

## **Multicultural/Multiethnic Education: A Critical Approach to the Educational Doctorate in Leadership**

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In the coming years, the community college will experience unprecedented turnover in its leadership, especially among its senior ranks (Shults, 2001; Weisman & Vaughan, 2001; 2006). Weisman & Vaughan (2006) note that 84 percent of community college Chief Executive Officers (CEOs) plan to retire by 2016. Primarily, the ‘impending’ leadership void is being created by educators who entered the community college in the 1960s and 1970s, and have served in these institutions for decades (Phillippe & Sullivan, 2005; Schults, 2001). On the verge of retirement, the presidential ranks are becoming progressively older. In 1996, the average age of a community college president was 54; in 2001, it had risen to 56. By 2006, the average age of a president had increased to 58 (Weisman & Vaughan, 2006). While the average age of a community college president is 58, Duree (2007) notes that 44 percent of presidents are between the ages of 60 and 69, supporting the assertion that administrator turnover is forthcoming.

The aging trend among community college leaders is also evident in the ranks of Chief Academic Officers (CAOs) (e.g., Vice Presidents of Academic Affairs, Vice Chancellors for Academic Affairs) (see Amey, VanDerlinden & Brown, 2001; Evelyn, 2001; Schults, 2001). For example in 1985, the average age of a CAO in the community college was 49.1 years old (Moore, Matorana & Twombly, 1985). However, by 2008, the average age had risen to 54 years old further suggesting that retirements are looming among these administrators (Mizak, 2008). The retirement of a large portion of senior faculty members also poses severe challenges to leadership channels. Typically, senior faculty members fill the leadership pipeline. As noted by Nevarez and Keyes (2007), “historically, the path to higher education administration has been via tenure track faculty member, to chair, dean, vice president, to president” (p. 82). This is affirmed by Duree (2007) who states that 84.4 percent of presidents have taught full time or part time in the community college prior to assuming the presidency. Furthermore, 47 percent assumed the presidency directly from positions in academic affairs.

### **Challenges to Leading in the Community College**

As retirements loom among executive level administrators, there is a critical need to develop the next generation of leaders who are prepared to assume the dynamic, complex, and challenging roles that their positions demand. Thus, the importance of providing leadership preparation focused on preparing leaders with the skills, knowledge, and experiences needed to become effective leaders is essential for the vitality and advancement of the institutions they serve. The need to prepare a new kind of executive leader is of the utmost importance, as the roles and duties of higher education leaders have changed greatly from previous generations. Leaders today need to realize the fundamental organizational changes required to better meet the needs of constituents and the necessity for growth and transformation of individuals and institutions (Hoff, 1999; Ramalay, 2000).

In contrast to other sectors (e.g., business), higher education has few internal mechanisms to train new and aspiring administrators for successive levels of leadership. Consequently, the lack of leadership succession planning in community colleges, especially among senior

administrative ranks, places those promoted to new leadership posts at a disadvantage as skills and knowledge needed for success in these positions are learned on-the-job. To counter the lack of preparation, an approach that focuses on building the leadership capacity of prospective leaders should be institutionalized within the everyday practices of the college.

Leadership development can serve to prepare leaders with the multifaceted skills necessary to meet these needs. It can serve as a tool to replenish the leadership pipeline, prepare leaders so they are effective at transforming institutions to meet the needs of students and constituents, and diversify the administrative ranks with leaders attuned to the needs of a global marketplace. Leadership development should encompass academic and professional development opportunities such as doctoral programs which provide guidance, mentorship, knowledge, experiences, networks and activities that prepare leaders to effectively serve the wide-ranging missions, demands, and diverse needs of the community college.

### *Primary Challenges Facing Community College Leaders*

There are a number of challenges facing today's community colleges and, subsequently, its leaders. These issues are dynamic and complex due to the evolving mission, changing demographic landscape, and societal pressures on the community college. The following merely serves as a snapshot of the challenges encountered by these institutions:

- *Complexity of the Position.* The community college has multiple roles (e.g., career technical education, remediation, transfer, meeting community needs), and these roles are continually evolving due to internal (e.g., faculty pay, student retention) and external demands (e.g., funding, accountability). Thus, leading these increasingly dynamic institutions requires that leaders are able to multi-task, possess effective leadership skills, and handle multiple pressures that the position brings.
- *Funding.* The chronic lack of funding experienced by community colleges poses significant challenges to the community colleges mission of open- access. Funding shortages result in lack of funding for student services, high numbers of adjunct faculty, and minimal institutional resources among other factors. While other institutions of higher education can confront these challenges with capital campaigns, community colleges are at a disadvantage as they lack the kind of support that four year universities experience. For example, Townsend & Twombly (2001) contend that “the community college has sometimes been viewed as a poor cousin of elite liberal arts colleges and research universities” (p.vii). These views have implications directly tied to alumni support, state/federal funding allocations, fundraising, and bond initiatives.
- *Academic Success.* Community colleges offer access to the most underserved students with the greatest needs, as their ‘open door’ policy is consistent with their mission focused on access. However, these institutions have been criticized for low degree attainment and transfer rates. Even when controlling for students who state that they desire to graduate or transfer, the success rate is low. For example, the three year graduation rate for first-time freshman in the community college is less than 27 percent for all racial/ethnic groups (US Department of Education, 2006).
- *Assessment.* As a whole, community colleges struggle in assessing local community impact and student success. Often, this is attributed to the multiple purposes and foci of these institutions. The assessment of the community college is challenged by its varied missions and its decentralized governance structure which provides it with a great deal of autonomy. Improved assessment is needed in the community college to: a) improve

academic outcomes of students; b) inform current and future practices; c) justify future funding, resources, and support from state governments; and d) satisfy guidelines for accreditation agencies.

- *Diversity*. The disproportionate representation of diverse leaders among the administrative ranks is not reflective of the population these institutions serve. This has implications in the following ways: a) preparing students for a diverse global marketplace; b) promoting civic engagement and social justice; c) creating quality role models; d) providing cultural brokers/translators/transformers; and e) encouraging effective critical pedagogy, planning, and programming that accounts for diversity.

### *Leadership 'Crisis' or Leadership Opportunity*

Some scholars have gone to great lengths to herald the approaching transition of community college leaders, describing it as a 'crisis' (Katsinas, 2002; Korb, 2006; Shults, 2001). This claim is made in relationship to the lack of leaders being prepared to assume the leadership ranks in community colleges. It is vague what is meant by this 'crisis' other than the typical administrative turnover experienced in all sectors of society due to the retirement of the baby boomer generation. However, there is another way to construe this phenomenon; it should be seen as an opportunity to improve the effectiveness of community college leadership.

The retention, graduation, and transfer rates of students (particularly students of color), is abysmal. Clearly, new ideas, perspectives, and educational approaches are needed to increase student academic success. In this light, these retirements are not a crisis; rather, it is an opportunity to improve the diversification of leaders and educational outcomes. That being said, the primary challenge posed by these retirements is the potential loss of institutional memory within these organizations (Shults, 2001; Phillippe & Sullivan, 2005). As the 'old guard' is replaced with new leadership, the historical context needed to understand the importance of policies, processes and programs may be lost. However, Phillippe & Sullivan (2005) assert that these changes provide opportunities as "the potential for new energy and insight balances some of the losses" (p. 76).

Some of these new insights may come from a more diverse leadership. Weisman & Vaughan (2006) provide data indicating that 88 percent of community college presidents are White, while only 8 percent are Black, 4 percent Hispanic and 1 percent Asian-American/Pacific Islander. Furthermore, they state that only 29 percent of these presidents are female, while 71 percent are male. These statistics indicate a clear problem of representation between the percentage of racial/ethnic and gender diversity in society and among community college students with that of the administrative ranks. It is important for the administrators to reflect on the diverse makeup of the students they represent in order to serve as mentors/role models and work towards creating an inclusive campus environment. The lack of diversity within the administrative ranks in many community colleges raises an important question: Does its principles of access, equity and diversity extend only to its student body? If so, a mixed message is being sent to its constituency. One that says, we welcome diversity among students but not among the leadership ranks. Furthermore, the paucity of leader diversity in the community college presents a nearly untapped resource to fill the broken leadership pipeline. If diversified, these leaders may bring to the leadership ranks new cultural lenses, a commitment to diversity, the ability to relate to diverse constituencies, and insights on challenges facing students which may enable the community college to better address the needs of a continuously changing

student populous. That being said, not all minorities are proponents for diversity-related initiatives and ideals.

### **Skills Needed by Community College Leaders**

A variety of leadership development programs/initiatives have been useful in developing community college leaders. In doing so, they have focused on developing the knowledge, skills, and disposition needed for success (e.g., budgeting, ethics, governance, human relations, cultural proficiency, facilitating institutional change, conflict resolution). However, there remains a need to rethink the way community college leaders have been trained. Traditional leadership development programs have been criticized for replicating leadership approaches, structures, and ideologies that are not attuned to the current realities faced by community colleges. For example, most doctoral programs which develop community college leaders, train students for the positions in the professoriate or as researchers; however, in discussions with current administrators seeking their doctorates, they state that there is a need to develop practical skills that are aligned with the everyday challenges faced by community college leaders.

