

St. John's University

**St. John's Scholar**

---

Theses and Dissertations

---

2022

**LEADERSHIP PRACTICES, SELF-EFFICACY, AND ROLE  
EXPECTATIONS OF COMMUNITY COLLEGE ACADEMIC LEADERS  
DURING CHANGE**

Elizabeth Kristen Gandt Spagnola

Follow this and additional works at: [https://scholar.stjohns.edu/theses\\_dissertations](https://scholar.stjohns.edu/theses_dissertations)



Part of the [Educational Administration and Supervision Commons](#)

---

LEADERSHIP PRACTICES, SELF-EFFICACY, AND ROLE EXPECTATIONS  
OF COMMUNITY COLLEGE ACADEMIC LEADERS DURING CHANGE

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment  
of the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF EDUCATION

to the faculty of the

DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATIVE AND INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP

of

THE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

at

ST. JOHN'S UNIVERSITY

New York

by

Elizabeth Kristen Gandt Spagnola

Submitted Date March 21, 2022

Approved Date May 17, 2022

---

Elizabeth Kristen Gandt Spagnola

---

Anthony J. Annunziato, Ed.D.

**©Copyright by Elizabeth Kristen Gandt Spagnola 2022**

**All Rights Reserved**

## **ABSTRACT**

### **LEADERSHIP PRACTICES, SELF-EFFICACY, AND ROLE EXPECTATIONS OF COMMUNITY COLLEGE ACADEMIC LEADERS DURING CHANGE**

Elizabeth Kristen Gandt Spagnola

Higher education institutions in the United States currently face ongoing challenges and difficulties beginning in 2008 with the fiscal crisis which created a need for education and retraining for man, demand for greater accountability by institutions and a fundamental shift in the perceived value of higher education. Academic leaders of post-secondary institutions, in particular community colleges, have encountered this shift in society's view of the value of a college degree, and now see a demand for greater skills and employability within the workforce. For academic leaders to meet these new expectations, an understanding of leadership styles, focused on the characterization of their self-efficacies and a knowledge of the institutional role expectations is needed to lead during times of uncertainty and change.

The study employs an explanatory single case design to establish to what extent an academic leader's perception of their leadership practices, self-efficacy, and institutional role expectations influence change. Defining the role of the academic leader in higher educational institutions will enable community colleges to remain sustainable and competitive in unparalleled economic and societal times. The participants of the study are individuals with the titles of dean within the academic affairs division from a selected two-year public community college in the Northeastern region of the United States. The study will employ Bolman and Deal's Leadership Orientation Survey (Bolman, n.d.) to first identify the leadership orientation practices of the selected

academic leaders, followed by semi-structured interviews to provide a deeper, more detailed data. Bogdan and Biklen (2007) explained that interviews generate “rich data filled with words that reveal the respondents’ perspective” (p.96), affording the interviewer the ability to gain a “general understanding of the range of perspectives on the subject” (p.96). The significance of the study will provide academic leaders and senior community college administration an understanding of the relationship of the role of leadership, its practice and self-efficacy and the perspective necessary for academic leaders to offer a direction for change.

*Keywords:* academic deans, leadership practices, self-efficacy, role expectations, community college, leadership frames.

## **DEDICATION**

I dedicate this dissertation in remembrance of my father, Raymond G. Gandt, whose memories continue to be a part of me. You taught me the value of hard work and the power of resilience.

To my mother for your guidance and love.

To my husband, Richard for your encouragement  
and support throughout this process.

To my beloved children, Alexandra Rose, and Thomas Hunter, thank you for your  
patience, maturity and understanding in sharing this journey.

I know you both will achieve greatness with grace, love, and fortitude.

“The world’s mine oyster.” Shakespeare.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This journey would not have been realized without the assistance, support and encouragement of many special friends and individuals in my life.

I would like to thank my mentor Dr. Annunziato and the members of my doctoral committee Dr. Ceceilia Parnther and Dr. Katherine Aquino for your expertise and guidance through this formative process.

I am grateful to all my teachers, through the years; for the knowledge and wisdom that made it possible for me to enhance my values of leadership; to my academic colleagues for the intellectual stimulation and exchange of ideas; to my cohort members for revealing how much we can learn from one another. To the participants who shared their unique views and perspectives, you all assisted in bringing this research forward.

To my colleagues, and friends Jennifer Browne, and Dr. Donna Ciampa, for your constant enthusiasm and continually assurance during this experience.

In memory of Jane F. Shearer who supported and mentored me.

I am especially grateful for Dr. James M. Keane for championing, and mentoring, me along the way, your confidence in me helped me grow into the practitioner I am today. To my friend, Dr. Carolyn Yeager, your continued guidance, advice, and mentoring has been invaluable to me and has been a blessing over the years.

Lastly, to my closest family members and my dearest friends, thank you for your time, support, assistance, and understanding. All my love.

Elizabeth Kristen Gandt Spagnola

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

DEDICATION .....	ii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS .....	iii
LIST OF TABLES .....	ix
LIST OF FIGURES .....	x
CHAPTER 1 .....	1
Purpose of the Study .....	5
Theoretical / Conceptual Framework.....	6
Significance of the Study .....	8
Connection to Vincentian Values and Social Justice.....	9
Research Questions.....	9
Design and Methods .....	10
Definition of Terms.....	11
Organization of the Dissertation .....	13
CHAPTER 2 .....	15
Theoretical Framework.....	16
Bolman and Deal’s Four Frames of Leadership .....	16
Structural Frame.....	17
Symbolic Frame .....	18
Human Resource Frame.....	19
Political Frame .....	19



Bolman and Gallos Reframing Academic Leadership.....	21
Structural View .....	21
Human Resources View .....	22
Political View.....	22
Symbolic View.....	23
Self-Efficacy .....	24
Institutional Role Expectations .....	24
Multi-frame Thinking .....	26
Sensemaking .....	27
Adaptive Leadership .....	30
Historical Legacy of Community College .....	32
Historical Relevance in the Context of Community College Leadership.....	35
Mission.....	37
Community College Environment .....	39
Role of the Academic Leader .....	41
Challenges of the Academic Leader .....	47
Leading as a Change Agent .....	49
Autonomy .....	50
Change .....	51
Conceptual Framework .....	55
Conclusion .....	56
CHAPTER 3 .....	57

Research Design.....	57
Research Questions.....	58
Setting .....	59
Participants.....	59
Data Collection Procedures.....	61
Instruments.....	62
Document Analysis Protocol .....	67
Trustworthiness of the Design .....	69
Research Ethics .....	70
Data Analysis Approach .....	70
Researcher Role .....	72
Conclusion .....	73
CHAPTER 4 .....	75
Findings.....	76
Theme One Alliances.....	76
Collaboration.....	78
Autonomy .....	82
Self-Efficacy .....	83
Theme Two: Multi-Frame Perspective .....	86
Identified Leadership Styles .....	87
Bolman and Deal Leadership Orientation Survey .....	90
Reflecting.....	91

Accountability.....	92
Theme Three: Sensemaking.....	94
Analytic Reasoning.....	95
Communication.....	98
Adaptability.....	100
Conclusion .....	102
CHAPTER 5 .....	105
Interpretation of the Findings.....	106
Research Question #1 .....	107
Research Question #2 .....	109
Research Question #3 .....	111
Relationship between the Findings to Prior Research .....	113
Limitation of the Study .....	115
Implications for Future Research.....	116
Implications for Future Practice.....	117
Conclusion .....	119
Final Thoughts .....	120
APPENDIX A: PERMISSION OT USE RESEARCH INSTRUMENT .....	124
APPENDIX B: LEADERSHIP ORIENTATION SURVEY .....	126
APPENDIX C: SEMI STRUCTURED INTERVIEW PROTOCOL FOR PARTICIPATING SUBJECTS .....	129
APPENDIX D: SJU IRB APPROVAL .....	135

APPENDIX E: SJU IRB RENEWAL APPROVAL .....	137
APPENDIX F: SCCC IRB APPROVAL .....	139
REFERENCES .....	141

## LIST OF TABLES

Table 1 Leadership and Management Eras in Community Colleges.....	36
Table 2 Description of the Participants.....	61
Table 3 Alignment of Research Questions, Data Sources, and Interview Questions .....	63
Table 4 Content Analysis: Relationship of the documents to the Literature Protocol.....	68
Table 5 Self- Identified Leadership Orientations Scores of Participants.....	90

## **LIST OF FIGURES**

Figure 1 Community College Core Principles Model.....	38
Figure 2 Conceptual Framework of Community College Academic Leaders .....	55

## **CHAPTER 1**

Community colleges evolved and advanced in the early 21<sup>st</sup> century and during this time their leaders changed and developed as well. The academic leader of today has many areas that they need to understand, learn, and manage. As these college leaders advanced and changed, they needed to understand and acquire skills and mindsets for success, not only for the student but for the sustainability of the institution. The viewpoint that these leaders developed, did not just address the success for the student it also led to a way of thinking that guided the community college to evolve into the entity that currently exists. Fullan (2011) discussed that an effective change leader actively participates as a learner in helping the organization improve. An academic leader has many facets that must be cultivated for the viability of the institution and the communities in which they serve.

As higher education institutions in the United States are encountering ongoing enrollment challenges and fiscal difficulties that began in 2008, the effects of these challenges created a domino effect that altered not only the way that academic leaders viewed the community college, but also created a shift in society's view of the value of higher education, the need for degree attainment and whether a degree leads to employability. These factors preceded to the development of greater accountability for all higher educational institutions and a distinct questioning of the worth of the degree. Subsequently, the community college faced a decline in traditional high school students entering college coupled with changing demographics and increasing diversity in the student population. Community colleges are specifically designed as open access

institutions offering an inclusive education environment where all students are welcome and can achieve their educational goals. Malcom-Piqueux as cited in Levin and Kater (2018) expressed that the community college is the most “diverse institution in the nation’s higher education system” (p. 21), due in part to the contextualized nature of an open-door policy unlike any other higher postsecondary entity.

Community colleges fill a vital role in the American higher education environment due an ever increasing socioeconomically diverse population (Astin & Oseguera, 2004). The community college landscape has changed in the past four decades to include a greater enrollment of racially diverse students, that are underprepared academically, first-generation college students, adult learners, and economic disadvantaged. In 2017-2018 academic year associate degrees conferred by race/ethnicity totaled; 54.2% White, 12.7% Black, 22.8% Hispanic, 6.0% Asian, 0.9 American Indian and 3.3% two or more races (U.S. Department of Education, 2020), creating core basic challenges in the ability for community colleges to meet the needs of these students.

The position of the academic leader in a community college setting may have many different titles and reporting structures, comprehensive of individuals within the level of dean inclusive of the vice president, that have oversight for the institution within the area of academic affairs. Academic leaders needed to possess greater knowledge of many more facets necessary to be successful in their positions, such as increased competition from various modalities of learning and decreased governmental subsidies. All these challenges impact the daily work of community college leaders in instructional leadership and supervision and create an ever-changing landscape marked by sense of



urgency and challenge. Bragg (2000) discusses educational leaders within a community college are required to manage not only day-to-day operations, but also serve as change agents in the continually shifting contemporary landscape. Further stating that an academic leader must have a complete understanding of students' past and present performance inclusive of the increasing challenges in equity currently faced to be able to guide them toward success.

The academic leader needs an understanding of the institution's legacy, mission, and philosophy to optimally respond to the present and future requirements of the learner, thereby understanding the requirements needed to attain institutional sustainability in a competitive marketplace. To be a successful academic leader requires strategy and vision, which must be shared with all areas of the institution. To lead inclusively while building rapport with faculty, these academic leaders enable all members of the institution to develop specific proficiencies and talents necessary to transform the learning environment. Proficiencies and practices of leadership, understanding of leadership styles, a definition of self-efficacies, and a comprehension of the institutional role expectations must exist to allow adaptation needed to lead during times of challenge for change.

The concept of managing through change and leading from a position of authority when faced with life altering challenges is explained by Fullan (2010) he discussed "Motion Leadership is simply leadership that causes positive movement" (p.60). Within the higher education domain, the concept of leadership is broad and complex. Major events in time affect how an organization and its leaders react to the change and its

aftermath. Bolman and Deal (2017) enumerated that while these major events, such as the terrorist attacks of September 11th, 2001, and Hurricane Katrina, create headlines, equally significant mistakes are made daily within organizations, caused by errors and human failures that create challenges. The organizational system of higher education is a structure that is complex and comprises many different individuals who possess differing styles of leadership. These differing leadership practices generate a competition among these leaders which, as Bolman and Deal (2017) described, creates a “thirsting for power” (p.28), leading to the creation of competition for control within the political frame.

Most recently, academia has been faced with an unpredictable global public health crisis, the COVID-19 pandemic began in the United States in early March 2020. Academic leaders across the nation responded promptly and converted traditional learning to an online and remote modality. The approach was to ensure the continuance of instruction for enrolled students during exceptional times. Decisions were made that jolted faculty, students, staff, and administrators into unfamiliar learning platforms and created a need to utilize and learn new technologies expeditiously to ensure the continuity of instruction was fulfilled. Leaders were faced with challenges, demands and safety measures of various stakeholders in heightened times of change. “The rise of the flexible ‘allostatic leader’ with adaptive capacity to learn and evolve in crisis, to emerge better able to address future crises” (Fernandez & Shaw, 2020, p.39).

## **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study is to identify an academic leader's perception of their leadership practices, self-efficacy, and institutional role expectations that influence change. By greater defining the role of the academic leader in higher educational institutions, this study will enable community colleges to remain sustainable and competitive in times of change. Dill (1980) defined the concept of the deanship as separated into three functions: (a) to integrate the interests of various populations into a common sense of purpose, inclusive of goal setting and institutional planning; (b) to create incentives from existing resources to promote new and continuing contributions and commitments to the institutions; (c) to maximize the institution's effectiveness in transforming influences and commitments of all kinds into educational results and services. The academic deans of today need to possess entrepreneurial skills to address the financial aspects of their role. Academic deans serve in critical roles that influence their institutions' financial status and outlook. Through programs and services offered with the support and cooperation of their faculty, these goals and fiscal achievements are met (Cleverley-Thompson, 2016). The ability for academic leaders to govern change is not limited to only the financial aspect of their positions. Today's academic leaders possess an ability to think strategically, particularly in periods of challenge and change. Fernandez and Shaw (2020) enumerated that it is the leaders who see opportunities in a time of crisis and rise to challenges that assist their institutions towards success. These leaders see opportunities in turmoil to lead the change that benefits all. Leaders that "are

goal-oriented, risk-takers, and strategic-long-term thinkers create a spiral of success and gain a competitive advantage” (Fernandez & Shaw, 2020, p.41).

Each institution frames the position of an academic leader to meet their individual needs as it relates to their established mission, vision, and goals, with careful consideration given to the skills and requirements necessary to lead in exceptional times. While there is a volume of literature that speaks to the expectations of an academic dean, they do not always reflect the vast complexity of the nature of the position. To accomplish this objective, the current study has explored the institutional collective defined role of an academic leader, the theoretical/conceptual role of their leadership practices, and the institutional expectations as defined in their own lived experiences amid times of change.

### **Theoretical / Conceptual Framework**

To understand and consider the direct and indirect effect that leadership practices, self-efficacy, and institutional role expectations of an academic leader has on leadership, this study utilized the theoretical framework of Bolman and Deal (2017). Bolman and Deal’s four frames are relevant for leaders to understand as the direct and indirect influence that their practices have on the culture of the organization. Bolman and Deal explain organizations are broad and prominent, creating difficulty in managing and controlling, often leaders struggle to comprehend the best ways to guide and manage. Identifying which frames of leadership can inform best practices for effectiveness within an organization and improvement in an organization’s culture will assist community college senior leadership. They discussed that one source of managerial failure often

could be the attention to details of change that only captures part of the organizational climate.

This study sought to recognize elements of leadership practices that can guide effectiveness within an organization. Schein (2017) observed that the culture creation process starts with its leadership and identifies that the culture is established within and has a direct effect on the organization's change capacity. The conceptual framework that the study used defined the academic leader as the pivotal point for action, through an academic leader's leadership practices, self-efficacy, and institutional roles, an academic leader when faced with change, can create pathways towards change.

Within the higher educational setting, the culture of the institution impacts the work of its leaders. College cultures vary from one institution to another and from four-year to two-year settings. Historically, college culture is developed by the institution's faculty, scholarship, and shared governance. Because the institution's culture encompasses various perspectives, autonomy, informal and non-hierarchical professional relationships, educational administrators support, embrace, and sustain the philosophy within the institution (Bergquist & Pawlak, 2008). Academic leaders bestow great influence on the institutional culture, affirm the college mission, and provide a shared vision that leads to professional commitment and increased organizational productivity (Kouzes & Posner, 2003). The success of an organization depends upon leaders who foster a supportive work environment that cultivates optimism, innovative thinking, and effective communication (Bushra et al, 2011). Cultural transformation within the setting of a community college requires its academic leaders not only to embrace faculty to

affect change but also to embrace all the cultural values and beliefs of its members, thereby guiding the intuition towards sustainable change.

### **Significance of the Study**

Understanding how academic leaders characterizes their leadership practices, self-efficacy, and institutional role expectations through the structural frames of Bolman and Deal (2017) and the theoretical lens of Bandura (1998) will assist higher education leaders in developing an institutional perspective and responsive approach to leading during periods of challenge. As the climate of higher education leadership shifts and changes, further research needs to be conducted into the role and position that academic leaders will fulfill as the higher education landscape changes.

A comparison of the role similarities and discrepancies of academic leaders and their ability to affect change within the institution revealed several underlying principles of leadership practices among these academic leaders. Gmelch (2013) outlined that the position of an academic leader needs cultivation and training to be successful; as he stated, academic leadership advancement is the least studied and most misinterpreted management process. Gmelch further stated academic leadership development provide an outline of the strategy, structure, system, skills, and shared values that are used to develop campus leadership. Austin (1984) explained that research on academic deans is much less abundant than that of the president or other upper-level administrators.

A further outcome of the study was it provided academic leaders and higher education administration a strong sense of where they are in relation to the practice of leadership shaped by challenges and guided by the influence of change. This research

offered a guide for upper-level community college administration to better define expectations in the role of academic leaders' practices, self-efficacy, and the ability to effect change. The information acquired from the study will allow community college leaders to guide from the viewpoint of the institutional mission, vision, and solidarity during periods of change, thereby providing guidance to those individuals aspiring to positions of academic leadership within higher education. Furthermore, it may also provide incoming academic deans needed structure as they begin a new position within the institution.

### **Connection to Vincentian Values and Social Justice**

This study relates to the Vincentian tradition when applied to community colleges. The Vincentian tradition strives to improve high educational standards, societal and moral awareness and offer equal opportunities to enrich citizens within the local, national, and global communities. Community college academic leaders are committed to excellence within the institution by fostering student success and developing diverse experiences for the advancement of lifelong learning. Academic leaders demonstrate servant leadership paralleling the values of St. Vincent de Paul's empathy, compassion, and community spirit. Academic leaders possess consideration, collaboration, and work with various internal and external constituencies, to lead and effect change in a meaningful manner for the greater good of society.

### **Research Questions**

The following main questions guided the study:

1. What do community college academic administrators reveal about their leadership practices, self-efficacy, institutional role expectations, and their ability to lead change?
2. What does the gathered contextual analysis disclose for community college academic leaders regarding themes, patterns, and variations in the leadership practices, self-efficacy, and institutional role expectations?
3. How do selected community college academic leaders navigate challenges to improve their leadership practices and their ability to influence during change?

