regarding the commitment to the organization despite a myriad obstacles and longevity in the position.

The presidents were asked about their feeling of preparedness for the job, and several rich quotes emerged:

1. “Congrats, \_\_\_\_\_, you’re now our president, and here is your manual. And these are all the things you should know to be a good president and you open the manual and there is nothing on the pages, it is blank. So what do you do? I wish I would have had a more formal introduction to the presidency.
2. “A lot of people just don’t want to bother with it. They’d rather wait until they get anointed and then start to work on their skillset, which is basically too late.”  
(Board member)
3. “The core fundamentals, yes, those can be taught. I mean, the reality, though, is you learn by doing, you develop the competency by having done it time and time again.”
4. “Skills can be taught but by the time you aspire to be the president, you need to have hone that down so that you will really understand what it is that you’re doing.”
5. “The presidency is a mystery. What does that person do and do I have the skills necessary to do it well? I mean it is very hard to assess your own knowledge (about ability) to do the job.”
6. “There really is no preparation that fully helps you to appreciate the enormity of all the difficult issues to the significant decisions that you’re dealing with all the time.”
7. “I can remember driving into the parking lot on the first day and thinking, “Oh my God! Who am I to think that I can run this institution?” I can’t ever think of a job where I began to experience that. I felt like I’m a fraud... I’ll only last a couple

of days, or maybe I'll last a week. At one point a few years later, I told the staff - you know, I pulled into the parking lot today and I felt like I belong here."

8. "It's still a nonprofit focus. You have in the hierarchy, you have frontline people and the staff. And so, there are some significant parallels." (Came into presidency from health care)
9. "There was very little of what I was asked to do that I hadn't already experienced again on a smaller scale and I actually felt pretty prepared." (Former Dean of a large program)
10. "Leadership is leadership – no matter what organization you're in."

Overall, every president had at least one major aspect of the position where they wished for some sort of training, mentoring or prior knowledge of coping skills, this despite years of experience in higher education, some mentoring and some professional development.

***Unique challenges.*** Twelve percent of the codes dealt with the unique challenges of the presidency.

**Resource constraint.** All presidents expressed deep concern about their financial position. Some are paying back long term debt, many are underendowed, others canceling construction projects, and struggling with faculty pay and tuition hike decisions. The financial situation affects the ability to train staff: "There is no money for development." However, a board member offers this insight: "When they say there is no money for training I view that as saying, 'we are going to solve hunger's problem by eating the seed' and I say I wouldn't eat the seed, I would plant the seed."

Fundraising was mentioned many times as a very demanding necessity. One president has apportioned 25 percent of his schedule to fundraising. Another stated: “People often ask me ‘how much time do you spend in fundraising and versus running the campus?’ And I say well about 70 percent on fundraising, and actually being a CEO running the campus, about 75 percent. There is not enough hours in the day.” Many presidents lamented the numerous off campus events and demand for their attention and time. One who was exhausted from being out most every evening of the week at an event, stated “sometimes, the role is simply showing up.” Another said “When I got to \_\_\_\_, they had 154 fundraising and community events for me to do per year. I got it down to 40.”

Faculty issues. Faculty tenure, unions, resistance to change and passiveness were all brought forth in the interviews. Notable statements include “Faculty unions are one of the most challenging aspects of my job and my career” and “The faculty is very strong, and the unions are much stronger.”

Former presidents who linger. Several presidents mentioned issues regarding former presidents who stay in the community or even move from the presidency to the board. One said “When the former president who served so long and well is in the room, he gets all the oxygen.” Another commented on how hard it was to enact change: “It is difficulty to take on an old policy that was put in place by the guy who is living down the street.” Most feel they have to cater to the prior presidents and even defer.

The Search Process. As previously stated, the ACE (2012) report indicates a rise in the number of presidencies filled through an external search process. The activities

associated with these searches were discussed by all of the presidents and board members interviewed for the study.

1. “The search ‘circus’ - what should be a moment to build the reputation of the institution and heighten the energy did not go well, and deteriorated to something of a circus.”
2. “The problem with hiring in Higher Ed, it’s now more of a beauty contest than a talent contest. Rather than go off and pick up somebody who’s going to tear the place up, they just say to the agency, send us résumés, whoever you want to put forth. The search firm reaches in the drawer for the ones from the last search they didn’t use, and throws them all together for your review. And then finally you get the final characters and you bring them to campus, and you parade them in front of everybody. And then finally somewhere out of that mess, you find a candidate - which is exactly the wrong way to bring leadership in, but that’s what they do. The person who is gorgeous ends up winning the contest.”
3. “The way a board runs a search for a president can do a lot to enhance the success or failure of whoever is hired. If people get mad at the search process the new president is fighting an uphill battle.”
4. “That whole (search) situation did leave us with some challenges that we had to confront - regarding support for a specific candidate the search committee recommended to the board of trustees, that they did not accept. The campus was behind that candidate, I was supporting that candidate. The board had become kind of divided and there were questions about process and it had surfaced some issues of bad board policy.”