Research by Nevarez and Keyes (2007) indicates that only 29 percent of executive-level community college administrators in California believe that their academic programs provided them with the training and skills necessary for successful leadership. Furthermore, 70.4 percent stated that there was a need to integrate leadership training and skills into current academic programs. Other scholars also affirm the disconnect that exists between leadership preparation and the skills needed to be successful in the field (see Brown, Martinez & Daniel, 2002; McPhail, Robinson & Scott, 2008). To illustrate this disconnect, Table 1 presents findings derived from three studies on this topic (Brown et al., 2002; Nevarez & Keyes, 2007; Wallin, 2002). On the left side of this table, a set of skills were identified by a variety of community college leaders as being essential skills for effective community college leadership<sup>7</sup>. These skills contrast the current areas of leadership development occurring in doctoral programs, which are featured on the right side of the table (Brown et al., 2002).

Table 1.  
*Leadership Skills Needed & Skills Emphasized in Doctoral Programs*

Leadership Skills Needed			Doctoral Program Emphasis
Wallin (2002)	Nevarez & Keyes (2007)	Brown et al., 2002	Brown et al., 2002
1) Budget management 2) Developing positive relationship with local political leaders 3) Developing positive	1) Strategic planning & management 2) Interpersonal communication skills 3) Budgeting & fund development 4) Laws and legal	1) Effective writing skills 2) Conflict resolution, mediation, and negotiating skills 3) Understanding and application of “change” 4)* Understanding of community college	1) Statistical research methodology 2) Faculty and staff development 3) Interpretation of surveys and research 4) Understanding of organization theory and culture

<sup>7</sup> Skill sets are ranked, ties are indicated by (\*) asterisks

relationships with state political leaders	issues 5) Technology training	mission 4)* Institutional effectiveness: assessment and analysis 6) Understanding of collaborative decision making 7) Understanding of interpersonal communication 8)* Developing and communicating a vision 8)* Effective public speaking skills 10) Effective listening and feedback skills	5) Effective writing skills 6) Teaching and learning styles and methodologies 7) Understanding of the community college mission 8) Understanding and application of “change” 9) Curriculum development 10) Statistical software application
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In examining the themes across Table 1, it is apparent that the primary skills needed for community college leaders, as identified by the leaders themselves, encompasses two areas: human relations and budgeting/finance. In contrast, the preparation received in doctoral programs focuses on developing research skills and the technical knowledge needed for success in the professoriate. While these skills are important for aspiring faculty members, the gateway for many community college presidents, they do not adequately prepare aspiring leaders with the skill-sets needed for success in administrative posts. This presents an opportunity to ensure that leadership programs, including doctoral programs, are attuned to the realities of the profession. It also illustrates the critical need for professional development for leaders beyond doctoral programs.

*Skills Provided by Doctoral Programs*

There are current efforts to address these contradictions, the focus of which has been on the unclear role of the EdD and Phd (Schulman, Golde, Bueschel & Garabedian, 2006). The lack of distinction between the EdD and PhD serves as an additional element contributing to the incongruencies between what leaders’ state they need, and what they are getting. Levine (2005) stated that educational leadership programs were not preparing academic leaders for the demands of the profession. Some efforts are underway to address Levine’s concern. As an example, the Carnegie Foundation launched a new initiative entitled, the *Carnegie Project on the Education Doctorate*; its purpose is to critically analyze and redefine the state of doctoral education. The foundation seeks to implement a widespread overhaul of the EdD and PhD curriculum to meet distinct needs of both researchers or practitioners. For practitioners, the goal is to create curriculum that focuses less on preparing students for the professoriate and more on providing a venue where greater efforts are made to link theory to practice (Carnegie Foundation, 2009).

### *Skills Provided by Leadership Development Programs*

In examining unpublished data from 66 community college executives (e.g., Presidents, Chancellors, Vice Chancellors) who participated in the study published by Nevarez & Keyes (2007), it is clear that leadership development programs are meeting some of the needs identified by these educational leaders. According to the community college leaders who participated in the survey, the top five skills/abilities that they have gained from leadership training include: 1) increased time management skills; 2) more understanding of the challenges associated with educational leadership; 3) increased strategic planning skills; 4) increased decision making skills; 5) increased communication skills; and 6) increased confidence level

Based upon this data, it seems that leadership development programs are meeting the human relationship needs of leaders, an important void identified in doctoral education training. Unfortunately, the budgeting/finance skills received the lowest score in this study. Thus, it is imperative that leadership development programs improve this area of training in order to address the top two concerns identified by community college leaders.