### **Design and Methods**

Through an explanatory single case study, the researcher explored academic leader's descriptions of their leadership practices, self-efficacy, institutional role expectations, and their ability to lead during change. Creswell (2012) explained that an explanatory research design is appropriate when the researcher is interested in the “extent to which two variables, or more co-vary” (p.340). Explanatory designs consist of a straightforward association between two or more variables. The research design was chosen as the following characteristics were identified: There will be the correlation of two or more variables, the study will collect data at one point in time and the investigator will analyze all participants as a single group. As the study looked at an individual institution, a single case study was used to research the group to describe the activities instead of identifying shared patterns exhibited by the group (Creswell, 2012). Yin (2018) explained that case study research is best to use when your questions seek to explain some contemporary circumstance, and further stated that case studies are also relevant



when your questions require an intensive in-depth description of some social phenomenon. The study took place in the northeastern part of the United States at a large, public two-year multi-campus community college located in a suburban setting. The participants of the study consisted of individuals with title of dean within the offices of academic affairs.

The instruments to be used for the study consisted of semi-structured interviews and a survey tool of leadership orientations (Bolman, n.d.), based in the conceptual framework of Bolman and Deal's reframing organizations. The researcher performed semi-structured interviews with open-ended questions thereby assuring the collection of a robust and reflective data sample. Interview transcriptions, researcher notes, and the setting of the interview were all gathered as primary sources for the data analysis. Lastly, a content analysis of institutional documents, and archival records were conducted to triangulate and assure trustworthiness.

### **Definition of Terms**

#### *Autonomy:*

Autonomy was operationally defined as the individual's power to conduct affairs and to use resources as best determined without interference or regulation from outside bodies (Birnbaum, 1988).

#### *Academic leader:*

The academic leader was operationally defined as the chief academic officer of a school or college unit. The role can also be defined as dean of the college, dean of

faculty, provost, vice provost or vice president of academic affairs or the dean.

(Bowker, 1981).

*Community College:*

A community college is defined as a two-year college, where the cost of attendance is moderately priced and pathways to four-year colleges or universities, career degrees, workforce development programs and continuing education opportunities are offered and generally serve the surrounding communities.

*Change:*

The ability for a leader's role to be altered within a process and move from one initiative to another that has more meaning.

*Leadership Practice:*

For this study, leadership practice is the type of process leading to collective guidance, which expands the work of Bolman and Gallos (2011), regarding the attainment of a goal.

*Role Expectations:*

Role expectations are principles shared by members of an institution which identify behaviors that are considered appropriate in each position.

*Self-Efficacy:*

Self-efficacy reflects confidence in the ability to exert control over one's own motivation, behavior, and social environment. Albert Bandura's self-efficacy

theory (Bandura, 1998) referred to an individual's belief in his or her capacity to execute behaviors necessary to produce specific performance attainments.

### **Organization of the Dissertation**

Chapter 2 reviewed the literature relevant to this study. The study begins by examining the leadership practices of academic leaders through the lens of Bolman and Deal (2017) leadership orientations and further analysis with the academic leadership views of Bolman and Gallos (2011). The chapter addressed the policies and practices required in the position of an academic leader, their leadership practices and self-efficacy, during times of challenge and the ability to adapt to a changing culture and climate when presented within a community college.

Chapter 3 included the methodology used to collect, assess, and report outcomes and findings in the study. This section will contain a qualitative case study research design. The researcher will consider how the data collection and analysis will occur. This chapter included a description of the setting, the participants to be interviewed, and development of the instrument used to conduct the research for the validity and reliability of the research design.

Chapter 4 reviewed the data collection and analysis of the main findings.

Chapter 5 contains the researcher summaries the conclusions found with the formation of themes and patterns based upon the literature review, research questions, and based in the conceptual framework of the study. The researcher discussed the results and identified future research, as well as practical recommendations for current and

future academic leaders, and senior administrators offering insight to community colleges facing change.

## **CHAPTER 2**

Chapter 1 addressed academic leadership within a community college and the challenges encountered by the complexity of both internal and external factors impacting a leader's roles. This study identified an academic leader's perception of their leadership practices, self-efficacy, and institutional roles and practices that influence change.

Chapter 2 discussed and explore in-depth, the theories and organizational structures that support the concept of the multidimensional role of an academic leader.

The theoretical framework that guided the study was the formative structuralist systems of Bolman and Deal (2017). Bolman and Deal described how the structure of culture within an organization defined how those within lead, behave and interact. These interactions are influenced by the values of each individual and how they frame the reality of the situation. Schein (2017) enumerated that an important concept of an organizations culture is the "shared product of shared learning" (Edmondson, 2012, p. 6). This accumulated shared learning sets the stage for the beliefs and identity of the organization. The defining of these distinctive beliefs, values and customs are framed by Bolman and Deal to see the culture of and organization as both "a product and a process" (2017, p. 258). When the learning is shared, all the group forces come together to create an understanding, defining for the group "who are we and what is our purpose or reason for being" (Schein, 2017, p.6). The study explored the structural concepts of academic leadership in Bolman and Deal's (2017) leadership frames, and Bandura's self-efficacy theory (1998), and how they can assist the academic leader in performing through challenges to achieve and sustain change.

Following the theoretical framework, the historical relevance and organizational structure of community college leadership will be explored and will enumerate the transitional journey of these leaders to present time. The final section of this chapter will examine the literature to discover what the research shows in respect to, the role of the academic leader, the institutional expectations, leadership practices, demographic composition, and autonomy of leaders.

Thereafter, Chapter 3 will inform the participants of the study, methodology used and data collection approach.

### **Theoretical Framework**

This study employed Bolman and Deal's (2017) reframing organizations as relevant for leaders to understand and be aware of the direct and indirect influence that their practices have on the culture of the organization. Bolman and Deal (2017) explained organizations are extensive and influential, difficult to manage and control, leaders often struggling to comprehend the best ways to lead. Seeking to identify frames of leadership can inform best practices for effectiveness within an organization and improvement an organization's culture assisted community college senior leadership.

#### **Bolman and Deal's Four Frames of Leadership**

Bolman and Deal (2017) discussed that as organizations become more prevalent, they evolve into complex organizations that are difficult for managers to comprehend and lead. Managers are charged with understanding the big picture of the overall health of the organization. Bolman and Deal's (2017) leadership theory informed those challenges are usually not clear and precise, but rather filled with ambiguity. Bolman and Deal (2017)

enumerated that one foundational cause of managerial failure is too narrow a focus which only captures part of the organizational climate. Managers guided by multiple perspectives, frame their influence, accordingly, understanding that as an individual becomes more informed, they can accomplish and navigate the organization. This multi-frame mindset requires the advancement of the leader's understanding to broaden the understanding of the overarching goals sought usable (Bolman & Deal, 2017). The leadership frames are classifications that describe the way in which leaders think and react to the organization's challenges. Furthermore, Bolman and Deal (2017) explained that organizations have multiple realities and leaders should view these challenges with multiple lenses and perspectives. The leadership frames which account for existing research on leadership, organizations and management divide these types of leadership into four frames or styles. The frames are classifications that describe the multiple ways leaders think and react, these four frames are human resources, political, structural, and symbolic (Bolman & Deal, 1984). The four frames outlined below were developed by Bolman and Deal (2017) and focused on different aspects of organizational behavior.

### ***Structural Frame***

This perspective “champions a pattern of well-thought-out roles and relationships” (Bolman & Deal, 2017, p.45). This frame is comprised of the social architecture rather than the individual. Each organization is unique in its ability to organize based upon size complexity, the important objectives at hand, goals, technology, and landscape. Within changing environments, a leader must understand the complexity

and structure that can be adapted without misdirecting resources and strive for the best interest of the mission and vision of the organization (Bolman & Deal, 2017).

### ***Symbolic Frame***

The symbolic frame focuses on the heart of the institution by setting the stage of the culture, and telling the organization's story and sharing its beliefs, values, and practices. Bolman and Deal (2017) stated, "Culture is the glue that holds an organization together and unites people around shared values and beliefs" (p. 243). Leaders rely on symbols to shape the organization and to build a sense of cohesion based on traditions that create a shared common vision. Schein (2017) posited that the shared learning within a group can solve its problems of external adaptation and internal integration. Members of the organization can be taught the correct way to perceive, think, feel, and behave in relation to problems. The culture of shared beliefs guides the organization with clarity and cohesiveness and in turn, robust and honest communication. Leaders with profound understanding through a symbolic frame help guide and align the effectiveness of an organization (Bolman & Deal, 2017). Cultures change as the organization matures and the environment evolves, and beliefs and values alter over time therefore, leaders must guide the organization through the cultural transformations (Schein, 2017).

Organizational culture often encompasses the values and beliefs of their founders who demonstrate passion and set forth aspects of the culture. A culture modifies as the organization matures and the environment evolves, causing the beliefs and values of its members to adjust over time.



### ***Human Resource Frame***

The human resource frame is founded on the premise of the psychology within the organization's needs. This frame realizes the value in investing in people and the challenge of formulating the individual to the organization. Human resource leaders strive to lead their work through the influence of empowerment and value the relationships that mold the needs of the people within the organization (Bolman & Deal, 1984). This frame recognizes and advances the value of human capital. Bolman and Deal (2017) stated an organization exists to minister to human needs rather than the reverse and describe the organizational characteristics as a sense of belongingness, unity and extended family. When the fit of an individual and organization are congruent both will prevail. When the fit is mismatched, there is weakness in which both the organization and individual will become defeated. Individuals find fulfillment and meaning when they are valued for their contributions and in turn help the organization to thrive. Advanced organizations understand the importance of prominent involvement strategies to enhance the dedication of employees through benefit packages, professional development opportunities, and secured employment. The human resource frame understands the long-lasting commitment required of both the individual and organization (Bolman & Deal, 2017).

### ***Political Frame***

The political frame refers to the individuals within the organization as they compete for fulfillment of their own interests and retrieval of resources. Conflict is often common, given the differences in the needs of various individuals and units that comprise

the organization (Bolman & Deal, 2017). Bolman and Deal (2017) described the frame as rooted in political science, in that resources are generally scarce, and conflict is common due to the competition for allocation. Bolman and Deal stated, “there are enduring differences among coalition members in values, beliefs, information, interests, and perceptions of reality” (p.186). Leaders are constantly in the process of operating with bargaining and negotiations to build alliances to influence decisions made to achieve favorable organizational outcomes (Bolman & Deal, 1984).

Sypawka (2008) studied the division of deans in the North Carolina Community College system based on Bolman and Deal’s (2017) four frame theory using the Leadership Orientation Instruction (LOI) instrument developed by Bolman and Deal. The analysis of Sypawka (2008) findings showed that the deans surveyed identified the human resources frame as their primary leadership orientation and the structural frame was ranked second. Sypawka (2008) study referenced other studies with similar findings (Borden, 2000; Mann Gagliardi, 2006; Russell, 2000) demonstrating that the human resource frame is the primary frame, followed by the structural frames, as opposed to the political and symbolic, frame which is consistent with the Sypawka study. In their follow up research Bolman and Gallos (2011) expanded the leadership frames of Bolman and Deal and redefined the frames of business practice into an academic leadership view, thus creating a more comprehensive interpretation for academic leaders to identify their leadership practices.

## **Bolman and Gallos Reframing Academic Leadership**

Bolman and Gallos (2011) embraced the conceptual framework developed originally in 1984 by Bolman and Deal, which explored the role of an academic leader within the context of a multi-frame view. By reframing an academic leader's position within an organization, Bolman and Gallos (2011) constructed a perspective that "it is easier to understand colleges and universities when you learn to think of them simultaneously as machines, families, jungles, and theaters" (p.11). Each of these frames aligned with Bolman and Deal's four frames of leadership orientations.

### ***Structural View***

The imagery of a machine refers to the way in which institutions of higher education are defined within the context of their mission, vision, policies, procedures, and roles, to attain goals set forth by the institutional leaders. Academic leaders are successful when their actions and guidance create key working relationships and cohorts that can join as cohesive units bringing clarity to issues and decisions that need to be made. Academic leaders have two essential roles in the structural view; they are the experts in analyzing the processes within the institution and system designers who implement the roles, policies, and procedures within the reporting structure (Bolman & Gallos, 2011).

Often institutions of higher education have been criticized for slow responses to finding solutions to issues and demands, often attempting to minimize responses to solve complex issues (Riggs, 2009). Bolman and Gallos (2011) contended it is crucial that organizations answer two structuring questions: "(a) the question of differentiation: How

does a leader divide up the work? And (b) the question of integration: How does the leader coordinate once the work is divided? (p.56)”.

### ***Human Resources View***

The depiction of family pointed to meaningful relationships amongst individuals and the organization. The ability for leaders to present contributions, and exhibit talents, allows these individuals to express and energize the organization. Academic leaders create supportive environments that foster collaboration to accomplish goals for the institution. When the individuals and institution are in sync, that is a win for all. The academic leader strives to build relationships with administrators, faculty, and staff. Bolman and Gallos (2011) shared five strategies of adaptive growth to foster creative development: “(a) Open Communication; (b) Empowerment; (c) Effective teamwork; (d) Support, coaching, and care; (e) Hiring the right people (p.94).” The work of the academic leader is arduous, and one must attempt to preserve oneself, understanding that it is not always possible to satisfy everyone, often at times, the aggravations, and frustrations of those being led turn into reproach as to how the academic leader manages. Ultimately the leader is guided by their persistence to invest in human capital through inspiration to meet the goals within the organization.

### ***Political View***

The concept of a jungle portrays a climate of differences and diversity in a complicated set of circumstances where resources are scarce, and competition is fierce. An assortment of values, beliefs, and characteristics generates imbalance and disharmony creating conflict with the institution. The academic leader must be objective in

understanding disparities to manage them effectively while still upholding moral values. Higher educational leaders operate within exceedingly political climates and must control competing needs for resources, meet multiple missions, and contend with conflicting interests daily. To be successful, the leader must learn to navigate in an intricate climate which requires, tact, confidence, and perseverance. Finally, leaders must have clear sustainable plans, and through building networks and rapport with constituencies, be able to negotiate within the various key unit within the organization.

### ***Symbolic View***

The theater view demonstrates the genre of a constant drama, whereas the people within the organization facilitate culture and commitment through their own individuality and tact. An academic leader establishes the stage with meaning that is immersed with positive energy throughout the organization. The leader must be committed to the mission, vision, values, and beliefs in a highly visible manner. The best leaders create an enthralling storyline to engage the college community's past, present, and future callings and explain the why behind the work they do. Although symbolic leadership is influential, the leader can place themselves and the institution in jeopardy if they are overzealous and do not understand their limitations. Bolman and Gallos (2011) purported those symbolic leaders enhance their impression by: "(a) building upon the past to create a vision of the future, (b) leading by example, (c) constructing a heroic narrative and telling it often and (d) leveraging the power in ritual and ceremony" (p.117). Finally, symbolic leadership is made up of ingrained history and cultural traditions which speak to the core values of the institution.

## **Self-Efficacy**

Looking at Albert Bandura's (1998) self-efficacy theory to connect how academic leader define themselves within an organization or a structure and the way in which they define their actions in that organization, self-efficacy refers to an individual's belief their capacity to execute behaviors necessary to produce specific performance attainments (Bandura, 1998). This belief of an individual in themselves factors into what they can accomplish. The aspect of self-efficacy is very important when exploring the way, a leader interacts within a system and with others. Bandura (1998) explains “People guide their lives by their beliefs of personal efficacy” (p.3).

A person’s belief in their ability to produce desired results is a driving force in their incentive to act. As self-efficacy reflects an individual’s confidence in the ability to exert control over one's own motivation, behavior, and social environment, it is important for a leader to fully understand to what extent their actions guide others and themselves. Bandura (1998) enumerated “outcomes arise from actions”, and “how one behaves largely determines the outcomes one experiences” (p.21). By creating a clearer understanding of an academic leader’s self-efficacy higher educational institutions will benefit as their leader’s ability to better communicate with those they lead.

## **Institutional Role Expectations**

Robillard (2000) described the community college academic dean as working with the faculty to provide quality academic programs. In turn, faculty expect the dean will be an advocate for the academic departments (Justice, 2019). Robillard (2000) explained that academic leadership positions require the following characteristics to

fulfill role expectations: Willingness to assume leadership responsibility for faculty; curriculum development and planning; conduct program assessments, hire and conduct evaluations; manage budgets; foster partnerships with internal and external constituents; manage conflict; experiences in administration and supervisory skills; human relations; effective communication; interpersonal skills; and implement professional development programs for faculty. Programs must be evaluated from a position of unit cost, enrollment, retention, and securing viable career opportunities for graduates (Justice, 2019; Robillard, 2000).

The dean must not only be cooperative but must also possess the ability to multi-task and listen actively. They are responsible for facilitating relationships among upper-level administrators, faculty, and students. Deans are often called upon to mediate and provide effective solutions to constituents who maybe at odds with one other and competing for resources. Justice (2019) described the position of the dean, as a middle manager and academic leader, comparable to two axes each shaping the diverse role of the position. The dean's work is centered on learning to navigate differences. (Montez, et al., 2003; Robillard 2000). The academic dean must develop the ability to observe all facets prior to deciding on a course of action (Findlen, 2000). Montez, et al. (2003) inferred deans may have to act as persuaders, negotiators, or arbitrators while they seek to maintain their principles. Academic leaders require a certain level of information to conduct the deanship effectively. Bragg (2000) stated that expertise in the discipline is important, proficiency in democratic and innovative leadership and skilled human rapport will contribute to their success. Shults (2001) enumerated that the midlevel academic

leader is charged with the daily business of the college, but potentially are the future leaders of community colleges. Ultimately, the goal of academic leadership is to ensure students are educated properly with the highest standards while building a passionate and dedicated faculty (Justice, 2019; Robillard, 2000; Wallin, 2012).

### **Multi-frame Thinking**

Institutions of higher education and community colleges are complex organizations that require leaders to possess many abilities, most notably a wide range of problem-solving skills to meet the various needs of the institution. The ability of these academic leaders to employ multiple concepts and thought processing to the challenges and issues fashioned by a shift and evolution in the philosophies of leadership (Eddy & VanDerLinden, 2006), creates a multidimensional model of leadership that provides flexibility and a construction based on an individual's core experiences, beliefs and capabilities (Eddy, 2010a). Eddy (2010a) outlined that the "foundation for the multidimensional model of leadership is built on five constructs; (a) There is no universal model for leadership, (b) multidimensional leadership is necessary in complex organizations, (c) leaders rely on their underlying cognitive schema in making leadership decisions, (d) leaders often adhere to their core belief structure, and (e) leaders are learners" (p.33). This model of thinking allows the leader to manage the complexities of departments, roles, policies, procedures, and the institutions impact on local and national economies. College and universities must embrace the human talent within their ranks and create a culture that inspires a collaborative environment to fulfill both mission and vision. Eddy (2010a) believed community college leaders must often reflect on the



organizational outcomes of their work to reveal what has worked well in the past and assist in continued development of new leadership competencies. Multi-frame thinking keeps the institution vigilant and cohesive because colleges can be “messy and difficult to lead” (Bolman & Gallos, 2011, p.12). Looking at community college complexities, leaders should be encouraged to view their roles from a more holistic perspective (Eddy, 2010a).

### **Sensemaking**

Bolman and Gallos (2011) enumerated the concept of sensemaking lies at the core of academic leadership. The ability of a leader to evaluate a situation is essential for productive communication to occur. When a leader evaluates complicated situations, they must explore all possible scenarios and move the situation forward by conveying these matters to the stakeholders within the organization. Maitlis (2005) illustrated sensemaking within an organization as a fundamentally social process, wherein members understand their environment in relationship to other members within the administration. For academic leaders to guide and inform situations, they must first draw upon personal inferences and past experiences, while utilizing relationships from within the campus community. Sensemaking occurs within organizations when its members face issues and events that are uncertain. Bolman and Gallos (2011) enumerated sensemaking is personal and incomplete, interpretive, and action-oriented and due to these personal states, it is important for a leader to spend time in thought and truly take stock prior to moving forward with plans. As academic leaders encounter heavy workloads, meeting timelines, and achieving high expectations require the need to understand and interpret the

expectations of those above them. Bolman and Gallos (2011) stated reframing is a deliberate process of looking at situations from multiple perspectives with an awareness of the sensemaking process, thereby assessing and acknowledging different approaches. Furthermore, leaders are vital in framing or giving meaning to the colleges mission. Framing is a valuable approach and should be implemented for the benefit of the college while never being utilized in an unethical manner or the advancement of self (Eddy, 2003).