5. “Every search is a brand new experience, you know, not built on previous experiences. That’s just wrong.”
6. “You know the search folks were really angry because they felt that they had not been given the whole truth in terms of even enrollment numbers and everything else.”
7. “I mean that’s a very complex emotional journey that I have said to people I don’t even personally understand it, so how can I explain it to you if I don’t understand it myself?” (A president who resigned to take a sabbatical, then came back to the presidency a few months later after a failed search)
8. “A new vision will be healthy, but at the same time it will bring risk for a small place like this, because no matter how well we’ve done to date, we are still very fragile. If we miss enrollment, we are going to be in trouble and if somebody comes in and decides that they want to, you know, catch up with the latest fad and forget about how we’ve been able to stay stable, then certainly it could bring some challenges for the place.” (Danger of bringing in external candidates)
9. “I do believe that the college finally resorted to using a search agency because they had had five presidents in five years.”
10. “I have a different philosophy about the important role they (search agencies) play, especially in investigating candidate backgrounds.” (Board member)

External environment. Several presidents discussed the rise of for-profit schools and online education as threats instead of opportunities. One said the “for profits are going to eat everyone else up” and with “their growth at 300 percent a year, and they’ll eat anything that doesn’t move.” and another made a prediction for-profits would seek to



penetrate the liberal arts market since it constitutes 50 percent and the core of American higher education system. Another feels strong concern about the potential demise of liberal arts programs since “so many people are more focused on just getting whatever skills they need and getting a good paying job.”

### *Change*

Change was a large topic in the interviews, consisting of 6 percent of the codes. The change brought on by the external factors discussed above, as well as quantum leaps in technology and student demand, has created what one president labeled an “arms race,” adding additional budgetary woes. The president of a large school is sensing board pressure to “get on the online bandwagon.” One said that he often stays awake at night contemplating: “Is there too much change that the organization is being forced to accept and what is impact on the quality of what we do?” Resistance to change in academia was mentioned several times as a way of “tying my hands” and another said trying to “get change internally, is useless, you’ll die trying.”

Unpredictable events are also seen as drivers for change. One president stated: “After the Virginia Tech Security situation, campus security became a big deal. I’ve often said that what 9/11 was to national security, Virginia Tech was to campus security.” A president of a liberal arts school mentioned the impact of the sexual abuse scandal at Penn State and the ripple effect to other schools in terms of conducting investigations.

Finally, a Board member stated that leader development is an issue not only in higher education: “There is a lack of leaders everywhere and for all kinds of things; here in \_\_\_\_\_, I see that in terms of leadership for Rotary Clubs, and Church Boards and School Boards and all kinds of things.”

## **Theoretical Saturation**

Theoretical saturation was achieved for the fourteen interviews. Prior to and during data collection, narrowing activities ensured holistic data was collected, but that it addressed the phenomena of leader development in higher education. All properties of the categories were explored through theoretical sampling and they were sufficiently dense with data variation, including conflicting views on development variables.

Theoretical sensitivity activities included grasping the nuances of the subject's responses, reconstructing meaning where needed and eliminating data not pertinent to the study (Strauss & Corbin, 1990, p. 44). New theories are not likely to emerge beyond those introduced in the theoretical coding process.

Member checking with this elite group of participants was not possible. The interviewer clarified and repeated main points as the interview progressed, knowing this would likely be the one and only contact with the subject. Triangulation of any non-personal journey data was accomplished with outside existing documents and research. This exhaustive process is was necessary due to the emerging nature of the data and served to validate the research methodology and data analysis. Broad, thematic analysis protected the privacy of the respondents, and direct quotes were cross checked to ensure protection of respondent identity. Quotes that may unveil the identity of a participant were vetted prior to inclusion in the study.

## **Qualitative Findings Summary**

The fourteen elite interviews gave rare insight into the journey, challenges and frustrations of the modern day university president. The data confirms the Phase 1 survey findings that some informal leader development activities are present, however

they are inconsistent, inaccessible, and not timed along a career path or tailored to need.

Additionally, several major findings emerged in Phase 2 as noted in Table 30.

**Table 30. Qualitative Findings Summary**

<b>Finding</b>	<b>Explanation</b>	<b>Significance to Leader Development Construct</b>
Different types of presidencies	There are emergent, “niche area” presidencies requiring tailored skill sets and innate leader traits <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Legacy (15+ year) presidents</li> <li>• Turn around presidents</li> <li>• Interim presidents</li> </ul>	Early leader identification Skill development Mentoring Search and matching
Situational presidents	Type of president needed at a college is situational; research showed cases of legacy to turnaround and turnaround to legacy	Search and matching
Leader affiliation with presidency type	Graduates of certain types of schools may gravitate towards leadership at similar institutions	Early leader identification Succession planning Mentoring Search and matching
Lack of failed presidency data	No ACE data regarding potentially high number of presidencies that fail due to bad match	Searching and matching Culture of Presidency
Apathy towards the presidency	There are ready and tested leaders who are not willing to lead in the presidency role	Succession planning Mentoring
Board issues are a persistent source of frustration	The president/board relationship is critical for success and requires special preparation	Skill development Mentoring
Inability or unwillingness to give and seek feedback	Several presidents expressed discomfort with giving direct feedback to senior staff; also, not able to sense where they stand with the board	Mentoring Knowledge of “self”
Lack of data on multiple presidencies	Those in multiple presidencies will likely affiliate with the same types of schools	Mentoring Searching and matching

These areas are ripe for further research and study.