Doctoral programs (EdD and PhD) link theory, research and practice relevant to training community college leaders. These programs are driven by the theoretical and conceptual underpinnings of leadership theory. Although the focus of these programs are to prepare community college leaders, each program has distinctive features (e.g., transformational leadership, social justice, policy), see Appendix 1. An emerging trademark of these programs is the cohort-based model, in which students are grouped with other aspiring leaders throughout the duration of their program. The intention behind this structure is to increase cohesiveness, support, and network among cohort members, which subsequently can serve as a mechanism to increase the academic success of its students.

A doctoral degree is widely viewed as a baseline requirement for executive-level leadership in the community college. Weisman & Vaughan (2006) note that 88.4 percent of community college presidents possessed doctoral degrees. Thus, there is a significant value in attaining a doctoral degree for aspiring and current community college leaders. As the demand for executive leaders to possess a doctoral degree continues to increase, the number of degrees conferred in the area of community college leadership has been stagnant.

The programs presented above provide a glimpse into what higher education programs focus on in preparing community college leaders. A comprehensive list of these programs is available on the Council for the Study of Community College and American Association of Community Colleges websites. These programs serve as an authority on preparing executive level administrators though they have been criticized for not adequately preparing leaders to effectively serve their institutions (Brown, et al., 2002; Land, 2003; Raines & Alberg, 2003). This is due to a lack of balance between theory and practice as well as a central academic focus on community colleges.

A cursory review of existing programs on community college leadership quickly reveals a paucity of programs specifically focused on community college leadership. What is found is that programs have a generalized higher education focus. Additionally, there is a proliferation of online and/or for-profit programs for community college leadership (e.g., Argosy University, Walden University). It is clear that alternative formats of instruction provided by these institutions create greater access to doctoral education focused on community colleges than has been traditionally provided by public institutions. Like their public university counterparts, the issue of assessment to determine program effectiveness continues to gain greater visibility, especially in consideration of the accountability movement that permeates higher education.

## Assessment

The need for ongoing assessment of the effectiveness of leadership development programs is of critical importance. Especially in this era of accountability where programs are being scrutinized to determine whether proposed outcomes have been achieved and subsequently determine if further support is warranted. Additionally, it is imperative to assess these leadership development programs to ensure that professional standards are met and that programmatic offerings are not fragmented and/or misaligned. Assessment efforts will identify key components of leadership development that are successful and areas that need to be created, expanded, revamped or eliminated.

It is important to assess “the worth of these programs to their stakeholders, including sponsors, participants, employers, and other beneficiaries” (Weissner & Sullivan, 2007, p. 93). Assessment of programs are needed in four areas: 1) participants reaction to the program, including subjects addressed, quality of presenters and logistics; 2) the nature and extent of the learning that occurred during the program; 3) the extent to which attitudes and actions changed as a result of the program; and 4) the outcomes and benefits of the program.

Preferably, program assessments will use quantitative and qualitative analyses to examine the immediate and long term impact of the programs. This approach will allow for a comprehensive overview of the impact the program and determine whether: a) the program met its intended purpose/outcome; b) programmatic adjustments are needed to improve its effectiveness; and c) sponsors should continue their funding support. Effective components of leadership development programs should include the following: 1) it is structurally sound where the purpose and objectives are clearly defined; 2) the curriculum of the leadership program is attuned to the professions skill requirements; 3) there is a focus on transformational leadership and organizational changes are emphasized; 4) it involves multiple entities to support the overall structure of the program; 5) it ensures that senior administrators serve as mentors and that these interactions are ongoing; 6) there are networking opportunities and a plan to sustain these relationships through hands on learning; 7) it links theory to practice through problem based learning; and 8) programs are sustained, supported, and evaluated.