Research demonstrated leaders often misconstrue foundational understanding when interpreting situations, they are faced with (Bolman & Deal, 1984; Bolman & Gallos, 2011; Weick, 1995). A misinterpretation within the sensemaking framework can impair the institution, the leader, and their status. Institutions come with histories and traditions that one must learn and observe to understand and inform their own lens. Seasoned leaders possess the ability to assess, reflect, and organize to effective a greater impact on the institution. Bolman and Gallos (2011) believed academic leaders serve learning by acting in diverse roles within an institution, “architect, politician, servant, coach, prophet, artist, and diplomat, and therefore can expand their mental maps and cognitive frameworks” (p.24). Bolman and Gallos (2011) recommended five skills for leaders to reframe: “(a) embrace becoming a reflective practitioner, (b) active seek opportunities for growth, (c) actively seek input, (d) practice for the future through data and scenario planning and (e) work outside one’s comfort zone and create new frameworks” (p.25).

The sensemaking model design by Weick (1995) consisted of seven properties and described how a leader could utilize the stages to create meaning in relationships with their constituents on campus.

- The first property speaks to the way a leader constructs sense of the situation and personalizes it.
- The second property requires using past experiences and personal reflection to make logic of the situation at hand.
- Enactment is the third property by which the leader has concluded and made sense of the situation from within and has framed it in a manner that can launch communication to relevant members on campus.
- The fourth property is social interaction by which individuals create purpose from the information presented by their leader.
- The fifth property deals with ongoing sensemaking as a continuous evaluation process.
- The sixth property uses extracted cues as a point of reference to understand the scope within creating sense of the situation (Weick, 1995 p.50).
- The seventh property explains that leaders interpret situations as conceivable founded in their belief that the outcome is possible rather than from actual results (p. 67).

This mental processing of the situation is established with the leader anticipating the outcome, yet finding the actual reality overshadowed by the expected one. Due to the

leader's expectations, they may find it hard to shift their mental thinking to make sense of the situation (Weick, 1995).

### **Adaptive Leadership**

The premise of adaptive leadership focused on the process of leading rather than a leader's capabilities. Heifetz (1994) explained for institutions to thrive in a changing climate, they will have greater success when the decision maker views leadership as a process requiring innovation and input from key constituents. Randall and Coakley (2007) suggested the results of this process should be positive change that is non-threatening to the participants in effecting the changes.

Heifetz and Linsky (2002) contended leaders encounter two types of problems, either technical or adaptive. The technical problems are well defined, and answers to them can be sought from individuals within the organization that possess the expertise to bring forth resolutions. Adaptive problems denote issues that are not apparent or well-defined and often involves various stakeholders within the institution. These differing individuals have distinct answers to the problems faced by the institution. It should be noted that the resolutions achieved emanate from the stakeholders, creating an adaptive culture. If the leader misjudges the dilemma as a technical problem rather than adaptive, the organization's success will be compromised (Randall & Coakley, 2007).

Flexible and adaptive leadership styles emerge in organizations as administrators and leaders are challenged with a changing landscape. Senge et al. (2008) described leadership as complex and believed challenging times are about creating the capacity for adults to shape the future that they desire, individually, and collectively. Heifetz et al.,

(2004) further posited that the adaptive leader continually orients towards the engagement of complex challenges, ever adapting and facing further challenges in a continual loop. Nicolaides and McCallum (2003) contended both Senge (1990) and Heifetz (1994) created a case for a not only single-loop learning, which assists institutions in improving performance, but also make the case for double-loop learning that helps institutions investigate and challenge assumptions. Given the climate of higher education today, a third style of learning identified as necessary to meet the changing higher educational landscape is identified. Nicolaides and McCallum (2013) suggested “that triple-loop learning involves a figure ground shift that opens up degrees of freedom from self and collective identifications” (p.248). The academic leader in higher education continually faces various types of change that require flexibility and adaptation, including a globalized economy, rapid technology change, changing cultural values, a diverse workforce, social networking, increase use of virtual interaction, visibility of leaders on the web, ethical practices, social responsibility, environmental impact, and sustainability (Burke & Cooper, 2004).

As research focused on flexible and adaptive leadership is limited (Yukl & Mahsud, 2010), and given the complexities of organizations encountering the many variables of change mentioned above, the ability for an academic leader to adapt will become increasingly prevalent. Additionally, Yukl and Mahsud (2010) stated that given the amount of ambiguity in leadership literature and that the nature of flexible leadership and how to assess it appears in several contexts, these gaps will become ever more prevalent. The behaviors must be relevant to the context in which they are incorporated. Yukl and

Mahsud stated that the universal theory of transformational leadership has gained more acceptance within the last 25 years due to the flexibility and insights provided by the adaptive leadership process in modern organizations.

The insights provided allow an academic leader to identify and employ enacted sensemaking to affect change (Weick, 1995). In periods of change or disruption, an immediate response is needed from leaders to minimize the negative impact on the organization (Yukl & Mahsud, 2010). The primary position of the leader is to manage the culture, thereby creating the vision and mission of the organization. To accomplish this undertaking, the adaptive transformational leader must develop deep relationships with all members of the group to assist in their understanding of the organizational culture and the learned beliefs. Adaptive leaders must tackle issues through human interaction, otherwise they risk disrupting and changing the culture, which could lead to a shift in the structure. It is necessary for leaders to establish assessments of the organization by examining concrete issues that affect the operation and efficacy of the organization. In his undelivered speech to the Dallas Citizens Council, “leadership and learning are indispensable to one another” (Kennedy, 1963, as cited in Nicolaides and McCallum, 2013), showing that leaders must serve as the chief learning officers of their organizations (p.249).

### **Historical Legacy of Community College**

Nevarez and Wood (2010) explained the original foundation for the community college was modeled after a German theory of education by Henry Tappan, University of Michigan President, from 1825-1863. The concept launched the idea of eliminating

general education from the university level and incorporated this coursework into the high school or liberal arts two-year colleges, where students could then be admitted into the university in their junior year. This structure permitted universities to advance research and not remain focused on general education (Cohen et al., 2003). Tappan advocated for the German university model as it was sensible considering the lack of preparedness amongst United States university students nationally. William Rainey Harper, the President of the University of Chicago received permission from his Board of Trustees in 1892, only one year into his presidency, to divide the college into two parts, for the path to attaining a bachelor's degree (Nevarez & Wood, 2010). The first part was the junior college followed by an upper level or senior college for the remaining two years. As was the intent by Harper, this two-level college system afforded higher educational organizations to assist incoming students to improve their academic performance while offering some students an opportunity to pursue a higher educational degree before entering the workforce. Higher educational historians agree the first junior college, named Joliet Junior College, began in 1901 in Illinois (Grubbs, 2020). By 1920, the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC) commenced creating an advocacy group for the junior college, which was often criticized for offering solely liberal arts courses aimed at transfer to a four-year institution. Thus, began a movement towards offering vocational and paraprofessional programs known as terminal degrees, which eventually became the primary focus of two-year colleges (Brick, 1964). By 1930, a precedent for junior college public funding was established with the Asheville, North

Carolina ruling which clearly indicated that junior colleges were considered inferior institutions with no claims to local tax revenues (Pedersen, 1987).

The next major funding change to junior colleges began in 1944 with the passage of the Serviceman's Readjustment Bill. This GI Bill granted World War II veterans funds for college tuition and living expenses which increased the number of enrollments nationally. In 1947, the President's Commission on Higher Education, appointed by President Harry Truman, recommended the expansion of higher education access to increase social equity in the United States. The authors of the report advocated for junior colleges to be renamed community colleges, and created a decade of affordable, educational access and opportunity for students (Grubbs, 2020). In 1957, President Eisenhower convened the Committee on Education beyond the high school and this commission found the importance and value of community college to be a significant milestone in higher education. President Truman and Eisenhower acknowledged the importance of the community college and its value in social and political interests and the development of public community colleges around the nation (Grubbs, 2020; Nevarez & Wood, 2010). Subsequently, for the next 20 years through the 1980's, there began a vast growth in the community college system, particularly its nontraditional student population (e.g., minority, lower socio-economic status, and adults). This increase in enrollment was directly related to the substantial population of the baby boomer generation bolstering use of public education (Grubbs, 2020; Nevarez & Wood, 2010). Eddy and VanDerLinden (2006) described how instability in the 1990's increased the need for developmental education, spurred by an increase in diversity, and a decline in



funding and resources. All those challenges called for a different style of leadership for the community college.

Along with the time periods in higher education, Nevarez and Wood (2010) cited six defined periods of development of the community college, including:

- The Origins Period from 1901-1920
- The Maturation Period from 1920-1940
- The Credence Period from 1940-1960
- The Equal Opportunity Period 1960-1980
- The Accountability and Assessment Period 1980-2000
- The Millennial Period 2000-present

Since their creation, community colleges continue to remain sustainable into the millennium (p.32).

### **Historical Relevance in the Context of Community College Leadership**

The political, social, and financial factors of the community college create a climate that influences the way academic leaders guide the organization. Community college leadership differs from college and university in that leaders report to the local community, external constituents, local officials, state legislators, and a Board of Trustees. Figure 1 demonstrates a comparison of leadership during the eras that correspond to management issues impacting community colleges. Each community college is unique and may not align with the management practices noted below (Eddy as cited in Levin & Kater, 2018; Twombly, 1985).

**Table 1***Leadership and Management Eras in Community Colleges*

Era	Leadership	Management
1900s-1930s	Great Man leadership-charismatic	Bureaucratic operations
1940s-1950s	Independence-hierarchical	Patriarchal
1960s-1970s	Maturation-building capacity, human resources	Unionization-entrenchment of roles
1980s-1990s	Focus of resource constraints-strategic planning	Shared governance
2000s-present	Leadership in transition: multi-dimensional leadership-programing change	Collaboration

Twombly (1985) defined fundamental management of the community college as rooted in a bureaucratic organization. Leadership structures during these education periods were associated with *great man leadership*, one that is highly influential, unique and features heroic-like leaders. The 1940's-1950's era moved from bureaucratic management to Paternalistic management due to the Presidents Commission on Higher Education (1947). Community colleges experienced increased enrollment during this time and became more immersed in their surrounding communities (Cohen et al, 2003). Leaders took a more humanistic approach and were supportive of their staff however they did not share their authority. During the 1960's-1970's, unionization became common in community colleges and authoritative leadership was required to respond to the rapid changing environment, as participatory governance began to alter the organization functions within organizations. Kater and Levin (2002) discussed the period of the 1980's-1990's, highlighting shared governance practices which united faculty and middle level management work together to address institutional issues.

From 2000, the mission of the community college has changed, expanding the focus to a greater need for accountability and unionization (Kater, & Levin, 2002). Although community colleges have cooperative practices with shared governance, its institutional structure still takes a top-down approach where its leaders need to be skilled in building relations, organizational learning, and fostering an environment of adaptive change. Eddy (2003) stated mid-level leaders serve as linchpins in collective leadership as their position is the interconnecting association of staff and leadership throughout multiple levels of the organization. Change within the organization is inevitable and necessary for institutions to remain viable in an evolving climate. Today's academic leaders should foster collaborative environments and view their work from multidimensional perspectives. The contextual history of community college leadership outlines the diversity and complexity of the community college from its creation to today, thereby promoting understanding of the present-day mission and environment.

### **Mission**

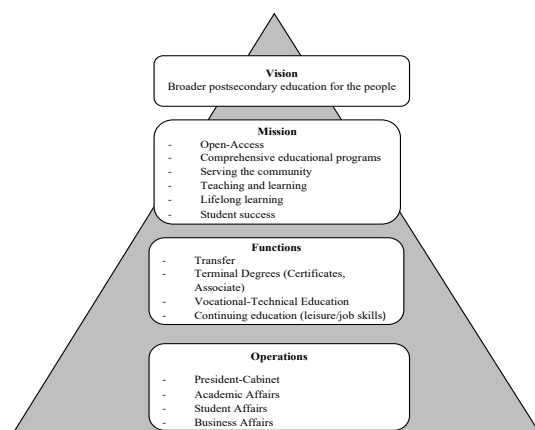
In the 1960's the mission of community colleges gained national prominence and assimilated educational functions that comprised of five traditional community college programs. Cross (1981) posited that these programs included: (a) collegiate and transfer education; (b) vocational education; (c) developmental or compensatory education; (d) general education; and (e) community education and service. In the 1990's there was an additional functional program added which included community economic and workforce development. This new vision intended to broaden the preparedness of the workforce

through training within the small business and local economic community (Dougherty & Bakia, 1999).

The mission of the community college has never been met with consensus by its policymakers (Breneman & Nelson, 1981). Since its inception, the mission of the community college has become broad in the sense of serving the community and being all things to higher education (Grubbs, 2020). Community colleges are expected to meet assessments and various measure of tangible success consisting of transfer degrees, terminal degrees, English as a Second Language programs, developmental/remedial educations, non-credit programs, adult education, certifications, and workforce training programs. In-depth exploration of the organization structure will assist in framing the operations of the institution and further clarify its mission and vision.

**Figure 1**

*Community College Core Principles Model*



*Note:* Certain elements from Deegan & Tillery, 1986; Vaughan, 1983

## **Community College Environment**

Community colleges offer two-year degrees, certificate programs, workforce, and continuing education programming and are primary publicly funded. They play a crucial role in the higher education system nationally. In fall 2019, community colleges enrolled 5.6 million students, which is 34% of undergraduate enrollment (U.S. Department of Education, 2021). Between the years 2018 and 2028 two-year community college enrollments is expected to increase by three percent from 5.9 to 6.1 million students (U.S. Department of Education, 2019).

Even though community colleges are primarily two-year institutions, they have a substantial academic, social, and political impact on the economic future of the United States. Community colleges serve a different demographic than most four-year institutions. Most students attending community college campuses today attend part-time, due to the likelihood of family and employment obligations (Roman, 2007). Rodriguez (2015) noted that during Barack Obama's presidency, he announced a new plan to support community colleges throughout the nation and challenged community colleges to graduate an additional five million students by 2020. U.S. Government and state offices have promoted the notion of free education to increase upward mobility for those students that may not have been afforded the opportunity to attend college (Grubbs, 2020; Mountjoy, 2019; Nevarez & Wood, 2010). These initiatives created a shift in the community college landscape for leaders to address current enrollment trends. These increases in underprepared students, student persistence rates, retention, transfer preparation to four-year institutions, workforce development, and academic programs

increased viability of community colleges importance in the higher educational community college environment. Community college academic leaders are tasked with meeting the requirements for all these challenges.

Students bound for community college face more economic challenges than students attending four-year institutions. Additionally, students within this demographic are faced with academic under preparedness for college enrollment, which creates a need for developmental education. Since 2011, the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC) describes the focus of community colleges as increasing completion rates in associate and certificate programs, furthering open access, enhancing the quality of existing educational programs, and removing achievement gaps that correlate with income, ethnicity, race, and gender (AACC, 2018). The AACC mission of the community college is to provide higher education access to “all those who desire to learn, regardless of wealth, heritage, or previous academic experience” (AACC, 2016).

The role of the community college has received considerable attention in the past decade from U.S. government and leading foundations because they hold a place of national importance. They continually face challenges given their size and complexity of the organization (Dougherty & Bakia, 1999). Eddy (2010) stated:

The central challenge of community college leadership is thus balancing these multiple missions and functions in a way that best meets the demands the community, the state, and the nation. In doing so, leaders must be responsive to changing regional needs and business demands, as well as student aspirations and limitations. (p. 3)

The American Association of Community Colleges (2016) mission statement describes AACC's commitment to advance the recognition of the role of community colleges in serving society today. By providing support, leadership, and service for community colleges, the association plays a key role in assisting the United States as it passes from the industrial era of the 20th century to the new knowledge-based culture of today.

In addition to the complexities of the community colleges, nationally higher education institutions face impending shortages of qualified developed, experienced leaders. Riggs (2009) discussed how community college leaders must fill the gap between what needs to be done to prepare for the future and what is accomplished. Questions arise as to who will bring forth this transformation of leaders as the field experiences high rates of retirements and fewer prepared professionals willing to enter the administrative ranks of a community college (Forthun & Freeman, 2017). There are many studies of community college leadership which focus on the community college presidency but there is a gap in the literature as to why, so few pursue an administrative community college pathway (Riggs, 2009).

### **Role of the Academic Leader**

The role of the academic leader requires many skills necessary for success. Cleverley-Thompson (2016) explained that the possession of entrepreneurial skills for academic deans in higher education is beneficial in addressing the financial needs of their institutions. Identified was a significant correlation between variables related to an academic deans' position, such as job expectations, and number of years to the self-

identified entrepreneurial traits of the dean's role. Academic deans were defined in this study as individuals who had a responsibility or oversight of a school or division and were employed in four-year and graduate higher education institutions in upstate New York State. Utilizing the Online Higher Education 2009-2010 directory, 103 academic deans from independent upstate institutions were identified.

Cleverly-Thompson's (2016) study was designed to address the following questions: a. What is the self-reported entrepreneurial orientation of academic deans in upstate New York's independent colleges and universities? b. Is there a relationship between the self-reported entrepreneurial orientation of academic deans and certain demographic and professional characteristics of academic deans' positions in these independent colleges and universities?

Using an online survey, quantitative data was collected on self-reported entrepreneurial orientations and its correlation to demographic and professional characteristics. The research instrument was an adaptation of a survey developed by (Riggs, 2005). This study utilized a four-point Likert scale, documenting how the deans perceived themselves regarding 10 characteristics identified from the research; innovative, risk taker, creative, change agent, team builder, competitive, opportunist, visionary, proactive, and persuasive. Those who expected to engage in an entrepreneurial activity reported a significantly higher self-reported entrepreneurial score than those that did not.

The key findings of the study were as follows; academic deans ranked team building and proactivity as the highest entrepreneurial characteristic. The second finding



indicated the longer the individual is in the position, the more likely the entrepreneurial orientation was to decrease. The third finding showed that academic deans that were expected to engage in these skill sets as indicated in the job descriptions, did demonstrate a higher entrepreneurial orientation.

Academic deans must recognize the importance of building a team-based approach in how they lead their units. The extent to which deans utilize successful traits from the business realm may assist in fostering student success. The Cleverley-Thompson (2016) study shows the analysis of necessary skills acquired by academic deans as part of their role expectations and influence. The identification of an academic dean's role expectations and influence is an independent variable.

Keim and Murray (2008) conducted a study to determine the educational backgrounds and demographic characteristics of public two-year college academic deans or vice presidents, comparing the findings to previous studies to determine trends. Keim and Murray addressed the literature, predicting shortages of qualified candidates to replace many community college presidents planning to retire. Additionally, within the research there is great concern for the Chief Academic Officer (CAO) retirements because predictions also point to high numbers of administrative positions that will be vacant. The intent of the study was to explore the educational backgrounds and demographic characteristics of two-year public institution academic deans or vice presidents and add to the research and findings of previous studies to determine trends and identify potential solutions for hiring shortages in the future.

The main findings in the study indicated that 133, (44%) of the sample were female and 167 (56%) were male. One observation noted that these results demonstrated, females while still proportionally lower, are making progress securing higher level administrative positions in community colleges. The second finding explored degrees obtained by CAO and gender. The results of this second question showed more female than male CAOs possess a doctorate or juris doctor degree with an overall 210 (70%) of CAO's having earned a doctorate. This is a decrease from 85% (Moore et al., 1985) and 76% (McKenney & Cejda, 2000) that previous studies noted. There were 210 participants with an earned doctorate, 138, (66%) were in the discipline of education and 72 (34%) were doctorates in other disciplines. Of the earned doctorates 123 (59%) held a PhD 83 (39%) held an EdD and 4 (2%) held a DA. Although there are advocates for both the PhD and the EdD, the percentages for either degree have changed very little in the past and CAO's holding administrative roles have remained steady over the past three decades. Dissertation topics written by these CAO's showed that 138 (66%) were written in the field of education.