Chapter 6 will use Phases 1 and 2 data and findings to explore a new leader development construct for higher education. Although the variety of leader journeys explored in the interviews illustrated that a “cookie cutter” leadership solution is not desirable, development activities can be tailored to leader and situation in order to level the playing field for all and cultivate the pool of ready, tested and willing leaders that higher education needs to meet future demand.

## **Chapter 6: The Deliberate Development Model and Future Research Topics**

### **Overview**

Leadership is fundamental in higher education, yet it seems overlooked in many aspects. Human capital management is virtually nonexistent. One president perfectly stated the dilemma: “We offer leadership courses and don’t even teach our own staff how to lead.” Creating future leaders is the responsibility of current leaders, not ACE, Harvard or the employees themselves, as the research proved is the current construct. A deliberate development construct requires individuals and institutions to work hand-in-hand; the institution provides the opportunity and the employee must take advantage in order to grow and move towards larger leadership roles. Higher education has not been completely unsuccessful in producing leaders, however the changing environment demands a leader development approach that is flexible and keeps pace.

A structured, formal program, no matter the topic, levels the playing field for all employees. Leader development should not be dependent on uncontrollable factors such as whether an employee is fortunate to have a mentor, attend a leadership school or be part of a succession plan. The data gathered in this study supported the overarching premise that a formal construct and model is needed and desired in higher education.

### **A New Leader Development Model for Higher Education**

While the journey from administrator or faculty member to the presidency appears to be a long road, it grows narrower and can accelerate as time passes. Without a formal construct, it may be impossible to accomplish the spectrum of growth and development activities needed to assume the presidency with the entire desired skillset.

Also, as leaders ascend the organizational ladder, tasks become more complex and sophisticated, requiring advanced skills. Therefore, a more structured leader development approach is needed where the raw abilities of a leader can be improved through targeted education, training, and experience.

The presidents and board members offered the following comments on the need for a structured approach:

1. “There’s a structural bias in the industry against the pipeline of future presidents.”
2. “In my own leadership positions I have dedicated time trying to cultivate replacements, future leaders, but none of that comes naturally and so I applaud your efforts in this area.”
3. “We need to think about creating a structure, a better structure to do this kind of thing. So you are right on track.”
4. “I think the structural issue in higher ed is very different than healthcare where typically the people in the various departments will aspire to be in an administrator role. And then over time, they’ll gravitate into those. Here, you just don’t aspire to lead.”
5. “It is certainly possible to create a structure that fosters the development of presidential type leaders.” (Board member)
6. “I was very attracted to the notion that there could be this kind of intentionality. I’m going to guess the public institutions and the community colleges will be very interested in pathways to leadership, they’re fumbling like everybody else.”

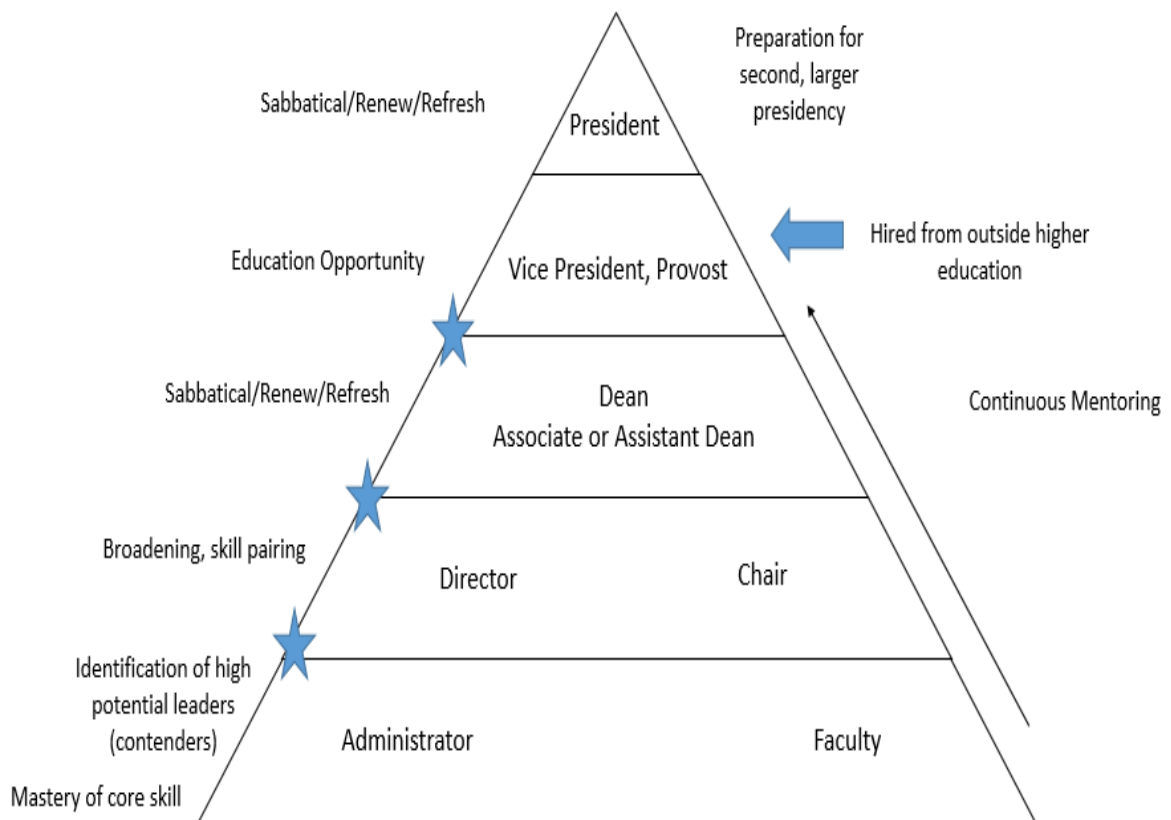
7. “I think it's generally helpful for the presidents who have been Teacher, Department Chair and a Vice President along the way, but at each stage of that growing and understanding, you develop a habit of taking a couple of steps back and looking at the big picture, a bigger picture than any one of those singular jobs. So that by the time they get to the Vice President level, they have an understanding of the necessary relationships with each area in the college.”
8. “How do we prepare individuals for the presidency? There really should be entities out there that literally will work with mentors, like the coaching aspects of preparing individuals. Because we already know what's going to happen here in the future - we have a shortage right now and that is the business we should be in - developing leaders as opposed to just filling and recycling these current presidents, to be quite honest.”