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## Appendix 1

### Doctoral Programs

Name	Program Overview	Distinctive Features
California State	"The CSU's Ed.D. programs	Five primary features:

<p>University Education Doctorate (EdD)</p>	<p>are designed to equip leaders with the necessary knowledge and skills to achieve reforms to improve student achievement”. These programs have a dual focus of preparing P-12 and community college leaders. There are currently ten programs; which are regionally represented across the state of California. There are plans to increase this number.</p>	<p>1) Reform: Program focuses on educating leaders to achieve reform and improvement in public education.  2) Involvement of professional partners: Local K-12 and community college educators form partnerships to address regional needs.  3) Cohort learning model: learning occurs through active problem-solving with peers.  4) Scheduling options: Ed.D. classes are held in the evenings and on weekends to allow participation of full-time working professionals.  5) Rigorous focus on applied research: Rigorous focus on applied research to improve student learning.</p>
<p>Community College Leadership Program (CCL Program) at Colorado State University</p>	<p>The Community College Leadership Program (CCL Program) is designed to meet the needs of persons interested in leadership positions at community colleges and other higher education institutions. The CCL Program offers current leaders the opportunity to improve their practice. The CCL Program offers aspiring leaders the opportunity to develop the cognitive, emotional, and interpersonal skills required for success in such appointments.</p>	<p>Four primary objectives:  1) To provide a comprehensive and progressive doctoral curriculum that develops the skills needed to successfully lead community colleges;  2) To develop students' research skills and abilities to enable them to expand the knowledge base concerning community colleges, effective teaching, and student learning;  3) To instill or reinforce a commitment to the critical engagement of diversity; and  4) To assist students in exploring ways to strengthen commitments to open access, the comprehensive mission, and instructional quality.</p>
<p>The Community College Leadership Program (CCLP) at Oregon State University</p>	<p>The Community College Leadership Program (CCLP) prepares teachers and administrators for leadership roles in technical and community colleges and similar organizations. The CCLP focus is on the application of quality research to the problems and opportunities in community colleges.</p>	<p>Five program features:  1) CCLP students enroll as members of a cohort with the goal of participating in an active learning community.  2) Classes are scheduled for an intensive weekend once a month at an off-campus conference center in Oregon.  3) Instructional methods include group and individual projects, scholarly discussion, and a professional internship.  4) A portfolio, oral exam, and the defense of original research reported in a dissertation are needed to complete the program.</p>

		5) A major professor guides each student through the program.
Community College Leadership Program (CCLP) at the University of Texas, Austin	This (CCLP) is the oldest community college doctoral program. The CCLP has focused on the preparation of key leaders for American and Canadian community colleges. A second objective has been to establish a service-oriented "field base" with community colleges from across North America for student recruitment and graduate placement, and to serve further as a laboratory for CCLP research and development efforts. A third objective has been the establishment of a research agenda that significantly impacts the quality of teaching, learning, and student services in open-door institutions.	The program consists of: 1) A cohesive program of study in a specialty area and related fields specifically tailored to the needs and career goals of individual students, 2) Sequences of appropriate field placements including such experiences as supervisory internships, administrative practica, and 3) Coursework in research and evaluation methodologies. 4) Upon completion of the program, each graduate will a) have a broad understanding of the impact of social and cultural factors on education, b) have the ability to communicate effectively in written and oral form in a variety of settings, c) have advanced special expertise—body of knowledge and skills—which prepares the individual to assume a position of educational leadership, and d) will be able to plan, develop, conduct, interpret, and apply research for specific purposes
Higher Education Program (HEP) at George Mason University	The Higher Education Program at George Mason University prepares individuals for positions of leadership in teaching, research, and administration at community colleges, four-year colleges, and universities around the globe. At the master's and doctoral levels, the interdisciplinary curriculum focuses on leadership, the scholarship of teaching and learning, and assessment. The program also offers coursework to prepare students for positions in academic affairs and student affairs.	The program rests on the four core principles that prepare graduates to handle the changing needs of today's college students. 1) <i>Ethical leadership</i> . Effective leadership derives from ethical integrity and a respect for the diversity of others. 2) <i>Assessment</i> . Assessment allows for educational improvement by measuring whether an individual, program or institution is achieving its desired goals. 3) <i>Information technology</i> . Information technology has been identified as a primary focus for Mason's excellence. It fits the needs and goals of the region and the nation, and our faculty and students creatively use and critically examine information technology for their academic goals. 4) <i>Diversity</i> . This program prepares leaders who will foster educational and work environments free from discrimination. Further, students and faculty will encourage

		diversity of thought in the classroom and in research.
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Source: see <http://www.soe.cahs.colostate.edu/Graduate/PhD/CCL/>; <http://www.dacce.gmu.edu/>; <http://edadmin.edb.utexas.edu/cclp/>; <http://www.calstate.edu/edd/index.shtml>. Note: Programs presented in alpha order, when possible direct quotes from program websites are provided.