Historically, search committees viewed the doctorate in education as less preferable than those of a traditional discipline. However, recognition that community college leaderships roles have grown in complexity and may now require multifaceted management skill sets found in the EdD practitioner degree. When you look at the 138 dissertations in education, 74 (54%) focused on community colleges and four topics emerged; student issues, administration or leadership, curriculum or teaching, and faculty

development. Of all the studies performed, only one dissertation was of national scope, and noted that graduate schools should do more to support national research.

It is essential for community college leaders to mentor and encourage younger academics to pursue roles in higher educational leadership as we witness the retirement and exit of many higher educational leaders. These voids will be compounded by the continued changing economic and global landscapes that will only become more challenging and complex over time. Keim and Murray (2008) identified the necessity for CAO to possess the educational background and request skills that ties directly to the position in that the identification of future educational backgrounds and demographic needs for higher educational leaders will assist educational institutions in the search and recruitment of capable and qualified replacements.

Rosser et al. (2003) presented the need to measure the effectiveness of leadership in academic deans and directors from both the perspective of the individual and the institution. As the demands of institutional accountability of student outcomes increase scarce resource allocation factored with a diminishing trust level from the public towards higher education challenge these titles. Higher education senior-level leaders are looking for ways to demonstrate their productivity, effectiveness, and efficiency.

The study looked to identify leadership domains necessary to possess to be leaders. The study examined to distinguish a dean's leadership style within the context of seven domains: vision and goal setting, management of the unit, interpersonal relationships, communication skills, research/professional/community/campus endeavors,

quality of education, and support for institutional diversity. These domains were identified to be necessary in determining a dean's perceived leadership by faculty.

The authors (Rosser et al., 2003) presented the descriptive information about the measure of a deans' leadership effectiveness, the within-group means suggest that as a group faculty and staff, rated the dean's effectiveness as relatively high. The results of the study supported the premise that leadership effectiveness can be measured, and the validity of proposed multilevel model examined was significant. This information suggests that the seven domains accurately defined the leadership effectiveness construct quite well. The study addressed the area of leadership perception and the ability to effect change. How a leader is perceived by their team suggests the extent to which they can be successful and in turn addresses how effective the unit can be. The study includes investigation into the leadership practices and how perception guides success in the connection of leadership practices of academic deans and institutional success. Erwin (2000) elaborated that the CAO of the community college has the "ultimate responsibility for the breath and quality that the college offers to the community", further stating that "this agency uplifts its community directly by intervening in every aspect of the community life" (p.13).

Sypawka et al. (2010) believed that the future of community colleges depends on how well academic deans lead their areas. The study used Leadership Orientation Instrument (LOI) (Bolman, n.d.), to determine a dean's leadership style based on a four-frame model of leadership by Bolman and Deal (2017). The LOI developed by Bolman and Deal (Bolman, n.d.) is composed of 32 questions evaluating the degree of leadership

behavior that are perceived to be used most frequently. The results of the surveys were statistically analyzed using a five-point Likert scale. The survey was sent to 340 academic deans working in 58 community colleges in the North Carolina's higher educational system. The research looked to examine the leadership styles of the academic deans' assessing their educational levels, prior business experience, and number of years served as dean. The findings from the study enumerated that Bolman and Deal's human resource frame was the primary frame used by the deans, followed by the structural frame. The study allows the researcher to conclude that the deans that participated in the survey perceived themselves as possessing characteristics and traits in the political and symbolic frames, yet in most cases these areas ranked low. This result was similar with other research studies addressing this topic.

As institutions evolve to keep up with the changing economic times, increasingly higher education institutions will be called upon to develop training and programs to address the needs of society. These institutions must embrace strong leadership as academic deans will be at the forefront and will require the proficiencies and the understanding to lead, and recognition their leadership styles and the self-efficacy of how they define themselves. The identification of leadership practices and the self-efficacy of academic deans will assist higher education in the training of future academic deans.

### **Challenges of the Academic Leader**

A major challenge an academic leader may face is role ambiguity. Role ambiguity is the result of a lack of information or communication, coupled with workplace pressures that can impact the efficacy of the academic leader. Wolverton et. al. (1999) indicated

there is some evidence to suggest institutional size can be a factor that contributes to role conflict. The growing demands of leadership positions in tense environments along with longer workdays, stress, institutions rooted in bureaucracy, and slow rates of change make the role of an academic dean daunting (Nevarez & Wood, 2010).

Wolverton et al. (2001) studied the role of the dean, the conflict and ambiguity they experience, and the change they perceive in near future. The National Study of Academic Deans (NSAD) was conducted in 1996 through the Centre for Academic Leadership at Washington State University. The study consisted of 1,370 deans, with a response rate of 60 %. Forty- one percent of the sample were women; almost twelve percent of the participants were ethnic or minority. The average age of the deans was 54 years old. The average time spent in the deanship was 5.6 years. The results suggested the participants experienced both role ambiguity and role conflict to some degree. The deans commented the greatest challenges they expected to encounter in the next three to five years, and seven categories emerged. More than 75 % of deans agreed the top three were fiscal resources, externally imposed accountability pressure, and increased demand for relevant curricula programs. About 30% rated fiscal concerns as number one. Almost 14 % rated faculty issues as prominent, technology 5%, followed by personal balance 3 % and diversity at 2%. (Wolverton et al., 2001). Although Wolverton et al. conducted this study in 1999, some of the same paramount challenges still exist today despite the passage of 20 years.

## **Leading as a Change Agent**

Justice (2019) discussed the essence of the modern college environment as highly collaborative and indicated the decisions made will impact all levels within the institutions. Cultivating a collaborative workplace is more effectively done in person rather than by voice, email, or virtually. To diversify the deanship, creating an inclusive climate will transform the college. The attainment of inclusiveness will be one of the greatest goals to undertake. A change leader builds a community of trust and respect within the organization (Wolverton et al., 2001). Bragg (2000) stated “leading change is at the heart of a dean’s work” (p.75). It is inevitably community college leadership in this era greatest challenge is change. The technological evolution has introduced new modalities to educational offerings with increased access to information. The impact of growth on regional, national, and globalization in the public and private sector has increased completions and traditional institutions have been met with resistance. Institutions face greater accountability measures with fewer resources, whilst there is increased diversity of gender, socio-economic status, race, ethnicity, academic preparedness. ~~With~~ the changing student demographic requires altering services, policies, and programs to meet the needs of students, and maintaining the mission of open access to community colleges. Wolverton et al., (2001) described an academic leader unable to foresee and acknowledge a changing climate can compromise the health of the institution. Deans understand that change impacts various levels of the institution and ought to be approached with many views to effect significant change. Research activities concluded six themes emerged to assist in preparing community colleges deans: mission,

philosophy, and history; learned-centered orientation; instructional leadership; information and educational technologies; institutional accountability and learner assessment and administrative preparation. Academic leaders are tasked to become mindful stewards of the institution and master the art of leadership practices (Bragg, 2000).

### **Autonomy**

Birnbaum (1988) explained that:

Individuals in leadership positions in collegial systems are expected to influence without coercion, to direct without sanctions, and to control without inducing alienation. They must provide benefits that other participants see as a fair exchange for yielding some degree of their autonomy. (p.102)

Leadership is a dual principle, that states responsibility for leading is immersed throughout the organization and that roles change over the course of time. These changes make the distinction between leader and follower subjective, and perceived autonomy can derive from an individual's characteristics or motivation, as an inner endorsement of one's own actions (Birnbaum, 1988; Deci & Ryan, 1987; Slemp et al., 2018). Schein's (2017) cultural change posited a perspective that is reflective of symbolic action by which leaders create change by addressing the organization's collective meaning. Culture can be developed, and certain ideas are more prone to transformation depending on what is happening in society. The culture of a group can be defined as the accumulated shared learning that an organization displays as it solves problems of external adaptation and internal integration. Identifying shared learning that works well and therefore are



considered valid, allows for the cultural norm to be taught to entering members as the correct way to perceive, think, feel, and perform in relation to assessments and decisions and create the support of autonomy and intentionality (Deci & Ryan, 1987). Schein (2017) explained that accumulated learning is a pattern or system of beliefs, values, and behavioral norms that are taken for granted as basic assumptions, eventually losing individual awareness. This theory defines three levels of culture, in a pyramid diagram with artifacts and behaviors at the top, norms and values in the middle, and underlying assumptions artifacts at the bottom. These dimensions of organizational culture are founded within five basic assumptions: external adaptations; internal integration; reality and truth; nature of time and space; human nature, activity, and relationships. As an organizations' culture evolves over time and its principles and values are shaped, the institution evolves, changes, and adapts to the new situation and determines the course of action. The organization learns from these experiences to form the culture of the workplace.

## **Change**

Higher education historically has been confronted with changes that have influenced their institutional structures and missions. Many significant changes within these institutions are the result of external factors rather than internal organizational change. Higher education has currently entered a time where change and crisis are unprecedented and have created unmatched problems driving evolving changes (Kezar, 2018).

Kezar (2018) shared the variations of change faced by higher educational institutions causes a lack of sustainable capacities in areas such as financial and human resources. As this change evolves and transforms it creates a need for academic leaders to alter their leadership practices or risk becoming overwhelmed. “While higher education may not be at the crossroads of a revolution, the enterprise will be required to shift in significant ways, and is already undergoing many changes” (Kezar, 2018, p.3). Academic leaders can determine outcome of change by their “responses or lack of response” (Kezar, 2018, p.4).

Kezar (2018) discussed the context in which higher education exists has been altered, change agents are required to lead the way to address the complex nature of the issues. As the trust in higher education has begun to diminish, change agents within the institution must become more accountable and transparent. As the public expectations of higher educational leaders have become more interconnected with society it has created a need for a deeper understanding of the associations of these institutions to social and economic goals. The need for change agents then becomes imperative to accomplish more with less, to work within the financial constraints they are placed within. Leaders should understand how to make change, but also reflect on the change implementation and garner support of the organization. The context of change creates academic leaders to continually examine the environment to possess the ability to adapt to the changing landscape. It is necessary for academic leaders examining an issue that needs to be changed to understand who interests will be served (Kezar, 2018). Kezar (2018) stated academic leaders must examine whether the situation requires change, and if so, this

change should support the greater good. For change efforts to be successful, academic leaders must overcome “resistance and cynicism resulting from earlier, unethical change practices” (Kezar, 2018, p.23). All change comes from an ethical position, so change agents need awareness of how their proposed visions affect all stakeholders.

Thus, the ability for academic leaders to employ transitional leadership attributes enables the organization to adapt as well. The climate of change has altered for numerous reasons. Kezar (2018) argued a new era calls upon change agents to be attentive to the connection of higher education and the global economy; an increased public investment and awareness of accountability; increasingly diverse students who engage campuses differently; the corporatized higher education environment; for-profit higher education, competition, and marketization; new knowledge about how people learn; technology; and internationalization of campuses. These change ideas are not based on evidence and research, and often are reactions to external forces rather than based in the visions and missions of the institution. Understanding the context of change and its correlation to the external environment assists the change agent.

Fullan (2002) discussed that the concept of leadership requires conceptual thinking which must be grounded in the creation of new concepts. As change within an organization can be threatening to its members, often at times the hiring practices of these organizations do not allow for potential new hires that are change agents to be brought into the institution as it is thought they are believed to not be a good fit (Riggs, 2009). As a transformational leader is more people-centered and typically can be more effective than a leader who is more task-centered (Bolman & Deal, 2017). Within the context of

educational leadership, the transformational leader can assist members of the community by providing mentoring while easing the transitional actions of change (Mitchell & Eddy, 2008). Kezar (2018) postulated for the past two decades leaders in higher education have overlooked the changing public policy environment surrounding the fiscal funding climate. Leaders had anticipated public support and state funding to be reinstated to past levels, however that has not occurred and has become increasingly direr. In fact, leaders should have accepted the need to conform to the changes rather than leaving the challenges unaddressed. Riggs (2009) further explained college leaders need to begin to “think differently about their colleges, how they operate, and the purpose for their existence” (para. 2). Higher education is related by many “as an enterprise, facing pressure to change as accrediting bodies, state and federal entities, and various stakeholders fail to understand the reasons these colleges exist” (Kezar, 2018, p.21). Bragg (2000) enumerated that academic leader must be proficient in many areas such as policymaking processes, fiscal policies, learner assessment, and new instructional modalities and technologies. “Change does not always entail something new, it is sometimes returning to best practices” (Kezar, 2001, p.13). Adaptive change is described as a one-time event in that is prompted by an external factor, whereas generative change is constant and is reflected within the organization (Kezar, 2001).

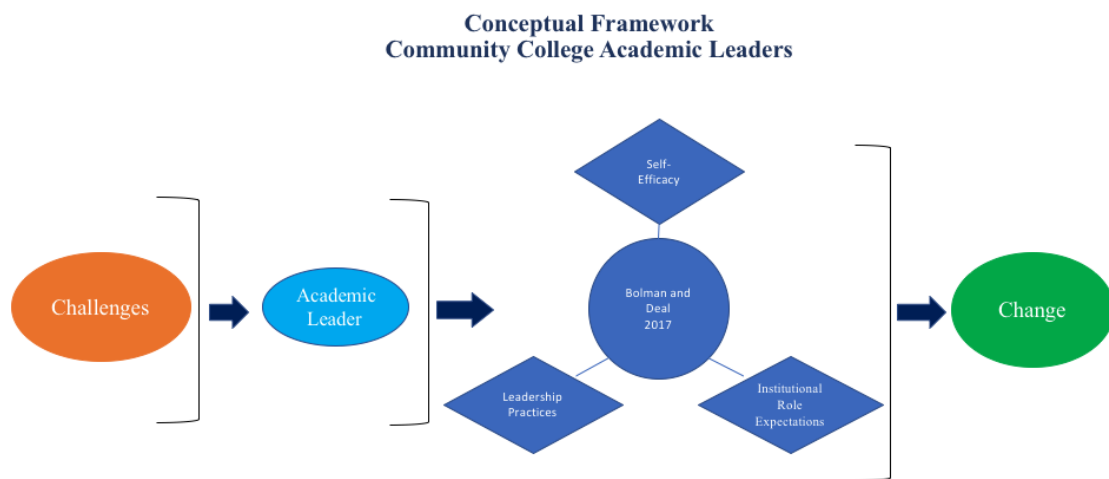
Community college leaders require thinking differently about the aspects that cultivate social equity, financially viable, in a rapidly changing world, as academic leaders must reflect on the institutions purpose, mission, operations and repurpose the organization to remain viable before becoming irrelevant within the realm of higher

education (Riggs, 2009). Change in the community college is certain, and if no action is taken these institutions will be formed by external political, economic, and social drivers. Accrediting bodies, state officials, four-year college/universities, technology, and globalization are forces that can impede the functionality of community colleges (Riggs, 2009).

## Conceptual Framework

**Figure 2**

*Conceptual Framework of Community College Academic Leaders*



As institutions today are challenged with ongoing altering environments and must be staunch in generative change (Senge, 1990), there is a necessity for continuous adaptation to meet the ever-changing landscapes faced by community colleges across the nation. Observing the challenges faced by the academic leader through the three elements of the study: leadership practices, self-efficacy, institutional role expectations imbedded

in the frames of Bolman and Deal (2017), allows the leader and the institution the capacity to construct change. This conceptual framework employs the theories of Bolman and Deal's (2017) leadership frames and Bandura's (1998) self-efficacy that allow academic leaders faced with challenges to create systems towards change.

## **Conclusion**

This literature review supports the need to continue research into the important area of academic leadership practices, self-efficacies, and institutional role expectations of academic leaders. By establishing that during challenge, the knowledge of a leader's strengths and style of leadership creates the lens that allow the academic leader to adapt to create change for both those they lead as well as the organization. This review of the literature showed that for academic leadership, Bolman and Gallos (2011) adapted the leadership frames of Bolman and Deal (2017) into a more culturally adaptive viewpoint, one that allowed for the nuances and distinctions inherent to higher education to be detailed and examined. As Schein (2017) established, cultural change suggests a perspective that is a reflective and insightful action in which a leader initiates change by adapting the organizations collective meaning and culture. This theory considers that leaders must continually adapt their leadership styles, through and with their self-efficacy to meet the needs of the organization to allow formative change to occur. Therefore, the present study is necessary to bring more clarity and insights to the way an academic leader can understand their actions and lead change.

### **CHAPTER 3**

The aim of this qualitative study was to understand to what extent an academic leader's perception of their leadership practices, self-efficacy, and institutional roles and practices and their ability to influence during times of change. The researcher employed qualitative methods, as qualitative research is an approach for exploring and understanding the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem (Creswell & Gutterman, 2019). The intent of this chapter was to define the methodology and rationale for the perceptions and techniques used during the study. The research was qualitative in nature and involved an explanatory case study with a semi-structured interview, archival records, and a survey instrument. There was an attempt to establish and identify the role of the academic dean within the organizational structural of the community college. The employment of a case study methodology, allowed for vivid qualitative information to provide insight for future research. The researcher examined the importance of methods and procedures, on the research questions, settings, and participants regarding institutional role expectations, self-efficacy, and leadership practices. Included in this chapter are the research design, research questions, settings, participants, data collection and procedures, trustworthiness of the design, researcher ethics, data analysis approach, and researcher role.

#### **Research Design**

For this qualitative study, the researcher conducted semi-structured, one-on-one interviews virtually, using Zoom, recording the audio sessions with each participant. The audio recordings were then sent to Otter.ai a cloud-based software, to transcribe the

recordings into word documents. Once the data was received back, the researcher reviewed the documents for clarity and errors. After it was determined that the documents were correct and valid, a computer analysis program called Dedoose was used by the researcher to analyze the transcriptions for themes and patterns. Krueger and Casey (2015) described the use of computer-generated analysis programs to create the possibilities that are not readily available using other strategies. He further goes on to explain the use of computerization assists the researcher by efficiently and effectively identifying themes and patterns, thereby allowing for an effective use of time.

The semi-structured interview data was organized into three broad categories: role expectations, impact of self-efficacy and leadership practices to see if there was a relationship to lead during change. The collection of data determined the themes that emerge, patterns, and discrepancies for each of the research questions (Hays & Singh, 2011).

### **Research Questions**

The following main questions guided the study:

1. What do community college academic administrators reveal about their leadership practices, self-efficacy, and institutional role expectations and their ability to lead change?
2. What does the gathered contextual analysis disclose for community college academic leaders regarding themes, patterns, and variations in the leadership practices, self-efficacy, and institutional role expectations?



3. How do selected community college academic leaders navigate challenges to improve their leadership practices and their ability to influence during times of change?

### **Setting**

The research setting took place in the Northeastern region of the United States and was limited to a large, public two-year, multi-campus community college in a suburban setting. The researcher explored the composition and structure of the position of an academic officer to determine what community college administrators revealed about their leadership practices and responsibility in their position of an academic leader. The research design allowed the researcher to investigate the educational background, and professional history of the academic dean and other identified demographics (Table 4). For the study the researcher sought participants in the position of an academic leader. The researcher of this study was an academic leader at the selected institution and was interested in the study to identify successful leadership practices in times of change that will inform higher educational leaders and institutions. The sample was obtained using purposeful selection and was identified to best assist the researcher to understand the problem and the research question (Creswell, 2003). IRB consent was sought from the site institution and approval was received from The Office of Planning and Institutional Effectiveness to conduct the research.