These comments indicate the desire for change to the current system and willingness to consider a structured approach.

### **The Model**

Due to the variety of institutions and environments in higher education, a leader development construct must be easily scaled to meet the needs of an institution. Also, the framework should support both “fast burners” and “late bloomers,” as well as those who temporarily step away for personal reasons.

The higher education enterprise is not too large or too complex for this practice, as the literature might suggest; an intentional process is very possible, as illustrated in Figure 6.



**Figure 6. Deliberate Leader Development Construct for Higher Education**

The model provides a graduated career path to the presidency and provides the correctly timed developmental activities along the journey, as informed by the data gathered in this study. The construct is also holistic, addressing both the art and science of leadership. The major steps of the deliberate leader development model are discussed below, along with new concepts for higher education.

Trigger points. Trigger points, as indicated by a star in Figure 6, are milestones that indicate a significant step to the presidency. These primary triggers may also be referred to as “gates” and sub gates can indicate completion of targeted education, development opportunities or broadening. The journey to the presidency will be different for each



contender, and within the primary development categories, activities or sub gates may be completed out of order. However, all leaders, including “fast burners” still must go through the gates, without skipping developmental activities - something the research showed is happening in the current environment, causing knowledge and experiential gaps.

In terms of years spent at each level of the pyramid, it is possible to take averages of the career paths traveled by current presidents. For instance, data gathered in Phase 1 of this study showed the trigger point for entering the presidency for the surveyed group was between the 13-20 year point, earlier for those in private religious settings and longer for those in public universities. An analysis of the entire pool of presidents will hone these waypoints, which can be tailored to school type and shaped to the desired length of time to master the activity.

Vectors. As the research indicated, leaders in higher education are often identified, but adrift and have no career path or milestones. The problem is exacerbated by the inherent lack of mentoring across the continuum. The model solves this issue, not only by providing a standardized construct, but by giving every high potential leader a vector, indicating the next step on the pathway to the presidency. For instance, the contender may be vectored to broadening, a sabbatical, or participation in the ACE Fellows program. Although these vectors may not always be fulfilled next due to organizational needs and unforeseen events, the vectoring process certainly helps the individual and organization prepare and plan. The vectors must be managed and given to the high potential leader by the president, who is informed about the leader’s progress by the supervisory chain. The presidential oversight works any nepotism, favoritism or

personality conflicts that might hinder a leader's progress out of the system. Vectoring and trigger point activities also will formalize succession planning activities, as the president can now inventory their leaders and track preparedness and progress.

Core Skill. The primary activity for entry level employees in higher education must be the mastery of the initial, or core skill. From a leader development point of view, they should be afforded the proper training and education to become experts in their area.

Attaining mastery of this skill is critical prior to attempting broadening.

Identification. It is quite natural for high potential leaders to start outpacing their peers early. The study showed that early identification is likely happening in higher education, although the individual is then put back into the pool to figure out the right path.

Although the activity is already occurring informally, formal identification of contenders will likely be a difficult step within in the higher education culture. However, the Center for Creative Leadership believes contenders should be told they are considered high potential, as they perform better when they know of the institution's belief in their abilities and an element of "self-fulfilling prophecy" is present (personal conversation, 1999). Major corporations already have best practices related to high potential identification and management that would serve higher education well, such as AON-Hewitt, a human capital corporation, which issued a foundational paper in 2013 entitled "Building the Right High Potential Pool."

Broadening/Skill Pairing. As leaders move through successively higher echelons, they need a wider portfolio of competencies. A broadening opportunity in line with the interests of the leader and/or the needs of the institution provides a secondary skill, such as fundraising, admissions, institutional research, information technology, accreditation,

or student services. The interviews revealed that current presidents who have a broad skill set are more confident about their abilities to serve in the position.