### **Participants**

Individuals with the titles of deans within academic affairs from Starfish Community College, a large public community college within Northeastern region of the

United States were asked to participate in the study through an email letter of invitation. A letter of informed consent was included with the email request. As the position of the academic leader can have many different titles and reporting structure. This study explored all individuals at the level of dean-- inclusive of the vice president--that have oversight for the institution within the area of academic affairs. In their examination of leadership within the academic arena, De Boer and Goedegebuure (2009) noted that the modern deanship has shifted away from being first among academic equals to a much more senior executive position. Due to the changing complexity of the position, individuals within these roles are coming from the traditional academic path as well as from a non-traditional management one. Sypawka et al., (2010) believed that collaboration leadership is a key element that leaders need to set the tone and the expectations if a new partnership is to be effective. To accomplish this there needs to be resolutions and collaborative work to join the two sides of the academic institution for improvement and change. By having academic leaders that rise into positions from both the traditional path and the untraditional side will bring the unique and differing viewpoints and solutions for students to succeed. The commonalities among these individuals are the interest in the success of the students and the economic need for retention. For no matter what path is taken, either the traditional one through an academics or a more untraditional one through student affairs, the position of the academic dean finds student success at its core.

**Table 2***Description of the Participants*

Participant Pseudonym	Gender	Age	Ethnicity	Education	Prior Instructional Full-time Faculty	Years Served in Role
Wright	Female	51-55	White	BA, MA, Ed. D	Yes	5-8
Kelly	Male	51-55	White	BA, MBA	No	12-14
Johnson	Female	51-55	White	BS, MS, Ed. D	Yes	10-12
Beach	Female	46-50	White	BS, MS, JD, MA	No	16-18
Peters	Female	51-55	Hispanic	BA, JD	No	3-5
Kenny	Female	51-55	White	BS, MS, MBA, Ed. D	No	14-16
Rocky	Female	46-50	White	BS, MS, Ph.D.	Yes	5-8
Wilson	Male	36-40	White	BA. MS, Ed. D	No	5-8
Rizzo	Female	46-50	White	MA, Ed. D	No	5-8
Lai	Male	61-65	Hispanic	BS, MBA, MPA, MD	Yes	12-14
Young	Female	61-65	White	BA, MA, MA, Ed. D	No	14-16
Williams	Female	61-65	White	BS, MS, Ed. D	No	18+

**Data Collection Procedures**

The participants were asked to complete a brief leadership orientation survey created by Bolman and Deal (Bolman, n.d.) and used with permission. The questionnaire investigated their leadership orientation and utilized self-identification to yield scores tabulated for future reference. The researcher then conducted semi-structured interviews and the participants were asked open-ended questions stemming from information gathered from a review of the Bolman and Deal Leadership Orientation questionnaire. The responses to each question were recorded and included in the data collection in the interviewees own wording through use of audio/video recordings. Additionally, field notes, transcriptions of the interviews, and setting descriptions were collected to further provide in-depth information. The purpose of this method was for the researcher to gather

data observations in the interviewees' own environment, to observe their nonverbal behavior, by listening actively, and conducting follow-up questions. All data gathered remained in the researcher's personal possession securely. All audio recording were wiped out upon the completion of the dissertation process. Any documentation linking names to the pseudonyms used by the researcher to identify the respondents were destroyed to protect the identity of the interviewees (Creswell & Poth, 2017). The interview protocol was designed to capture respondent's ability to disclose their lived experiences and beliefs regarding their respective role as an academic officer and the self-efficacy of leadership and organizational structures as it relates to their role in the community colleges.

### **Instruments**

The following interview protocol will be employed to question the selected academic leaders on their leadership practices, self-efficacy, the institutional role expectations using Bolman and Deal's Leadership Orientation Survey (Bolman, n.d.) administered first which will allow for these leaders to answer openly and honestly to get their perspective, and then following up in the semi-structured interviews to further explore their views and frames. The semi-structured interviews consisted of ten demographic questions and twelve interview questions, with the last question allowing the administrators to add anything they feel was relevant and necessary to know. This protocol directly related to the three research questions, allowing for the participants answers from their own unique perspective.

The interview questions are based on the administrators experience leading at Starfish Community College. Each question aligns with the literature and asks the administrators perception of leading through challenge towards change. Table 3 is a visual depiction of the relationship of the research questions to the data sources and the interview questions.

**Table 3**

*Alignment of Research Questions, Data Sources, and Interview Questions*

Interview Protocol Question	Research Question	Subtopic	Author
10. Can you tell me a little bit about yourself?	R1	Self-Efficacy	Bandura, 1998; Bragg, 2000; Fullan, 2002; Fernandez & Shaw, 2020; Kezar, 2018; Kouzes, & Posner, 2012; Mountjoy, 2019; Nevarez & Wood, 2010; Deci & Ryan, 1987; Shults, 2001; Slemp, et al., 2018; Sypawka, et al., 2010
11. Briefly describe the institution as you know it today?	R2	Institutional Role Expectations	Amey et al., 2000; Amey et al., 2002; Birnbaum, 1988; Bolman & Gallos, 2011; Bragg, 2000; Cantor, 2021; Cleverley-Thompson, 2016; Fernandez & Shaw, 2020 Gmelch, 2013; Holmes, 2019
12. Briefly describe the institution as you knew it prior to March 2020	R2	Institutional Role Expectations	Amey et al., 2000; Amey et al., 2002; Birnbaum, 1988; Bolman & Gallos, 2011; Bragg, 2000; Cantor, 2021; Cleverley-Thompson, 2016; Fernandez &

Shaw, 2020 Gmelch, 2013;  
Holmes, 2019

13. How would you describe the role of an academic leader?  
a. Is your role a line or direct staff assignment to the President?  
b. What successes have you had in this role before March 2020 and after March 2020 (pre and post).  
c. What difficulties do you face in this role today, verses before March 2020 (pre-post).  
d 1. Are you aware of any difficulties that your direct reports perhaps faced? c 2. Are you aware of any difficulties that students or faculty perhaps faced

R1

Self-Efficacy

Bandura, 1998; Bragg, 2000; Fullan, 2002; Fernandez & Shaw, 2020; Kezar, 2018; Kouzes, & Posner, 2012; Mountjoy, 2019; Nevarez & Wood, 2010; Shults, 2001; Slemph, et al., 2018; Sypawka, et al., 2010

14. How does your job description define or not define the expectations in your current role?

R2

Institutional  
Role  
Expectations

Amey et al., 2020; Amey et al., 2002; Birnbaum, 1988; Bolman & Gallos, 2011; Bragg, 2000; Cantor, 2021; Cleverley-Thompson, 2016; Fernandez &

			Shaw, 2020 Gmelch, 2013; Holmes, 2019
15. How do the institutional expectations attached to your position influence your ability to lead? a. Is this different during times of change?	R1 & R2	Self- Efficacy Institutional Role Expectations	Bandura, 1998; Bragg, 2000; Fullan, 2002; Fernandez & Shaw, 2020; Kezar, 2018; Kouzes, & Posner, 2012; Mountjoy, 2019; Nevarez & Wood, 2010; Shults, 2001; Slemp, et al., 2018; Sypawka, et al., 2010 Amey et al., 2000; Amey et al., 2002; Birnbaum, 1988; Bolman & Gallos, 2011; Bragg, 2000; Cantor, 2021; Cleverley-Thompson, 2016; Fernandez & Shaw, 2020 Gmelch, 2013; Holmes, 2019
16. How do you see your role as an academic leader in your ability to affect change? 17. How much autonomy do you believe you have in this role? (Pre 2020). Do you feel that your autonomy has changed after March 2020? What are your perceptions of your effectiveness in your current role?	R1	Self- Efficacy	Bandura, 1998; Bragg, 2000; Fullan, 2002; Fernandez & Shaw, 2020; Kezar, 2018; Kouzes, & Posner, 2012; Mountjoy, 2019; Nevarez & Wood, 2010; Shults, 2001; Slemp, et al., 2018; Sypawka, et al., 2010

Based on what you have told me how does this affect your capacity to lead?

17. Based on your experience, what do you believe are characteristics of effective leadership at a community college?

R3

Leadership Practices

Ancona, 2012; Astin & Astin, 2000; Bergquist & Pawlak, 2008; Bolman & Deal, 2017; Bolman & Gallos, 2011; Bushra et al., 2011; Dalcher, 2018; Dwyer, 2019; Eckel & Kezar, 2003; Eddy, 2014; Fullan, 2002, 2005, 2011; Holmes & Scull, 2019; Riggs, 2009; Rosser, 2003; Schein, 2017; Sypawka, 2008; Wallin, 2012

18. In the leadership orientation survey, you recently completed for this research, your orientation frame was identified as \_\_\_\_\_.

R3

Leadership Practices

Ancona, 2012; Astin & Astin, 2000; Bergquist & Pawlak, 2008; Bolman & Deal, 2017; Bolman & Gallos, 2011; Bushra et al., 2011; Dalcher, 2018; Dwyer, 2019; Eckel & Kezar, 2003; Eddy, 2014; Fullan, 2002, 2005, 2011; Holmes & Scull, 2019; Riggs, 2009; Rosser, 2003; Schein, 2017; Sypawka, 2008; Wallin, 2012

19. Based on your experience, what do you see as the major challenges to effective leadership during times of change at a community college?

R3

Leadership Practices

Ancona, 2012; Astin & Astin, 2000; Bergquist & Pawlak, 2008; Bolman & Deal, 2017; Bolman & Gallos, 2011; Bushra et al., 2011; Dalcher, 2018; Dwyer, 2019; Eckel & Kezar, 2003; Eddy, 2014; Fullan, 2002, 2005, 2011; Holmes & Scull, 2019; Riggs, 2009; Rosser, 2003;



a. Do you feel that your view has changed since March 2020?			Schein, 2017; Sypawka, 2008; Wallin, 2012
20. Based on your role as an academic leader have you seen any major positive outcomes brought about during times of change, that can inform leadership at a community college?	R3	Leadership Practices	Ancona, 2012; Astin & Astin, 2000; Bergquist & Pawlak, 2008; Bolman & Deal, 2017; Bolman & Gallos, 2011; Bushra et al., 2011; Dalcher, 2018; Dwyer, 2019; Eckel & Kezar, 2003; Eddy, 2014; Fullan, 2002, 2005, 2011; Holmes & Scull, 2019; Riggs, 2009; Rosser, 2003; Schein, 2017; Sypawka, 2008; Wallin, 2012
21. Finally, what do you see as the top three important leadership traits necessary to lead a community college during times of change?	R3	Leadership Practices	Ancona, 2012; Astin & Astin, 2000; Bergquist & Pawlak, 2008; Bolman & Deal, 2017; Bolman & Gallos, 2011; Bushra et al., 2011; Dalcher, 2018; Dwyer, 2019; Eckel & Kezar, 2003; Eddy, 2014; Fullan, 2002, 2005, 2011; Holmes & Scull, 2019; Riggs, 2009; Rosser, 2003; Schein, 2017; Sypawka, 2008; Wallin, 2012

## Document Analysis Protocol

Additional content was gathered which included mission/vision statements, position descriptions, college website pages, memorandums, institutional goals, external

accrediting, and assessment agencies. The documents that were analyzed provided important data that validated and confirmed participant responses. All the documents gathered were publicly accessible to the researcher. The results from the document analysis were then coded using the same relevant literature, themes; alliances, multi-frame perspective, and sensemaking as the semi-structured interviews, and Bolman and Deal Leadership Orientation Survey (Bolman, n.d.).

The following table is a visual depiction of the interconnected relationships of the documents, literature, and theory.

**Table 4**

*Content Analysis: Relationship of the documents to the Literature Protocol*

Document	Subtopic
Mission/Vision Statements	Self-Efficacy, Institutional Role
	Expectations, Leadership Practices
Position descriptions	Institutional Role Expectations
College Website pages	Institutional Role Expectations
Memorandums	Institutional Role Expectations
Archived college material	Institutional Role Expectations

In essence, analyzing applicable institutional documents provided the researcher a varied method for triangulating the findings. And the data gathered from the mission vision statements, position descriptions, college website pages, memorandums, institutional goals, external accrediting, and assessment agencies documents provided

additional insights into the institutional expectations and leadership practice of the participants.

### **Trustworthiness of the Design**

To ensure that research findings and interpretations are accurate and credible, the researcher must authenticate conclusions through strategies such as triangulation or auditing (Creswell, 2015). In quantitative research, the terms validity and reliability are commonly used to describe the accuracy. In qualitative research, researchers often use the term trustworthiness to reference the concept of validity (Roberts & Hyatt, 2010). A research protocol was followed to ensure the trustworthiness and credibility of the research study by making sure that the same interview questions were posed to all participants. The procedure allowed the researcher to take notes during the interview, and stay on task, as well as gather field notes for the purpose of triangulating the data for completeness and accuracy. The procedure helped the researcher to organize thoughts on headings, information about starting the interview, concluding ideas, information on ending the interview, and thanking the respondent (Creswell, 2015). Once all data was collected and analyzed, it was triangulated for trustworthiness purposes (Creswell, 2015). Triangulation allows for the researcher to use multiple sources as corroborating evidence, aligning the data to the theory (Creswell & Poth, 2017; Yin, 2018). The data triangulated compared leadership practices, institutional expectations, and leader effectiveness. Triangulation occurs when at least three independent measures support and agree with a finding (Mills & Gay, 2016). Accordingly, the researcher triangulated the data using the Bolman and Deal leadership orientation survey (Bolman, n.d.), semi-structured

interviews, and gathered institutional documents. By comparing three different sourced documents, the researcher was able to cross check findings to validate and corroborate the results.

### **Research Ethics**

The researcher's goals and intent were to provide a comprehensive examination into what an academic leader discloses about their leadership practices, self-efficacy, institutional role expectations and their ability to lead during a time of change. Creswell and Poth (2017) stated that using qualitative methods will generate a wealth of comprehensive information relevant to a small number of participants and cases and will increase the knowledge and understanding of a situation but will have a reduced generalizability of other methods. The researcher established multiple strategies to validate and assure the accuracy of the information gathered. By triangulating the information gathered, the researcher developed a "coherent justification" (Creswell & Creswell, 2017, p.200) for themes and patterns identified. All participants volunteered for the study and participated without incentive, ensuring that participation was not coerced. Once the participants of the study agreed to participate, informed consent forms were signed, dated, and collected. Finally, pseudonyms were provided to all members, and they were informed that they could terminate the interview at any time.

### **Data Analysis Approach**

There are philosophical assumptions that support a researcher's justification to conduct research related to ontology and epistemology and the procedures to study a particular phenomenon is known as methodology (Mills & Gay, 2016). Creswell and

Creswell (2013) informed over the past four decades researchers have compared qualitative and quantitative philosophical assumptions that support qualitative research validity. Over the course of this time, the culmination of research has determined there is no longer a need that justifies one philosophical assumption over the other. The methodology of qualitative research provides the researcher to perform an in-depth study of personal experiences and perspective and affords the opportunity to exchange detailed and personal information in great depth and delve into concepts (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007; Mills & Gay, 2016;). The goal of the researcher was to provide a comprehensive study of to what extent an academic leader's perception of their leadership practices, self-efficacy, and institutional roles and practices influence change during unrepresented times. To this purpose the researcher employed in vivo coding to capture the actual spoken words of the participants. Saldaña (2016) posited that in vivo coding is a common name given to the form of coding that places emphasis on the actual spoken words of the participants, which can be useful when studying members of a specific culture. This form of coding can be especially useful when the participants use specific words or phrases in their interactions that might not be understood using other forms of coding (Manning, 2017). For the purposes of this study, a case study design affords an appropriate avenue for conducting research on this topic. According to Yin (2018), the power of the case study method is the ability to examine, in-depth a case within its actual context, the use of single case studies allows for a direct interpretation of people and events providing an awareness.

Bogdan and Biklen (2007) described five characteristics of qualitative research as naturalist, descriptive data, concern with process, inductive, and means form the holistic constructs for qualitative research. The naturalistic progress entails the researcher's presence on the premises at the location to attain an understanding of the setting. This approach enabled the researcher to provide a wholesome representation of the community college background for the study. The context of research is important in setting the stage for the study. Second, the process applied descriptive data, which used pictures and words, not numbers. This characteristic allowed for the data analysis to be rich and complete. Third, qualitative data are greatly concerned with the process of research not just the outcomes (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007). Qualitative data, according to Bogdan and Biklen (2007) assesses how terms and labels come to be utilized and employed and noted that qualitative research tends to analyze data inductively. In this method, concepts are constructed as the data is gathered and categorized together. Finally, and of extreme importance, is meaning. It is the researcher in qualitative research that must capture the essence and meaning of each participant's perspective accurately to provide the most accurate description and a detailed account of how the participant understands the world in which he or she functions, works, leads or lives (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007). The researcher for the study spent time participating in direct observations of the institutional personnel and analyzing the institution's climate and culture.

### **Researcher Role**

The researcher of the study is an administrator at a Starfish Community College in an academic leadership role and engaged in observations and dialogue with the

institution's personnel to gain greater insight into the institution's climate and culture. According to Mills and Gay (2016) it is vital for the researcher to establish that he or she is compatible with the participants for the success of the study to eradicate any implied or unimplied bias. Creswell and Creswell (2017) discussed that the collection of data in a researcher's own workplace may create "an imbalance of power" and may "jeopardize the roles of the researchers and the participants" (p.184). As the study involved data collected at the institution of the researcher, guidelines and interview protocols were implemented to assure the reliability and confidentiality of all participants. The participants of the study are colleagues of the researcher, and it is understood that these relationships may influence participation and the interpretation of the results. In reflecting on the role of the researcher it is important to identify inherent biases that may exist between the researcher and the participants to assure consistence and accuracy in the findings.

## **Conclusion**

The purpose of this chapter was to describe the methodology, research design, research questions, setting, participants, data collection and procedures, instruments, trustworthiness of the design, researcher ethics, data analysis approach, and researcher role. This study utilized a qualitative research design to address the research questions and was rooted as an explanatory single case study.

The setting was a two-year, multi-campus community college in the Northeastern part of the United States and was chosen as it was a purposeful sample, selected due to the comfort and ability to gather information. This study addressed the issues of

trustworthiness by incorporating triangulation of the data sources. The sample size in the study was limited and therefore the research findings may only be applicable to a limited setting.



## CHAPTER 4

This explanatory single case study explored academic leaders' perspectives when faced with change. By examining the complexity and actions (Yin, 2018) of the participants, the research explored an academic leader's narrative of their leadership practices, self-efficacy, institutional role expectations, and their capacity to lead during change. The dominant narrative that emerged from the data identified resourcefulness as being a key aspect for most interviewed. Many participants also identified communication as being a critical characteristic that led to the ability to reason and solve the complex issues they encountered. All the participants recognized the importance of alliances within their positions and articulated about its necessity when faced with challenges and decisions. Accordingly, three overarching themes emerged from the study: a) alliances; b) multi-frame perspective; c) sensemaking. This chapter portrays the experiences, viewpoints, philosophies of the participants gathered in their own voice (Creswell & Creswell, 2017) and correlated them to their self-identified dominate Bolman and Deal (2017) frame. These findings were then considered against the institution role expectation, which was gathered from institutional artifacts that allowed for the research to develop.

As this case was conducted in a single community college, the themes that were identified may not be applicable for all community colleges. Consequently, the motivation factors for these leaders may not be relevant for other leaders.

## Findings

### Theme One Alliances

Power and decision-making exist at every level within an organization, and to achieve change leaders must join forces and create alliances. Bolman and Deal (2017) indicated, “At every level in organizations, alliances form because members have interests in common and believe they can do more together than apart” (p.190). An ability to accomplish tasks and make decisions within an organization requires the formation of strategic partnerships or alliances. It is noted that the ability for leaders to accomplish their goals requires the power that is derived from the unification with others. Achieving objectives and goals within an organization requires working through a complex network of individuals and groups as colleagues and allies make things a lot easier to accomplish and affords the leader the power to achieve change (Bolman & Deal, 2017; Bolman & Gallos, 2011; Eddy, 2014). This theme of alliances was noted by all the participants interviewed and was identified as an important aspect for most to lead through crisis.

In addressing the capacity to create change **Dean Wright** noted:

My ability to affect change is tied to introducing my ideas and talking to people who need to make the change. As a Dean, I can't write curriculum and submit it. It must be written by faculty and submitted by faculty. I approach the faculty, talk to them about what their ideas are, and let them know what my ideas are, I engage them that way. I work collaboratively with them, and together we move things forward.