Preparatory Jobs. The research showed the vice president and provost positions as important for preparing and testing candidates for the presidency. Although there are cases of successful presidencies by those who came from outside of higher education, we must consider whether we are doing the employee and the institution a disservice as they simultaneously try to attain skills and knowledge while in the role. Even if “leadership is leadership,” a recommendation from this study is to enact a procedure where those outside of higher education enter the career path at the vice president point to allow them to “catch up” with regards to skill sets and competencies and for “testing” prior to assuming a presidency. As the rich pool of contenders grows, we would expect less of a need to look outside of higher education for senior leaders, although this group should not be excluded as it adds external perspective.

Mentoring. The study validated the “dreadful lack of mentoring” in higher education position of Bornstein, 2011. The interviews were replete with examples of informal mentoring that was not helpful or confusing. All employees deserve formal, constructive mentoring, therefore leaders must be taught mentoring fundamentals, as well as how to mentor cross gender, cross culturally and cross generationally. As was noted by a Board member interviewed for the study, the lack of money for staff development has placed a greater emphasis on the importance of mentoring. Mentoring must be baked into the culture in higher education and occur at every point on the leader development continuum. Furthermore, leaders should be assessed on their mentoring skills and activities in the annual performance review.

Developmental Education. The survey data and interviews illustrated an uneven application of opportunities such as the ACE Fellows program and attendance at various leadership institutes. Even upon assuming the presidency, very few are afforded the chance to attend the Harvard University's New President's program. Most of those interviewed for this study have never attended developmental education. Based on the data and research, there are two points on the presidency path where developmental education is important: prior to becoming a dean and prior to becoming president.

Sabbaticals. Faculty should not be the only employees in higher education taking sabbaticals to refresh and renew. Information collected during the interviews indicated the need for time away while serving as dean, and while serving as a president. As discussed in Chapter 5, sabbaticals are also healthy for the organization as those leaders one level below fill in for the leader, test their skills and build confidence.

Preparing for the Next Presidency. With the increase in multiple presidencies, there might be a graduated approach to the presidency, where new presidents grow and are tested at smaller schools prior to assuming presidency at a large research university. As the study showed, burn out is a possibility for those on second, third or more presidencies, especially when engaging in turn-around activities.

Annual Review Process. The leader development construct within a college must be managed by the president to ensure equity and fairness throughout the system, as well as put those who may have been "lost" due to personal or health issues back on track.

Human Resources (HR) plays a significant role in the deliberate development construct. Personnel records must reflect the identification of high potential leaders, as well as accomplishment of gates and sub gates. The optimal process would be to maintain an

accumulating portfolio of the individual's experience, education, and training to serve as a central, portable repository. Included in the portfolio would be an ongoing assessment of the contender's capabilities and interests in leading certain types of schools, for example, large, small, liberal arts, a research university or community college. The study showed not enough attention is being paid to the matching process and knowledge of self and capabilities is a good first step. The portfolios would also better inform search agencies than the standard resume, helping with the matching process.

Budgetary Support. Central funding for leader development is a must in order to provide training and developmental opportunities for all, removing the burden from the employee to source their own education and leveling the playing field between departments. To maintain equity, the oversight of this budget must rest with the president, not the departments.

Executive Agent/High Level Guidance. Due to their broad policy role, the lead agency and executive agent for leader development in higher education should be the Department of Education, with organizations such as ACE, Harvard and others aligning their programs with skill and capabilities needed in the presidency. The optimum situation would be to have one primary "schoolhouse" to centralize higher education skill instruction in areas such as budgeting, strategic planning and managing board relationships, with other education and development opportunities providing the variety, external views and ideas on leadership. Guidance regarding the leader development program must be widely accessible to all employees in higher education in the spirit of transparency.

## **Barriers to Execution**

Several challenges must be addressed prior to instituting a leader development construct. First of all, any new processes must be implemented carefully, with a nod to the long tradition and history associated with higher education. The culture is mostly change resistant, therefore communication, partnering and a slow, measured approach is needed.

As indicated in the Vicere Model and illustrated throughout this study, Human Resources is a key implementer of leader development programs. Unfortunately, higher education has been slow to bring HR into the “inner circle” of the senior leadership team, with membership on the president’s cabinet at the vice president level. Most non-academic environments have more extensive HR areas capable of managing their leader development programs, and unless the program falls into a different portfolio, expansion of HR staff and services from the current construct would be necessary.

Finally, the faculty culture must change to accept and encourage professors who aspire to executive leadership. There are incredible would-be leaders in the faculty who do not want to step forward due to pressure from peers and the system. Deans must identify and place these fledgling leaders on the leadership path. Also, schools with faculty unions and shared governance must play a role in planning for a leader development program and its execution.

## **Immediate Recommendations**

Based on the data analysis and findings in this study, several recommendations are proposed as a way to jumpstart the deliberate leader development process in higher education.

The higher education culture must shift at the core from the “selection of the fittest” to a “development of the fittest” (McCall, 1998, p. 17). Therefore, a pilot program should be developed within DOE to test the deliberate leader development construct proposed in Figure 7, perhaps within a large community college system, or within a state or a region. Several of the presidents interviewed for the study indicated their willingness to test emergent leader development activities.