With the creation of an alliance with faculty, Dean Wright exemplifies what Bolman and Gallos (2011) identify as “the first law of higher education leadership: if you lose the faculty, you lose” (p.84). Strategic alliances are very important as they allow the leader to move initiatives forward through collaboration and teamwork.

The position of an academic leader embodies many characteristics of the institution and therefore the leader must be able to establish directive when faced with crisis. How an individual recognizes and relates to the decision at hand is influenced in part as to how well they can envision their solution, which is shaped in the way they identify to it. Their frame or view that they interpret through creates a solution by allowing them the opportunity to empathize or understand the potential outcome. During our interview, **Dean Peters** reflected that with her position at Starfish Community College, the alliances she formed with her colleagues extended outside the institution to other school settings. She found it helpful to see how these other institutions and administrators were handling the rapid change.

I reached out to colleagues for suggestions and their thoughts. I found that as we worked together with our counterparts, when we would speak with them, we kind of understood each other very well. It was like they understood that we were being faced with a lot of changes and a lot of difficulties at the college.

Seeing the empathy from others and having the ability to share ideas and thoughts allowed each institution the potential to create and develop solutions to the situations as they presented thus creating a synergy for each of these entities.

## ***Collaboration***

Higher education institutions have realized the importance for leadership to work collaboratively for the past decade, as organizational collaboration yields benefit of greater efficiency, effectiveness, and enhances student learning (Kanter, 1994; Kezer, 2001; Kezar, 2005). It is through these alliances and partnerships that the confidence in decisions is earned, and that because of these that conviction is attained for all participants (Amey et.al., 2007). **Dean Rizzo** reflected during our interview the following:

I think what is happened is that there is a lot more confidence in the ability to work together...everybody that I must work with ...we achieved something... we can agree on something fast, and so, I think there is a lot more respect, because we are part of the solution, part of the COVID-19 response team. And I have never worked that closely with other people and that productively before. You know, we have been in multiple meetings and multiple initiatives and multiple things and so on. And it was just very different. So, I think as much as this pandemic disrupted many things and made this very complicated for many. I think that there is a tremendous growth in institutional confidence and people's trust in the ability to move forward and do things that we never believed we could. So, I think it's that is a great outcome.

This sense of collaboration was noted by many participants to exist with both their colleagues and with faculty, **Dean Beach** explained that the academic administrator

must acknowledge the importance of the needs of the students, faculty, and the institution. She explained:

As an academic leader, you must think not only about what the faculty want, but you must put what the students need first, and then what the college can fiscally manage, sometimes first or second, and then hope those things align with what the faculty want to do. So, there exists a lot of guiding, and advising.

It should be noted, in this perspective Dean Beach is viewing the alliances that are being created within the institution through her individual leadership orientation. When I analyzed the score on Dean Beach's leadership orientation survey (Bolman, n.d.) (See Table 4) I noted that she tied highest score in both the structural and human resources frames. As Bolman and Deal's (2017) structural frame argues for putting people in the correct roles and relationships, the human resources frame emphasizes dealing with issues by changing people through coaching or training. As these two distinct frames connect in Dean Beach's assessment it creates a further position of the identification of the need to align with the institution. Thus, acknowledging the importance of the role of the academic leader in sustaining the fiduciary aspect as well.

As this study looked at how a leader conducts themselves during times of change Dean Wright noted during her interview that the patterns of responsiveness in communication and collaboration changed post 2020 due to the COVID -19 pandemic. In her opinion, **Dean Wright** believed that the crisis created more collaboration among her colleagues, as each of them strived to assist each other and continue forward in areas that they already had accomplished success.

I think, post 2020, we were much more communicative and collaborative, within the leadership. I can't speak for the faculty, but leadership has had from the chairpersons up, been much more collaborative, and much more cooperative, and much more communicative with their counterparts at each campus.

Dean Wright and her colleagues exhibited one of the three principal steps of sensemaking that Bolman and Gallos (2011) identified as action-oriented which seeks solutions to issues that present by following personal interpretations of how to solve the crisis. The structural roles of their positions call upon these academic leaders in times of uncertainty to respond and create collaborative teams. Yet, given the actuality and the design of colleges as open systems, there exists both interconnected and disconnected parts thus creating a disconnect that sometimes prevents exchange (Bolman & Gallos, 2011). **Dean Rocky** explained that for her the collaboration that she and her colleagues engaged in: “allowed all of them to find a way for all opinions and voices to be heard”. She felt that this aspect of collaboration, and the combining of ideas and opinions, allowed her and her team the ability to acquire successful outcomes, that perhaps may not have been possible alone.

Determinants and elements of teams and performance have been researched for decades, many factors go into creation and selection of high performing teams (Katzenbach & Smith, 1992). Within the subtheme of collaboration there was a grand-child theme of teamwork that was found present in many of the participants’ interviews. A team is comprised of a small number of individuals who possess complimentary skills, and who are united in a common goal (Bolman & Deal, 2017; Bolman & Gallos, 2011).

As these academic leaders shared, at times for them to be successful they acknowledged the role that their direct reports had on their success. **Dean Kenny** explained:

Being an effective leader is making sure that all understand what is that you have need to accomplish. You must go at the pace in which you know that you can move your people, you can't be standing out there by yourself and expect that you're going to be able to lead if you don't have the support of others.

**Dean Kenny** continued, "I think back initially to what teamwork is, it goes back to this idea that not one person can make it happen, one person could make all the decisions, but it really needed everybody to implement them".

By creating and supporting a team structure when looking at adapting and creating solutions it is important to remember that the leader must be a resource as well as a support to the team for success. **Dean Johnson** explained:

When people are comfortable it's easier for them to be at their best sometimes to think and process. And I think, for me, the progress toward change, when change is necessary, is improved when people are engaged in it with me.

In some cases, the changes that are needed are not always received or accepted, so academic leaders must balance between advising and empowering their reports to gain their trust and support. Several participants shared that they believed they were a stronger team today, and that this institution has been functioning with goodwill, hard work, and the dedication of all persons involved. They shared that looking back initially it is through teamwork that the institution was able to survive this most recent crisis, as revealed the idea that not one person can make all the decisions, and the knowledge that

an effective team will hold themselves accountable (Bolman & Deal, 2017; Bolman & Gallos, 2011). The ability to bring people on board and foster them to success is a vital aspect of leadership, particularly during times of change.

By building relationships and building trust, leaders can create the change that is necessary for institutional success. There are times that cross-functional teams are needed to solve an issue, as institutions can be comprehensive and broad. These various areas and departments within the organization share certain services, such as informational technologies, but the decisions made for the whole are not always based on input from all. Academic units and departmental units often function in silos, creating tensions and inequalities within the organization. The creation of connectiveness through the formation of cross-functional teams fosters greater collaboration and assists with shared resources.

### ***Autonomy***

Through autonomy the academic leaders in this study expressed that their ability, motivation, and the perceived support to render decisions changed over the course of time and as the situation changed. The perceived autonomy they derived came from their own individual aspect or motivation, as an inner support of their actions (Birnbaum, 1988; Deci & Ryan, 1987; Slemp et al., 2018). Overall, most participants spoke of their sense of autonomy, yet two of those interviewed felt that there was a lack of independence or support to make decisions.

**Dean Wilson** elaborated:



You also have systems that determine autonomy, and so, I think there's times where a system prevents you from doing what you need to do or following your role and what your job description or job responsibilities are. Because of operating structures within the organization and your intuitional role expectation there are times that one is withheld from acting.

In his interpretation of autonomy within the organization Dean Wilson noted that a strong connection with his ability to perform his duties lie in the institutional role expectations of the position, the outside governing agencies, and the predetermined job description he works within. His beliefs are that the amount of autonomy he has is limited by these factors. As the autonomy is affected by the amount of support that the academic leader believes they have from the institution and their leaders, and that support motivates or inhibits the academic leader (Deci & Ryan, 1987). As **Dean Wright** further suggested:

There is no autonomy in this role currently, we have a very top-down decision driven organization right now. We need to seek approval for all purchases. So, in speaking about autonomy, there's not a lot currently in that aspect in this institution, everything needs to be vetted.

Since autonomy is linked with motivation and how an individual sees themselves as either effective or not effective in their role, it factors into their leadership style and ability to render decisions.

### ***Self-Efficacy***

As a person's belief in their ability will produce positive results, thus allowing for that individual to act, their effectiveness is a driving force in their motivation. As self-

efficacy reveals an individual's self-assurance in the ability to exercise influence over one's own motivation, conduct, and social situation, it is significant for a supervisor to fully comprehend to what degree their actions guide others and themselves. Bandura (1998) discussed "the impact of personal efficacy on the quality of life depends on the purposes to which it is put" (p.2). An academic leader's self-efficacy can be exercised for self-interest and not that of the collective group, it is important that higher educational institutions work to gain the commitment of their leaders to the common purposes they seek to accomplish or risk losing the desired outcomes they seek (Bandura, 1998). **Dean Wright** shared her viewpoint of self-efficacy:

I believe that I'm persistent. If I believe in a program or a service, I will make sure that I touch base with anyone and everyone who can make it happen, see what the best route is to make it happen. And then I don't let go, sometimes it takes up to six years to get things done... And I will persist, I don't give up easily. So, my effectiveness, I believe comes out of my level of persistence.

**Dean Young** continued when questioned about her thoughts of self-efficacy:

I think also I have a strong presence. But also, at the same time, I show kindness to people. To pull everyone together as a team you must also have a good political sense. Because we are a community college and even if we weren't, you must be able to work with the leaders within the community and to represent yourself well within the community, with the politicians and to be willing to accept the change yourself.

One must note that both Deans Wright and Young scored highest on the self-administered survey in the structural frame, but their next highest score was the political frame. Both these academic leaders identified that to be successful in this organization as it existed, required an acknowledgement of the potential political maneuverings that one may need to choreograph to accomplish the mission and vision of the institution. As **Dean Kenny** posited “It takes an awful lot of patience, and ability to support those around you even when they don't believe in you... or believe in the initiative... you just have to just keep showing them the value in it”.

Within the subtheme of self-efficacy there were two identified a grand-child themes of passion and empathy. The passion within these academic leaders created a sense of motivation which compelled them to continue. **Dean Kelly** described “I have a passion for the students”, and further goes on to discuss that this passion assists him in fostering student success. **Dean Lai** enumerated “I came here because I wanted to help students in the community”, and further stated: “Like the other fields that I've been in... it gives me that satisfaction of being able to make a difference”. **Dean Lai** further continued his philosophy of leading, “I tend to lead by example, meaning, whatever I want my faculty or staff to do, I will do it also”, showing the Bolman and Deal (2017) self-identifying connecting frames of human resource and symbolic evident in his leadership practices. As, Dean Lai scored as a humanist on his Bolman and Deal (2017) questionnaire it demonstrates his desire and passion to assist and engage his team through example. These scores are triangulated for Dean Lai because he is living the organizational mission and vision of Starfish Community College.

The empathy noted within the themes is clear in **Dean Beach** assessment:

So particularly in community colleges, where there's so many first generation students and students of color who may have been marginalized, or otherwise, we need to focus on the ways that can create more equitable opportunities for social mobility so that we're actually meeting our mission and not and not just keep assuming that students all look the same as they did in the 1600s and 1700s when higher education began, because they are not this way anymore.

As community colleges satisfy an essential role in the American higher education environment due an ever increasing socioeconomically diverse population, the environment has evolved in the last four decades to include a greater enrollment of culturally diverse students, that may be underprepared academically, first-generation college students, adult learners, and economic disadvantaged. Academic deans must be cognizant to remember who comprises their student bodies and how best they may assist them to achieve their educational goals.

### **Theme Two: Multi-Frame Perspective**

Assessing complex issues using different frames can provide understandings into events and help explain why certain events or outcomes develop the way they do. “A frame is a mental model – a set of ideas and assumptions – that you carry in your head to help you understand and negotiate a particular territory” (Bolman & Deal, 2017, p.12). The four-frame model developed by Bolman and Deal (2017) offered a method to group organizational operations, with the inference that those able to operate from multiple

frameworks see a greater perspective of what is truly happening and therefore are capable to render more well-thought-out solutions (Amey & Eddy, 2014).

During the semi-structured interviews with the participants, the second theme of multi-frame perspective was noted to be central to all the participants interviewed and was identified as a crucial element necessary for generating solutions to support change. There were four subthemes identified within the second theme of multi-frame perspective; identified leadership styles, Bolman and Deal leadership survey, and reflecting, accountability.

### ***Identified Leadership Styles***

Structural theorists emphasize authority and acknowledge the legitimate prerogative to make binding decisions. In this view leaders make rational decisions within the context of intended purpose, then monitor and assess to ensure that their decisions are carried out by their subordinates. Structural leaders highlight reason, analysis, logic, facts, and data. They are likely to believe keenly in the importance of clear structure and well-developed management systems (Bolman & Deal, 2017).

Human resource theorists place less emphasis on power and authority and more on empowering others. As structuralists emphasize the power they possess, human resource theorists emphasize limits on the authority and focus on the influence that enhances mutuality and collaboration. Hoping that participation, openness, and collaboration substitute for sheer power (Bolman & Deal, 2017). They endorse the view that the central task of management is to develop a good fit between people and organizations. They believed in the importance of coaching, participation, motivation,

teamwork, and good interpersonal relations. A good leader is a facilitator and participative manager who supports and empowers others (Bolman & Deal, 2017).

Political frame considers authority as only one of the many forms of power, recognizing the importance of the individual and group needs. Yet understanding that limited resources and incompatible preferences can cause needs to collide. From a political view, the issue is how competing groups articulate preferences and mobilize power to get what they want. Political leaders believe that managers and leaders live in a world of conflict and scarce resources. The central task of management is to mobilize the resources needed to advocate and fight for the unit's or the organization's goals and objectives. Political leaders emphasize the importance of building a power base: allies, networks, coalitions (Bolman & Deal, 2017).

Symbolic frame focuses on how legend and representations help leadership make sense of the chaotic, ambiguous world in which they exist. Meaning, belief, and faith are its central tenets, and the meaning that is derived is created by the individual or the institution. Symbolic leaders believe that the essential task of management is to provide vision and inspiration. They rely on personal charisma and an ability to get people excited and committed to the organization's mission. A good leader is a visionary, who uses symbols, stories and frames experience in ways that give people hope and meaning (Bolman & Deal, 2017).

These four frames of structural, human resources, political, and symbolic each have underlying assumptions that assist in understanding how those operating from these frames define the issue and reach conclusions. When you are assessing individuals to

determine to which frame, they belong you may often discover that individuals may fit in to more than one frame and as so will exhibit the characteristics of both frames. This duality in their perspectives can assist the individual by providing further context in which to view the issue or question.

## Bolman and Deal Leadership Orientation Survey

**Table 5**

*Self- Identified Leadership Orientations Scores of Participants*

Participants		Structural	Human Resource	Political	Symbolic	Total	Question Six
1	Wright	19	9	18	14	60	Visionary
2	Kelly	23	12	12	13	60	Analyst
3	Johnson	11	19	11	19	60	Humanist
4	Beach	16	16	15	13	60	Analyst
5	Peters	15	19	15	11	60	Analyst
6	Kenny	20	21	8	11	60	Humanist
7	Rocky	13	18	11	18	60	Visionary
8	Wilson	22	20	9	9	60	Analyst
9	Rizzo	16	13	15	16	60	Visionary
10	Lai	14	17	12	17	60	Humanist
11	Young	19	11	16	14	60	Visionary
12	Williams	14	16	17	13	60	Political

The Bolman and Deal Leadership Orientation Survey (Bolman, n.d.) was administered to 12 academic deans at Starfish Community College, their survey scores are listed in Table 5. Five of the 12 participants score equally for their top two frames. Inclusive of these tie scores there were equal numbers of top scores for structural and human resources. There were four top scores in the symbolic section. Yet, it should be noted that all these scores were part of the tied two frames. There was only one participant that scored in the political section as their highest score.

Question number six on the Bolman and Deal Leadership Orientation (Bolman, n.d.) asked the participants to identify themselves as an analyst, humanist, politician, or visionary. When compared against their determined leadership orientation three of the 12 participants mis-identified question six to their score. Two identified as being visionary while their leadership score placed them as structural, and the third participant identified



as an analyst while the leadership score had them as human resource. When looking at this misidentification of how the participants viewed themselves, further research would be needed to identify if these participants understood the task of the survey or if they were perhaps looking at themselves as how they would like to be viewed.

During the semi-structured interviews, the participants were asked if they agreed with the way they scored on the Bolman and Deal Leadership Orientation Survey (Bolman, n.d.) and whether the top score they felt defined their leadership style. All the participants agreed that the way that they were identified by their score on the survey accurately classified them as the leaders they are currently. Some of the participants noted that as they progressed in their careers their leadership styles had transformed and that they believed that their score in this study are different than perhaps years ago.

### ***Reflecting***

As reflecting is a vital aspect of the multi-frame perspective **Dean Wright** discussed:

The areas that I struggle with are those effective academic leadership pieces. And that's the ability to really listen to what people are saying, not to the words they're using, but to the intent behind what they're saying. I think that sometimes getting to the core need is difficult, because of the motive language that people toss out there and the way they communicate.

**Dean Beach** agreed, "It starts with understanding and listening to people in depth of organizational structure, knowledge, and analytical skills". **Dean Kenny** shared that it

is important to be able to hear the opposing view as well as those who agree. She explained:

I just need to find a way to bring the majority along and try and try not to focus so much on the naysayers. Because it's unreal. Sometimes it's just unrealistic to think everybody's going to be 100% in support of a change, of course.

**Dean Wilson** explained that for him:

Being able to analyze situations is going to be problematic, no matter how caring and how much of a listener you are, if you can't analyze and see bigger picture...with what's presented to you or in your own mind. You're not going to be able to do this job effectively.

The role of academic leader is that they should see the different point of views of all and can embrace the multiple perspectives of any issue. The academic leader values those who are involved and obtains a better decision by seeking input from all at the table.

**Dean Wilson** continued:

If we just listen to one role, it's going to be slanted, it's not going to have the whole what I would say truth to the matter to help you to make an effective decision overall, if you try to listen to everyone and say, I'm going to comment on every single person, you're never going to make anyone happy.

### ***Accountability***

The subtheme of accountability had two grand-child codes, external which encompasses the outside community stakeholders at-large that the institution encounters and the internal stakeholders comprising of the students, faculty, staff that are within.

**Dean Lai** explained, “I would coordinate programs to bring the students out into the communities to do different functional tasks, as professionals, educate them on the needs that different communities have.” **Dean Wilson** said, “it's building the relationships and building trust, to help people know that, that we're in this together”.

**Dean Wright** posited:

I would rather just be doing it, you know, sometimes you just want to take control and do it yourself. So, you must release, you know. I think the greatest thing is select, let go and let the people do what they need to do. And support, it's a lot of support work.

While **Dean Rocky** explained: “I feel we all need clear, communicated goals, manageable and clear, getting down to it and you know otherwise, I feel like you're just all over the place.” **Dean Beach** agreed when dealing with internal constituents:

I think that do to the fact that we have multiple roles, I often feel we can't take a day off... I mean, it just feels like at times it's nonstop and we do not have a lot of down time.

When academic leaders are dealing with accountability, they must always consider both the internal and external parts of the position and its effect on the institution and the community in which they operate. Successful leaders reframe, consciously or subconsciously, until they comprehend the situation at hand. They use multiple perspectives to develop an analysis of what's really going on. Then they integrate their understanding into their leadership account, the narrative they use to guide

themselves and their team. Multi-frame thinking requires moving beyond narrow, routine approaches for comprehending the world (Bolman & Deal, 2017).