Using the skill information gathered in this study and built upon by future research, ACE, the Association of Governing Boards (AGB) and other institutions providing leader development activities should factor requirements into their course offerings. Courses should also be offered in a portable, online format for presidents unable to attend in person due to resource or time constraints.

To address the immediate concern of mentoring presidents and vice presidents, research indicates that a Senior Statesman program consisting of former presidents would be beneficial to vice presidents and presidents. The interviews illustrated how the presidency is a “lonely place;” a Statesman program would provide support to those who are geographically separated or do not have a circle of colleagues for encouragement. Along with the mentoring issues in higher education, the research discovered higher education has a culture where there is the inability or unwillingness to seek and give feedback. During the interviews, several presidents expressed uncertainty about their effectiveness or standing with the Board, indicating a lack of self-awareness. ACE should provide each sitting president with a 360-degree leadership assessment, completed by the president and his or her board, vice presidents and deans. The cultural fear about

direct, specific feedback must be eliminated to enhance leader effectiveness and open channels of communication.

Regarding professional development, an annual reading list for presidents with a handful of books, perhaps selected by ACE and related to current challenges, would be helpful. The books could be delivered in e-format and cover topics in business, government and other industries, in addition to higher education. Data in the study showed the need for case studies as learning tool, and, in addition to making the Trachtenberg, 2013 book mandatory reading, professional journals should be sought to take on the challenge and cover not only successful, but failed presidencies. An Education-with-Industry program, similar to that offered to military executives, would also be helpful to add to the development inventory. The pairing of presidents with CEOs of major corporations and senior leaders in the government would serve as a conduit to build cross agency relationships as exchange knowledge and ideas.

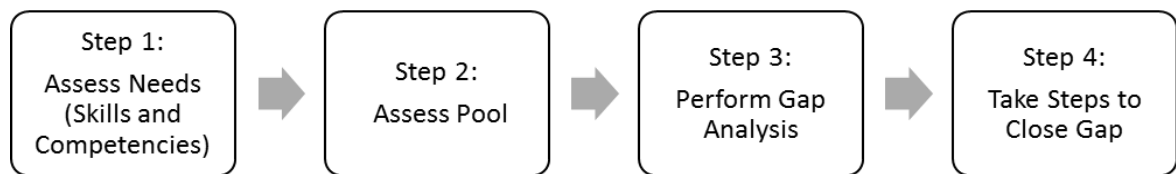
Finally, the study found inadequate support to the presidents regarding life/work balance and management of their physical and mental stressors while in the presidency. Executive coaching services and agencies that support business executives would be helpful to assist with their physical and mental health in the very stressful presidency role. In addition to encouraging sabbaticals for presidents that are restorative in nature, the culture should grow to support these all types of helping activities to holistically take care of its leaders.

### **Opportunities for Future Research**

Several major future research strands emerged from the study. With regards to the upcoming bow wave of retirements and the aging of the presidency indicated by ACE



2012, perhaps the most pressing is the lack of data on the size and skillset of the existing pool of leaders and future needs of the presidency. This gap analysis is critical to predicting deficiencies in the precursory jobs of dean and vice president. The interviews revealed a belief that the pool is larger than it may be, and the overreliance on search agencies has caused a “hands off” approach and overconfidence that needs can always be filled by search agencies or external candidates. The following prescriptive model is proposed as a way of addressing these concerns.



**Figure 7. Gap Analysis**

This study introduced a process for accomplishing the Step 1 assessment through Likert-scaled survey questions to isolate the skills and competencies needed in the modern presidency, and the results are factored into the recommendations later in this chapter. Another research finding was the criticality of board member input regarding the skillsets and qualities needed in newly appointed presidents. After need is identified, Step 2 involves an assessment of the available pool of leaders which could be accomplished by surveying sitting deans and vice presidents, as the main precursory positions to the presidency. The gap analysis in Step 3 will reveal disconnects, and the final process, Step 4, closing the gap, is accomplished by ensured the proper training, education and experiential opportunities exist and are provided to the up and coming leaders.

Another valuable project would be to identify the competencies of the presidency at various types of institutions, as the study indicated there may be differences such as the need for political or fundraising skills. The data could be gathered by not only surveying the presidents, but also the board, as “subject matter experts.” This information might be fed to search agencies to improve the matching process.

A longitudinal study would be extraordinarily helpful and could be accomplished at one large public school, a group of schools such as community colleges in the same state, or a consortium of small independents (population under 1,500). Treating new employees as a cohort and tracking their development and ascendancy would give unique perspectives on how the system does or does not support their journey. Another study might be a pilot test of the deliberate development construct at a school, or having study and control groups to compare and contrast the effects of deliberate development activities.

Throughout the study, numerous parallels were seen between leader development in other professions such as the medical and military career fields. A comparison of development activities and programs in these professions, as well as cases from the business world, would provide insight into how best to accomplish similar endeavors in higher education. Sitting presidents with experience in other professions would be extraordinarily informative, such as the subject interviewed for this study who came into the presidency directly from a CEO position in the health care industry brought a deep knowledge of “board management.”