### **Theme Three: Sensemaking**

The third theme identified was the viewpoint of sensemaking identified by all the participants as necessary for them to work individual and collaboratively to assist the members of their community both internally and externally to make sense of organizational change. Sensemaking allows institutional members the ability to understand events and activities. At times, these academic leaders would look to the mission and vision of the institution as this is often where they find where transformational leadership begins. Thus, allowing them the capacity to interpret and guide, referring to how we structure the unknown so to be able to act (Weick, 1995). Sensemaking is the process by which individuals interpret changes around them and adjust their thinking and understanding of events accordingly (Eddy, 2003).

Once a leader becomes aware of an issue within the organization, there exists an opportunity to use alternative frames to incorporate new practices (Schön, 1983). Academic leaders are unique individuals, each having their own views and beliefs that they engage with to construct meaning of what they observe around them. They then couple these beliefs into the mission of the institution. Even seasoned administrators can overlook, ignore, or misjudge information if they are not informed of its occurrence. Once a leader becomes aware of an issue within the organization, there exists an opportunity to use alternative frames to incorporate new practices (Schön, 1983).

**Dean Peters** shared:

I believe in positive self-talk, I would keep telling myself, you could do this, you're going to figure it out, and we're going to get this done. So, internally, I'm trying to tell myself, even though you're not feeling very effective, you're going to get through this, we're going to figure this out and that that helped my capacity to learn.

**Dean Williams** further explained:

When I am called upon to decide, I continue to process what I heard, I continue to think about what I heard. And I tell people I'll give this some thought or you know, let's all of us give this some thought. I'll go back to what was said, I'll think about it, I synthesize it, I put it together under the frame of, where do we need to go? What ideas can really work? So that's what I do in my own mind. I then might follow up and ask for more details, if there's a particular pathway that someone offered that I think I need to learn more about.

Sensemaking enables leaders to have a better grasp of what is going on in their environments, thus facilitating other leadership activities such as visioning, relating, and inventing (Ancona, 2012). Thus, sensemaking involves and requires an articulation of the unknown, because by defining the unknown one learns about how much one comprehends of the situation (Ancona, 2012).

### ***Analytic Reasoning***

The subtheme of *analytic reasoning* was identified within the coding by all the participants as a necessary element for them to engage in problem-solving and resolution management. As nine of the twelve participants were found to have the frame of

structural in the top two frames of their leadership survey. These academic leaders identified the ability to gather knowledge from individuals within the organization who are vested in moving the organization forward, creates frameworks and commitments from key constituents assisting towards solutions to advance the institution past the challenges at hand. **Dean Wright** said:

In the development and building and scaling up of our academic advising center, that came out of a study... back in 2009... it was the foundations of excellence study, and the data that we gathered created our base for our title three grant. From this title three grant came an opportunity for academic advising, at this institution. This was a way to engage students in connecting academically with faculty and that's where the mentorship piece came in. We serve 5000 students annually, we connect them with faculty, based on their interests that come up, we help them plan semester to semester, what courses they need to take.

**Dean Rizzo** further goes on to elaborate about the need for analytic reasoning:

If you think about it from organizational structure, it's not very well aligned, in the sense of my leadership role and expectations from the institution, and expectations to myself from myself. I think community colleges in general, for the most part, people who work with community colleges are self-sufficient. Because community colleges historically are institutions that are underfunded, they have always been underfunded, they must be resourceful in their missions. I think community colleges have always been places where you must learn to adjust.

As flexible, and adaptive leadership involves changing behavior in appropriate ways as the climate and environment evolves. The foundation of adaptive leadership informs that leadership focuses on the process rather than individual capabilities (Heifetz et al., 2004), sensemaking is about changing mindsets, which in turn modifies behaviors, priorities, values, and commitments (Kezer, 2018). Academic leaders must continually utilize analytic reasoning to work through the many issues and problems that present within the institution to allow for the ability to advance.

Identified as a subtheme of sensemaking was *resourcefulness*. Using what is within your control allows the academic leader the ability to guide and effect outcomes.

**Dean Young** discussed:

I don't think I've ever really changed. You know, in that sense, I tried to be a role model. For my full-time staff, I want them to know everything I know. And even if there's push back in the beginning, in the end, I always hear from them... thank you for teaching me that. I think it's just an insecurity, but I want everybody to know as much as that they can know, so they can grow.

**Dean Williams** further goes on and explained that for her:

You get a budget, you write your operational goals, you contribute to the college's strategic goals, and then using the budget as the tool along with rallying the troops and getting teams formed and leadership groups to help meet goals. You keep your eye on the bottom line, you make decisions within your campus to reach goals and to stay in, bear in in keep your budget balanced. That's the definition and expectation of my role, but that's not the reality of my role. And that causes

great frustration. My job description defines the institutional expectations... but my practice is much different than the expectations in my description. Not of my doing it's of the institutional doing.

The level of affect that each member of the leadership team exhibits ties into how much they are influential on the key resources of an organization. When a leader can influence decisions, it affects their sense of efficacy and control. The more positive the influence the greater the satisfaction (Eddy & Amey, 2014), and thereby the motivation to continue to contribute to the institution.

### ***Communication***

The subtheme of *communication* came through in the codes as the participants identified the internal venues of communicating with their peers and direct reports, as well as the defined institutional context of communication that was identified within the content analysis. As described in chapter two, Bolman and Gallos (2001) identify “active and regular solicited input from others”, as a critical component for sensemaking and the power of reframing (p.25).

**Dean Peters** explained that for her she worked to develop an open-door policy for communicating with her direct reports. She felt that this was the best way for always having the channel of communication open, and accessible to all. “I think letting people know that report to you, or even people that come to you with questions that you're available, you're readily available.” Another aspect of communication that we spoke about was the many forms of written communications that are a constant part of the job, particularly emails. **Dean Peters** stated:



Since this crisis began and we have been working more remotely I try to do this... but I don't always...to answer all your emails within 24 hours. But if you get too many, sometimes you just can't answer it that time frame”.

Dean Peters shared that she made this a goal for herself and those that reported to her as she felt it a major part of communication. **Dean Johnson** elaborated: “I think being able to communicate with people of varying levels of experience and rank and roles is important.” **Dean Johnson** is connecting in this statement in her unique viewpoint of the role of an academic dean to the identified content analysis for the position of Academic Dean at Starfish Community College within the mission, vision, and institutional goals is the goal of communication identified as “to promote transparent and effective communication within the college community and between the college community and external constituencies.” Dean Johnson understands that it is imperative to remember to communicate with all internal as well as, external members of the community.

**Dean Williams** elaborated:

But the one tool that I use the most that has stuck with me, no matter what position I was in, is brainstorming, people love to give their opinion. And I when a leader allows brainstorming over a problem that needs a solution over a plan that needs initiation, brainstorming is a great place to start because it gives everybody an opportunity to give their opinion and, and give their thoughts and, and as a leader, it's important to know that people around the table have thoughts and have opinions and have good ideas. I'm not the only one who can do this. So, I have used that tool throughout my entire career.

When we actively and regularly pursue the input of others we are actually extending respect to them, in that by seeking their participation and involvement we deepen their commitment to the organization and to our leadership success (Bolman & Gallos, 2011).

### ***Adaptability***

As the ability for an organization to respond to change is critical to its success (Van Wagoner, 2004), its leaders must learn to identify the constructs of change and relate this change to the environment they exist within. Community colleges reside in local communities and these communities change continually, creating the need for leaders to understand the aspects of change and communicate these influences both to those they lead and to the communities they serve. Adaptive leadership is essential in mitigating conflict amongst stakeholders and assuring the outcome is positive change (Heifetz et al., 2004). The role of a leader evolves to develop, communicate, and change the practices and values to adapt to the organization's culture. **Dean Johnson** established:

For instance, getting to a place where we could do business with students from afar, we were very slow before 2021, to understand how to do that work well.

Even though there are institutions all around the country that are dependent upon that, we did not understand how to incorporate those structures to allow us to grow until we had to.

**Dean Williams** explained:

Upper administration has more oversight of our course schedule, and of our course offerings, and that's understandable. That was a change that had to happen.

Some people see that as difficult, and it is different. This current crisis made things atypical... it changed the way we transformed and adapted.

**Dean Wright** concluded:

I don't think changed; I think I have expanded. I've always realized the importance of change because I've always liked change. You know for me, it's like that growth piece. But it's beyond personal development, I now see more value in the change as I have expanded and grown.

Given the complex nature of higher educational institutions, it is difficult to incorporate and administer change given the concept of shared governance. Bolman and Gallos (2011) informed that considering the structure of shared governance on campuses, academic leaders are constrained in their ability to become change agents, therefore it becomes important for leaders to comprehend the structural context and imperative to strive for accuracy in the details. The authors explained that for an academic leader to be effective they must pay attention to three interrelated levels of structure: “(a) structuring their own time; (b) managing the structure of their unit or organization; and (c) structuring the change process to enhance the likelihood that the organization can adapt to a demanding, fast-changing environment” (Bolman & Gallos, 2011, p.53). **Dean**

**Beach** shared:

That in many cases for her being an academic leader is a complex issue. Because shared governance is a critical component of being successful in the role of an academic dean. And as an academic leader the position is to guide others by keeping them safe, as I always think about like guard rails, you want to give a lot

of space for people to think and grow and create and, but there's got to be some guardrails, so they don't go off the highway. And sometimes those guardrails are easier to put up than another times.

When leaders are considering changing long standing policies and procedures, it is wise for them to carry out what Bolman and Gallos (2011) detailed as the Three Ps of change: patience, persistence, and process. These three change constructs serve an academic leader well in assisting them to not be discouraged when advancement is slow; allowing the members of the team to share their views and opinions in the process, and finally allowing for the needed adjustments for the policy or procedure to transform.

## **Conclusion**

The first research question in this study examined what community college academic administrators reveal about their leadership practices, self-efficacy, and institutional role expectations and their ability to lead change. The findings of all the participants revealed that the overarching theme of alliances was noted as necessary for the academic dean to perform and be able to lead others through change. Collaboration, autonomy, self-efficacy identified during the interviews with the participants as subthemes essential in the achievement of alliances. Within the subtheme of collaboration, some of those interviewed identified a grandchild code of teamwork and the ability to lead a team were interconnected, which allowed both the leader and those they led a resource for each other. In the subtheme of self-efficacy existed two identified grandchild themes of passion and empathy as these traits were shared by only a few of the participants. The passion and empathy characteristics appeared in some of the

participants outlook towards the student as well as the organization yet was not noted by all those interviewed.

The second research question allowed the researcher to investigate the gather analysis and what it disclosed regarding themes, patterns, and variations in the leadership practices, self-efficacy, and institutional role expectations of a community college academic leader. Notably, all the participants interviewed and surveyed operated from their own unique leadership frame yet identified in the data was a multi-frame perspective overarching throughout. The identified leadership styles, the Bolman and Deal Leadership Survey (Bolman, n.d.), reflecting and accountability-both internal and external, were subthemes identified in the coding of theme two. These leaders would use the archival documentation provided them by the institution and outside reporting agencies to assist them in rendering decisions.

The ability to analyze decisions through the identified leadership frames were stated by those interviewed as effective and valuable when faced with needing to render a decision. Effective leaders, act to continually process all the information available until they comprehend the situation at hand. They use multiple perspectives to reflect and develop an analysis of possible outcomes to determine the best course of action.

Lastly, the third research question explored how the selected community college academic leaders navigate challenges to improve their leadership practices and their ability to influence during change. The overarching theme recognized how academic leaders navigate challenges to improve their leadership identified as sensemaking. There was a consensus with a vast number of the participants that sensemaking provides the

leader with cognition and the ability to understand the issue. Thereby they can reframe the problem for the campus members thus providing a means for sensemaking (Eddy, 2003). One should note how the leader interprets the meaning through their frame, influences the actions of those they lead. The subthemes that assist academic leaders in providing sensemaking are analytic reasoning, communication and adaptability, and these subthemes were noted by many interviewed as having a significant contribution in the unification of all the three themes of this study: alliances, multi-frame perspectives, and sensemaking.

Collaboration is a taskforce or set of activities conducted as a joint effort for mutual benefit by two or more parties. An alliance includes multiple collaborations, over a continued period, which together constitute a strategically important relationship for all parties. Higher educational leaders must seek ways to unify the resources and talents to assist students and institutions. Mohnot and Shaw (2017) enumerated that the need for effective and prepared leadership is one of the greatest requirements for higher education today. Determining that leadership behaviors were a principal necessity in the training of leaders, they examined the relationship of leadership styles to the preparation for academic leaders in higher education. Noting to effectively lead academic deans must understand the roles they serve not only to the institution but to the student served, and the extent which they are prepared determines success. Current and future academic leaders must be not only be prepared, but they also need to possess certain shared competencies to attain results.

## CHAPTER 5

This explanatory case study was conducted to understand an academic leader's perception of their leadership practices, self-efficacy, and institutional roles and practices and their ability to influence during times of change. By better defining the role of the academic leader in higher educational institutions the study aimed to address three research questions. The first research question sought to understand what community college academic administrators revealed about their leadership practices, self-efficacy, and institutional role expectations and their ability to lead change. Continuing, the second research question addressed what the gathered analysis disclosed regarding themes, patterns, and variations in the leadership practices, self-efficacy, and institutional role expectations of a community college academic leader. Finally, the third research question looked to fill the gap in how community college academic leaders navigate challenges to improve their leadership practices and their ability to influence during change.

Community colleges fill an essential role in the American higher education setting due in part to an ever increasing socioeconomically diverse population (Astin & Oseguera, 2004; Grubbs, 2020; Mountjoy, 2019; Nevarez & Wood, 2010). The community college has changed in the past four decades to include a greater enrollment of racially diverse students, first-generation, adult learners, English language learners, economic disadvantaged students, and those that are underprepared academically all while enduring the fiscal crisis that higher education is currently facing (Cleverley-Thompson, 2016; Fernandez & Shaw, 2020; Kezar, 2018). As academic deans are in frontline for the

success of students and institutions, the understanding of their perceptions and abilities is essential to identify.

As discussed in Chapter 3, the data collected in this study consisted of individual interviews, document analysis, and a survey instrument. Correspondingly, three overarching themes emerged from the data collected in Chapter 4: (a) alliances (b) multi-frame perspective, and (c) sensemaking. The theme of alliances noted that the ability for leaders to accomplish their goals required the influence that is derived from the alliance with others. The second theme included the multi-frame perspective as a crucial element central to all the participants, and necessary for generating solutions supporting change (Bolman & Deal, 2017), and closely aligns with the theoretical framework presented in Chapter 2. Finally, the third theme considered sensemaking as a required element necessary for academic leaders to work individual and collaboratively to assist their members and their community to make sense of organizational change. Finally, this chapter will include discussions of the major findings from the analyzed data collected. The researcher will address each of the research questions and connect findings to the existing literature and conceptual framework presented in Chapter 2.

### **Interpretation of the Findings**

The intention of the study was to research what a community college academic administrator relayed about their leadership practices, self-efficacy, and institutional role expectations and their ability to lead change. By looking to determine if their ability to successfully lead others was substantiated by these attributes, the researcher examined the twelve selected participant's responses from the Bolman and Deal Leadership Orientation



Survey (Bolman, n.d.) and compared them to the answers garnered during the one-on-one interviews and the content analysis. After the data comparison was completed, the codes that were developed established the three overarching themes, which was thereby supported by the conceptual framework introduced in chapter 2.

### **Research Question #1**

The first research question in this study examined a community college academic leader's perception of what they individually deemed as necessary to lead during times of change. The analysis of the interview data found that alliances exist at every level within an organization and formed as the outcome of strategic partnerships or plans by these individuals to accomplish a goal. This achievement of objectives and goals by members of an organization is a result of a unification of forces and talents allowing for the power to achieve change (Bolman & Deal, 2017; Bolman & Gallos, 2011; Eddy, 2014).

The theme of alliances was observed by the participants and identified as an important attribute for most to lead through crisis, as it permitted these leaders the ability to work with their direct reports and colleagues as part of a collaborative team. Higher education institutions should work to develop leadership to work collaboratively, as organizational collaboration generates benefits of greater adeptness, productivity, and efficacy (Kanter, 1994; Kezer, 2001; Kezar, 2005;). It is through these alliances and collaborations that the confidence in decisions is produced, and because of these interactions that belief is attained for all participants (Amey et.al., 2007). The identification and the formation of cross-functional teams advances greater collaboration and assists educational institutions with rendering solutions.

Autonomy was observed by the participants to have a strong connection to the inner motivation and support derived from their ability to execute solutions and action (Birnbaum, 1988; Deci & Ryan, 1987; Slemp et al., 2018). This autonomy was affected by the measure of backing that the academic leader believes they have from the institution and their superiors, and that support motivates or impedes the academic leader (Deci & Ryan, 1987). Since autonomy is associated with motivation and how an individual identifies themselves within in their position, it influences leadership style and capacity to provide guidance to others.

Finally, academic administrators' belief in their ability produced positive results, allowing that individual to proceed; their efficacy is a dynamic force in their motivation. Self-efficacy discloses an individual's self-assurance in their ability to exercise influence over one's own motivation, conduct, and is significant to fully comprehend to what degree their actions guide others and themselves (Bandura, 1998). Self-efficacy is a driving force for an individual to act. The impact of personal efficacy on the ability to lead depends on the proficiency for the leader to communicate to the team; that is where the leadership style of the individual becomes pertinent. An academic leader's self-efficacy can be used for self-interest and not that of the group, it is important that higher educational institutions work to increase the commitment of their leaders to the mission of the institution so that they strive to accomplish that which is outlined to achieve.

For within self-efficacy lies the passion and empathy elements identified by the researcher, an added element of compassion. This compassion brought forth by some of these academic leaders created a path for success for both students and staff, and in their

own words created a mirroring of emulation by allowing for these individual administrators to foster and mentor students and staff beyond what was prescribed by the institution. Community colleges are an essential part of the higher educational plan of socioeconomical advancement for all people through training and education. Academic leaders and their institutions not only acknowledge the insufficiencies of those they serve they must embrace and foster pathways for achievement.

The most current research sampled showed, more than 700 senior level leaders in Business, Education and Government. In the Structural frame 90% of these senior level leaders rated themselves a 22 or better with only 10% scoring higher. In the Human Resource frame, surveying these same leaders 90% of these leaders scored 24 or higher and only less than 10% rated themselves under 10. These results are consistent with the findings for this study when comparing to other studies in the structural and human resource frames. Comparatively, these two frames are the most represented of the four frames of leadership defined by Bolman and Deal (2017) and assist the academic leader through autonomy to foster alliances towards solutions.

## **Research Question #2**

The second research question explored the data regarding themes, patterns, and variations of the leadership practices, self-efficacy, and institutional role expectations of a community college academic leader. The multitude of data gathered during the interviews corresponded to the document analysis of the institution. Many of the participants acknowledged understanding of their institutional job expectations, as well as the measurable institutional goals of student success, access, affordability, communication,

community, and diversity. The capacity of these academic leaders exercised multiple frames of thought to develop strategies to solve the challenges and issues they faced. By creating and adapting to growth in the viewpoints of leadership (Eddy & VanDerLinden, 2006), and created a multidimensional model of leadership that provided for flexibility and interpretation based on an individual's experiences, beliefs, and capabilities (Eddy, 2010a). Multi-frame thinking allows academic leaders the ability to prioritize the needs of the institution and the individual together by viewing decisions through different lens (Bolman & Gallos, 2011).

This theme of multi-frame perspective was described by the participants and identified as an important element for creating answers. Identified in the second theme of multi-frame perspective, were distinct characteristics that influenced an academic leader's general ability to formulate solutions. The four-frame leadership model identified by Bolman and Deal (2017) characterized how a leader approaches concerns about organizational problems, development, and transformation. Each frame has underlying conventions that assist in understanding how those operating within these frames define the issue and reach conclusions. When individuals determine to which frame, they belong, they may often discover that they correspond into more than one frame. Consequently, the leader exhibits the characteristics of both frames. Some participants, identified into more than one leadership perspective, which gave them a unique ability to view situations through multiple frames of views thereby providing further context in which to view the issue or question.