Development and execution of a deliberate leader development in higher education may require the creation of a new organization to provide oversight and

direction, and serve as repository for best practices and information clearinghouse.

Research would be valuable as to whether this new institute would best be positioned as nonprofit organization, a branch in the Department of Higher Education or as part of an existing association.

Finally, a major and emergent research strand of this study regarded the presidency as a profession or a vocation, which would transform the university president cadre from one with similar responsibilities to one with a sense of stewardship and shared responsibility to identify and cultivate future leaders. A first step might be to develop doctrine that codifies the beliefs of the higher education profession and provides fundamental principles to guide actions. The doctrine would be universally applied across institutions despite their unique missions. Many questions in higher education are lacking answers such as “Who are we?” “What business are we in?” and “Where are we going and where do we want to go?” The military construct proves there is a direct connection between doctrine and strategy, which leads to the next major future research strand: the lack of strategic direction and vision in higher education. A code of ethics would also be helpful as a beacon to guide conduct for all presidents. Finally, the identification of enduring competencies would help with leader development. What is universal and unchanging about the profession of higher education? This body of research identified an interest in the enduring competency concept, and provided the basis for future studies.

## **Conclusion**

Although the challenges facing the presidency are unprecedented and complex, they provide a rare opportunity to reshape and reenergize the enterprise. As the Air Force

situation proves, a leader development system can turn around a vast organization in just a few short years if there is the courage to change paradigms; accurate articulation of the need for the change; and a transparent process that will be embraced by those who want to lead. Accordingly, the systemic change proposed by this study requires united leadership. Kotter (2006) defined “a guiding coalition” as one of the most essential preconditions for successfully leading change. The coalition must have enough power to lead the change and get disparate groups with separate agendas to function like a team. In the higher education construct, the college presidents will need to form a coalition in order to initiate and sustain a new leader development construct across the spectrum.

Our future presidents are out there right now, serving as administrators and faculty, waiting for an acknowledgment of their unique leadership talents and a pathway to the top. Providing targeted and sequenced training, education and experiences will produce the right expertise and competence to deliver a ready, tested and willing pool of leaders for the college presidency.

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## Appendix A

### College President Survey – Phase 1, Quantitative Review

#### **Survey:** Deliberate Leader Development in Higher Education

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Follow up contact information (phone and/or e-mail) \_\_\_\_\_

Statement of Consent: I have read the above information and have received answers to my questions. I consent to take part in the research study of leader development in higher education.

#### **A. Background data.**

Are you a current, sitting college or university president? YES / NO

How long have you been in this position? \_\_\_\_\_

Is this your first presidency? If not, second, third or more? \_\_\_\_\_

If a prior institution president, for how long? \_\_\_\_\_

Were you hired to the presidency from a field other than higher ed? \_\_\_\_\_

If yes, please selected applicable career field:

Corporate

Military

Other government

Other (please specify)

What is your highest held degree (specifically)? \_\_\_\_\_

EdD

PhD

Doctor of Business

Doctor of Divinity

JD

Other \_\_\_\_\_

How long have you served in higher ed positions (cumulative)? \_\_\_\_\_

#### **B. Career Path and Succession Planning Information**

Were you specifically identified as a future leader in the higher education realm early in your career? YES / NO

Are you aware that other large enterprises such as the military have this identification process very early in the career and then specially manage the career of “contenders” for future critical leadership positions? YES / NO

Did you have a specific career path, one that you knew could take you to the president position? YES / NO

If not, do you believe a specific career path would it have been helpful to you in terms of stability, experience, skills and predicting your potential for success? YES / NO

Is there formal succession planning at your university? YES / NO

If not, is there informal succession planning at your university? YES/NO

Have you been expected to search or otherwise be involved with identifying your replacement? YES / NO

Were you part of a national search effort by an external firm when selected for this position? YES / NO

### **C. Traits and Skills Needed to Succeed as a University President**

Please rate the importance of the following traits and skills for a successful university president:

5=Very Important 4=Important 3=Desirable 2=Usually not needed 1=Not Necessary

1. Able to keep balance in all aspects of life	5	4	3	2	1
2. Innovative	5	4	3	2	1
4. Ability to handle conflict and resolve disputes	5	4	3	2	1
5. Accomplished and poised speaker	5	4	3	2	1
6. Intuitive understanding of the budgetary process	5	4	3	2	1
7. Effective writer	5	4	3	2	1
8. Thorough understanding of human resources practices	5	4	3	2	1
9. Proficient with technology, formal and informal (social)	5	4	3	2	1
10. Understanding how to lead cross generationally	5	4	3	2	1
11. Understanding how to lead cross gender	5	4	3	2	
1					
12. Understanding how to lead cross culturally	5	4	3	2	
1					

### **D. Traits and Skills Needed to Succeed as a University President (Part 2)**

Now please indicate whether you received formal education and training on the same areas noted in the previous question. Please note whether this education or training was self procured.

	Received Training?		Self	
Procured?				
1. Keeping balance in all aspects of life	Yes	No	Yes	No
2. Innovative, creative	Yes	No	Yes	No
3. Strong listener (listening skills)	Yes	No	Yes	No
4. Ability to handle conflict and resolve disputes	Yes	No	Yes	No
5. Accomplished and poised speaker (speaking skills)	Yes	No	Yes	No
6. Intuitive understanding of the budgetary process (budget skills)	Yes	No	Yes	No

7. Effective writer (writing skills)	Yes	No	Yes	No
8. Thorough understanding of human resources practices (HR skills)	Yes	No	Yes	No
9. Proficient with technology, formal and informal (IT, social networking)	Yes	No	Yes	No
10. Understanding how to lead cross generationally	Yes	No	Yes	No
11. Understanding how to lead cross gender	Yes	No	Yes	No
12. Understanding how to lead cross culturally	Yes	No	Yes	No

### **E. Mentoring**

Do you participate in a formal mentoring program as a mentor? YES / NO

Do you informally mentor colleagues who exhibit leadership potential? YES / NO

Have you ever been part of a formal mentoring program while serving in higher education?

YES / NO

Were you mentored? YES / NO

Would you be interested in establishing a mentorship program as part of leader development in higher education? YES / NO

### **F. Enduring Competencies**

As part of this study, we will introduce a new concept to higher education, that of “enduring competencies.” These are the traits exhibited by successful leaders in higher education that are timeless and enduring. Please select the traits from the list below that you believe are enduring:

#### **Personal Leadership**

- ☐ Exercise Sound Judgment
- ☐ Adapt and Perform Under Pressure
- ☐ Inspire Trust
- ☐ Lead Courageously
- ☐ Able to Critically Assess Self
- ☐ Foster Effective Communication

#### **Leading People/Teams**

- ☐ Drive Performance through Shared Vision, Values, and Accountability
- ☐ Influence through Win/Win Solutions
- ☐ Mentor and Coach for Growth and Success
- ☐ Promote Collaboration and Teamwork
- ☐ Partner to Maximize Results

#### **Leading the Institution**

- ☐ Command Organizational and Mission Success through Enterprise Integration and

Resource Stewardship

- ☐ Embrace Change and Transformation
- ☐ Drive Execution
- ☐ Attract, Retain, and Develop Talent

Have you ever thought about the concept of enduring competencies prior to taking this survey? YES / NO

Would you find case studies of other successful college presidents helpful in your own endeavors? YES / NO

**G. Other**

Would you be interested in participating in a follow-up interview?

YES / NO

If **yes**, please provide your contact information:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Best time to call: \_\_\_\_\_

Email address: \_\_\_\_\_

*Thank you for your participation in this survey!*

## Appendix B

Research and Interview Questions – Former and Current College Presidents,  
N=12

<b>Central question:</b> What are the factors of a leader development program that contribute to preparedness of university leaders?	
<i>Research Thread</i>	<i>Grand Tour Questions</i>
Do participants share similar experiences that led to their success?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Tell me as much as possible about yourself, family, educational and professional experiences.</li> <li>2. What concerns, if any, do you have regarding the start of your college presidency journey?</li> </ol>
How are leaders in higher education identified?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3. Were you identified early in your career as a future leader in higher education?</li> <li>4. If so, can you explain how this process took place?</li> <li>5. Alternatively, do you feel your success was a combination of hard work and happenstance or chance?</li> <li>6. Did politics play a role in your selection?</li> </ol>
How are leaders in higher education developed?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>7. Did you have a mentor and what role did he/she have in your development as a leader?</li> <li>8. Do you feel that you were “deliberately developed”? In other words, was there a plan?</li> <li>9. Was there a specific career path to your present position?</li> <li>10. What were the critical steps along the way?</li> </ol>
What are the characteristics, qualities, and strategies of the present leader development programs?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>11. Did mentoring play a role in your development?</li> <li>12. Did you broaden and take jobs outside of your core specialty to purposely gain breadth and skills?</li> <li>13. Did you attend professional leadership training or courses? If so, who sponsored this education?</li> </ol>
What attributes are needed in a college president?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>14. Specifically, what attributes does it take to succeed as a college president?</li> <li>15. What do you view as enduring competencies those that persist throughout generations and over time?</li> <li>16. In what ways is/is not the Presidency a calling? A profession?</li> </ol>



Research and Interview Questions - Board members, N=2

<i>Research Thread</i>	<i>Grand Tour Questions</i>
How are leaders in higher education identified?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Do you believe leaders in higher ed are identified early in their career?</li> <li>2. Alternatively, do you feel their success is more likely a combination of hard work and happenstance/chance?</li> <li>3. Are politics at play in the selection of college presidents?</li> </ol>
How are leaders in higher education developed?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4. How might career broadening help? Through which positions?</li> <li>5. How is mentoring playing a role in the development of College Presidents?</li> <li>6. Is there a specific career path you consider more advantageous to the Presidency?</li> </ol>
What attributes are needed in a college president?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>7. What are your thoughts on the increased use of search agencies to find candidates for the Presidency?</li> <li>8. What are your feelings concerning Presidents who come into the role from outside of higher education?</li> <li>9. What do you feel are the enduring competencies of the President position that persist throughout the ages?</li> </ol>