When the participants received their leadership orientation frame during the interview, they were asked to share their view of whether they agreed with the way they scored, and whether they felt the top score truly defined their leadership style. All the participants agreed that the way that they were identified by their score on the survey correctly defined them as the leaders they are at this time. Some of the participants observed, that their leadership styles had changed, and they believed that their score adjusted as they advanced in their careers.

Reflecting and accountability are critical parts in the role of academic leader, by seeing different points of views and embracing the multiple perspectives of any issue. Academic leader values those who are participating and achieves a better resolution by seeking input from all, while accounting for its effect on the institution and the community. Successful leaders reframe a decision until they comprehend the situation at hand, thereby allowing for their multiple perspectives to develop an analysis of possible outcomes. Understanding their leadership styles, they can integrate and account for the narrative they used to guide themselves and their team. Multi-frame perspective requires critical thinking to move beyond limited approaches to creative new ones (Bolman & Deal, 2017).

### **Research Question #3**

The last research question investigated how the selected community college academic leaders navigated change to enhance their leadership methods and their capacity to influence during times of change. Once a leader becomes conscious of a

problem within the organization, there exists an opportunity to use multiple frames to integrate new solutions (Bolman & Deal, 2017; Eddy & Amey, 2014; Sypawka, 2008).

This theme of sensemaking was recognized by the participants as required for them to work individually and collaboratively to assist the associates of their community to make sense of organizational change. Academic leaders are unique individuals, each having their own assessments and opinions that they engage to construct meaning. Even experienced administrators can overlook or misinterpret information if they are not informed of its occurrence. When a leader becomes aware of a problem within the organization, there is an opportunity to use substitute frames to encompass new solutions (Schön, 1983). Sensemaking permits leaders to have a better comprehension of the situations and facilitate other leadership activities (Weick, 1995). Sensemaking entails communication of the undetermined, because by defining the unknown one learns about how much one understands of the situation (Weick, 1995).

The participants identified analytic reasoning as a critical piece needed to employ problem-solving and resolution management. Most of the 12 participants self-identified in the leadership survey with the structural framework. As one of their top two frames, they had the capacity to use organizational knowledge including skillsets to frame solutions. Adaptive leadership involves changing behavior in suitable ways as the surroundings evolves. The foundation of adaptive leadership informs that leadership focuses on the process rather than individual capabilities (Heifetz et al., 2004), sensemaking is about changing outlooks, which modifies behaviors and priorities (Kezer, 2018).

The academic leader must use what is within their control to have the ability to guide and effect results. The level of influence that each member of a leadership team demonstrates ties into how influential they are on key resources of an organization. When a leader feels they influence decisions, it affects their sense of efficacy and control. A positive influence results in greater satisfaction (Eddy & Amey, 2014), and thereby greater motivation to continue to contribute to the institution. As the capacity for an organization to respond to change is critical to its success (Eddy, 2010a; Van Wagoner, 2004), its leaders must understand ways to identify the concepts of change and relate this change to the environment they work within for the institution to be successful. When leaders are deliberating changing long established policies and procedures, it is prudent for them to carry out what Bolman and Gallos (2011) detailed as the Three Ps of change: patience, persistence, and process. These three change concepts assist an academic leader well in supporting them to not be disheartened when progress is slow; by permitting members of the team to share their views in the process and allowing for the necessary modifications to develop.

### **Relationship between the Findings to Prior Research**

As discussed in the research question sections, the analysis of the interview data found that alliances exist at every level within an organization and formed as the outcome of strategic partnerships or plans to accomplish a goal. This achievement of objectives and goals by members of an organization is a result of a unification of forces and talents allowing for the power to achieve change (Ancona, 2012; Astin & Astin, 2000; Bergquist & Pawlak, 2008; Bolman & Deal, 2017; Bolman & Gallos, 2011; Bushra et al., 2011;

Dalcher, 2018; Dwyer, 2019; Eckel & Kezar, 2003; Eddy, 2014; Fullan, 2002, 2005, 2011; Holmes & Scull, 2019; Riggs, 2009; Rosser, 2003; Schein, 2017; Sypawka, 2008; Weick, 1995; Wallin, 2012). Alliances perceived by the participants were identified as an important aspect for most, as it assisted these leaders to have the capacity to collaborate and communicate with other members of the institution, thereby permitting them the opportunity of the sharing of solutions. Higher education institutions have been working at professionally developing leadership to work collaboratively, as organizational collaboration produces benefits of greater proficiency, output, and effectiveness (Kanter, 1994; Kezer, 2001; Kezar, 2005; Weick, 1995). These academic leaders can exercise sensemaking to develop approaches to solve the challenges faced, allowing for the institution to adapt and grow (Bolman & Deal, 2017; Bolman & Gallos, 2011; Eddy & VanDerLinden, 2006; Sypawka, 2008), while also allowing the academic dean to listen and receive feedback from faculty and staff. This created multidimensional model of leadership allows academic leaders the ability to weigh the needs of the institution and the individual simultaneously by viewing determinations through different lenses (Bolman & Gallos, 2011). Sensemaking necessitates an interaction with others to determine the parameters of the unknown, and thereby allowing the leader to identify the best course of action to take (Weick, 1995).

It's important to recognize that the associated similarities to prior research (Sypawka, 2008), may be due to the setting for both studies in terms of academic leaders, and community college environment. In addition, both utilized the Bolman and Deal Leadership Orientation Survey (Bolman, n.d.) in conjunction with semi-structured



interviews. It would be interesting for future research to examine other levels of leadership or the administration of a different leadership orientation survey. This research has shown understanding of one's leadership practices assists a leader in rendering decisions aimed at solutions.

Ultimately, this study supports the existing noted in the literature review. The ability for academic leadership to achieve change is strongly associated with alliances, multi-frame perspectives and sensemaking (Bolman & Deal, 2017; Bolman & Gallos, 2011; Eddy & VanDerLinden, 2006; Kezar, 2005; Sypawka, 2008; Weick, 1995). These skills permit for the interpretation of the situation and the ability to communicate it to others. However, as higher education is everchanging, research must continue to keep up with the challenges and advancements for leaders to continue to adapt.

### **Limitation of the Study**

As the research was conducted using only participants that were selected from one two-year multi-campus community college in the Northeast region of the United States, the results might differ if the researcher looked at a different Carnegie Classification institution, or one located in another geographical region of the United States. Each institution is classified differently and has different objectives and outcomes that its leaders need to understand. Therefore, conducting this study may have different outcomes if conducted in a four-year research institution in the Southwest region of the United States. The participants selected were academic deans that ranged in their years served in the position, the experience levels for all may not be comparable, and these differences must be acknowledged when comparing responses and proposed solutions.

Understanding the implications of such a limited sample, the researcher acknowledged the difficulty for the results to be representative of a larger sample, and therefore is only able to be generalized to the community college academic deans directly related to this study (Creswell & Gutterman, 2019).

All the participants were limited to the title of academic deans in this qualitative study, the research findings may only be illustrative of a unique set of perceptions or outcomes from this selective position within the institution. The themes that were identified could be unique to Starfish Community College and the academic leaders that participated. Consequently, these themes may be difficult to expand to other institutions or leaders. Since this study was conducted with a convenience sample, it therefore will only be able to be comprehensive to the community college environment directly related to this study and cannot be stated with confidence to be demonstrative of the landscape (Creswell & Clark, 2017).

The study was limited to 12 participants; the reader should note that only four of the participants came through the ranks from full time faculty positions. The research literature suggested the traditional path to the position of an academic leader has traditionally been through the ranks of faculty, this study supports the recent research suggesting that the path of the academic dean is coming now more from the path of non-faculty (Cleverley-Thompson, 2016; Mohnot & Shaw, 2017; Sypawka, 2008).

### **Implications for Future Research**

This study was performed using academic leaders from a multi-campus community college in the Northeastern region of the United States. Most of the

participants were deans within the area of academic affairs. Future studies should include leaders that are from levels below the dean, such as department and program chairs, or leaders from the student affairs leadership. The inclusion of other academic leaders and those from the student affairs area would allow the research to increase in its ability to identify characteristics or leadership attributes (Bolman & Deal, 2017) necessary to lead an institution during times of change, thus providing an opportunity for senior higher educational leaders to develop policies and practices to pursue.

Future research could also be conducted on community colleges academic leadership regionally or nationally to see if the results are similar or different gathered in this study. By identifying if other community colleges receive different results than the results in this study, where the leadership practices of the academic leaders were identified into other frames, expanded research can then be done to identify if this shift was created by perhaps demographic differences.

Finally, further studies could also include four-year colleges and/or universities, as this study was conducted at a community college. Academic leadership at a four-year institution has different reporting structures and job expectations than those in a community college. A four-year institution may have various organizational structures, less governmental oversight, and different financial obligations and requirements.

### **Implications for Future Practice**

The results from this study contribute to the existing literature as to what an academic leader revealed about their leadership practices, self-efficacy, and institutional role expectations, and their ability to lead change. Higher educational institutions,

educational leaders, and leadership preparation programs may utilize the findings from this study to provide a basis to guide and inform leadership decision-making practices and to create programs for professional development.

The findings from this study brought to light the first theme of alliances, noted as necessary for the academic dean to perform and be able to lead through change. The alliances formed by these leaders allowed for collaboration and teamwork to occur. This collaboration and teamwork were joined by the self-identified autonomy and self-efficacy, of the academic leader and created a synergy for successful decision outcomes. Additionally, teamwork was highlighted, as well as ~~the characteristics of~~ passion and empathy. Identification of these attributes will allow for the academic leader to support and develop faculty and ultimately assisted students to reach their goals.

The findings from this study also revealed the second theme of multi-frame perspectives. Findings uncovered academic leaders operate from their own distinctive Bolman and Deal Leadership Orientation (Bolman, n.d.) frame, yet detected in the data was a multi-frame perspective overarching throughout. The ability for an academic leader to consider decisions through their identified leadership frames was explained by those interviewed as successful and valued when faced with the need to contribute to a solution. Using multiple perspectives to reflect and develop provided an academic leader various path to gather information, until they comprehend the situation ~~at hand~~ then decide on a course of action. Development of these leadership frames for academic leaders, will enhance analysis of possible outcomes and determinization of the best course of action to follow.

Lastly, the findings from this study revealed a third theme that focused on sensemaking. There was a consensus of the participants that sensemaking provides the leader with reason and ability to comprehend the issue, allowing for consideration of alternatives and opportunity to reframe the problem. For members of the institution, as well as the external community, sensemaking offers a means for academic administrators to problem solve collaboratively to create solutions (Bolman & Deal, 2017; Bolman & Gallos, 2011; Eddy & VanDerLinden, 2006; Kezar, 2005; Sypawka, 2008; Weick, 1995). How the leader understands the problem, through their leadership frame, influences the course of action not only for themselves, but it also affects all of those they lead and those that rely on them to outline the plan. This collaborative style of problem-solving may assist higher educational institutions and their leaders in creating change.

## **Conclusion**

Ancona et al. (2007) explained that no leader is perfect and further explained that a good leader does not attempt to be perfect, they concentrate on improving their strengths and find others who can make up for their limitations. A model of distributed leadership integrated four capabilities necessary: sensemaking, relating, visioning, and inventing (Ancona et al., 2007), and identified that these capabilities covered the intellectual and the interpersonal. Sensemaking and relating can be considered the enabling capabilities of leadership that set the conditions to motivate and sustain change. Where visioning and inventing are creative and action oriented, the capabilities that produce the focus and energy needed to make change happen (Ancona et al., 2007).

After interviewing and interpreting the narratives of the academic deans in the study, the researcher identified several conclusions: (a) alliances are the pathway for collaboration and communication with colleagues and the sharing of solutions (b) multi-frame perspectives allow academic leaders the capacity to concentrate on the needs of the institution and the individual (Bolman & Deal, 2017; Bolman & Gallos, 2011) (c) sensemaking is about changing outlooks, which in turn modifies behaviors and priorities (Kezer, 2018). Factors that supplement and involve sensemaking are analytic reasoning, communication, and adaptability. These components were noted by many interviewed as having a significant influence in the integration of the three themes of the study.

As mid-level leaders, deans are at the center of the recurrent push for change. Their leadership in pursuit of change is the foundation of a successful university. While they do not pursue transformation on their own, the academic dean plays a central role in creating the environment in which change will take place (Usunier & Squires, 2019). For it is in this change that the advancement of the institution and success will be found.

### **Final Thoughts**

Completing the research as the foundation of this dissertation and my analysis of the results has provided me the opportunity to examine the research findings in the context of organizational leadership. The knowledge gained from this study, aligned with earlier research, adds to the body of the research that confirms the framework of Bolman and Deal (2017). The emergence of themes and subthemes that evolved from this study allowed me as a practitioner in the field, to reflect on the importance of how these findings can guide academic leadership at higher education institutions.

The results of the scores from the Bolman and Deal leadership orientation surveys (Bolman, n.d.) were evenly dispersed for most of the participants. Therefore, I began to consider that the multifaceted dimension of an academic leader's perspective perhaps creates its own unique value to the institution, the team, and the leader. As academic leaders embrace the changing environment within higher education, more specifically the community college, higher education leadership may choose to use this study to pursue the viability and value of these distinctive perspectives within the community college landscape.

There were three significant findings identified from my research. First, the need to explore and increase the diversity of academic leaders, as only two of my participants identified as Hispanic, and only three of them identified as male. The diversity of these academic leaders continues to lag considering the demographic makeup of the student body enrolled at the institution. As the data showed, the academic deans that identified as Hispanic were better able to connect and communicate with the students within this demographic category and the surrounding communities where the institution was located. Also noted in my results were that these Hispanic academic deans strived to become mentors to the students, as they felt a connection to the student in understanding where they had come from. Second, the traditional pathway to the position of academic dean has usually been one founded in the faculty path. My study found that only four of the 12 participants were instructional full-time faculty prior to their current deanship role. Three of these four demonstrated high scores of human resources and symbolic in their Bolman and Deal survey (Bolman, n.d.). These results led me to reflect that perhaps it

was better when institutions are faced with change that its leaders can analyze situations strategically, which is a skill that is distinctive to those who identify strongly in the Bolman and Deal (2017) structural frame. Third, in reviewing the results of the Bolman (n.d.) survey, all the participants had results spanning over the four frames, which demonstrates that leaders may have a multi-frame perspective regarding the way they render decisions and lead others. The findings for the frames were well distributed and no participant within my study scored 60 entirely in one frame. This constancy in the spread between the frames for these leaders is consistent with other studies and the strengths of each participant offsets each other within this community college. These identified differences and similarities, and the results identified, assist academic leaders to move institutions forward successfully.

My study demonstrates the importance for an academic leader to work collaboratively within their institutions to be able to affect change to assist both the institution and the student. As the theme of alliances showed, these alliances increased the collaboration of the participants of the study, to guide their practices, professional development, and their efficacy. My research may also inform community college upper-level administrators as a guide to greater understand the scope of how leadership within academic affairs can strengthen and identify opportunities for their leaders. As the future of academic leadership has higher educational institutions on a course towards *shared leadership*, which is defined as multiple individuals influencing one another at varying levels (Holcombe et al., 2021), this emergence of shared and collective leadership emulates the academic views of Bolman & Gallos, (2011), and allows for future



visioning of the capacity of change. My research conducted during this unprecedented time in higher education, will add to the literature within the context of community colleges as it relates to identify how academic leaders identify their self-efficacy, leadership practices and role expectations and guide academic leaders during times of change.

## APPENDIX A: PERMISSION TO USE RESEARCH INSTRUMENT

---

**From:** [lee@bolman.com](mailto:lee@bolman.com) <[lee@bolman.com](mailto:lee@bolman.com)>

**Sent:** Sunday, September 20, 2020 11:16 PM

**To:** Elizabeth K. Spagnola <[elizabeth.spagnola17@my.stjohns.edu](mailto:elizabeth.spagnola17@my.stjohns.edu)>

**Subject:** RE: Requesting permission to use a version of Leadership Orientations Instrument

\* External Email \*

Dear Ms. Spagnola,

I'm happy to grant permission to use the Leadership Orientations Survey in your doctoral work.

Good luck with your research, and I'll look forward to learning what you find.

Best wishes.

Lee Bolman  
Lee G. Bolman, Ph.D.  
Professor and Marion Bloch/Missouri Chair in Leadership, Emeritus  
Bloch School of Management  
University of Missouri-Kansas City

Tel: (617) 487-8859

-----Original Message-----

From: Elizabeth K. Spagnola <[elizabeth.spagnola17@my.stjohns.edu](mailto:elizabeth.spagnola17@my.stjohns.edu)>

Sent: Sunday, September 20, 2020 9:51 PM

To: [lee@leebolman.com](mailto:lee@leebolman.com)

Subject: Requesting permission to use a version of Leadership Orientations Instrument

Dr. Bolman

My name is Elizabeth Spagnola, I am a doctoral student at St. John's University, Jamaica, NY and I am conducting research into leadership practices of higher educational leaders. I am writing to you in hopes for permission to use the Bolman & Deal Leadership Orientations Instrument for my dissertation. The topic of the study explores leadership practices, Self-Efficacy of community college academic leaders I would be happy to share the results of this dissertation along with the research data upon request. I have attached a pdf of the leadership orientation document that I wish to

use.

Thanks in advance for your consideration, I look forward to your reply.

Sincerely

Elizabeth K. Spagnola

This email may contain proprietary, confidential and/or privileged material for the sole use of the intended recipient(s). Any review, use, distribution or disclosure by others is strictly prohibited. If you are not the intended recipient (or authorized to receive for the recipient), please contact the sender by reply email and delete all copies of this message.

**CAUTION - External email. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.**

This email may contain proprietary, confidential and/or privileged material for the sole use of the intended recipient(s). Any review, use, distribution or disclosure by others is strictly prohibited. If you are not the intended recipient (or authorized to receive for the recipient), please contact the sender by reply email and delete all copies of this message.

## APPENDIX B: LEADERSHIP ORIENTATION SURVEY

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

### LEADERSHIP ORIENTATIONS

This questionnaire asks you to describe yourself as you currently see your leadership orientation. For each item, give the number "4" to the phrase that best describes you, "3" to the item that is next best, and on down to "1" for the item that is least like you.

1. My strongest skills are: \_\_\_\_\_ a. Analytic skills \_\_\_\_\_ b. Interpersonal skills  
\_\_\_\_\_ c. Political skills \_\_\_\_\_ d. Flair for drama

2. The best way to describe me is: \_\_\_\_\_ a. Technical expert  
\_\_\_\_\_ b. Good listener  
\_\_\_\_\_ c. Skilled negotiator  
\_\_\_\_\_ d. Inspirational leader

3. What has helped me the most to be successful is my ability to: \_\_\_\_\_ a. Make  
good decisions  
\_\_\_\_\_ b. Coach and develop people  
\_\_\_\_\_ c. Build strong alliances and a power base  
\_\_\_\_\_ d. Inspire and excite others

4. What people are most likely to notice about me is my:  
\_\_\_\_\_ a. Attention to detail  
\_\_\_\_\_ b. Concern for people  
\_\_\_\_\_ c. Ability to succeed, in the face of conflict and opposition \_\_\_\_\_ d. Charisma.

5. My most important leadership trait is: \_\_\_\_\_ a. Clear, logical thinking  
\_\_\_\_\_ b. Caring and support for others \_\_\_\_\_ c. Toughness and aggressiveness \_\_\_\_\_ d.  
Imagination and creativity

6. I am best described as: \_\_\_\_\_ a. An analyst \_\_\_\_\_ b. A humanist \_\_\_\_\_ c. A  
politician \_\_\_\_\_ d. A visionary

\_\_\_\_ST \_\_\_\_HR \_\_\_\_PL \_\_\_\_SY \_\_\_\_Total

---

© 1988, Lee G. Bolman and Terrence E. Deal. All rights reserved. This survey is based on ideas in Bolman and Deal's Reframing Organizations: Artistry, Choice, and Leadership (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1991, 1997, 2003).

Your Leadership Orientation Score Compute your scores as follows:

1a + 2a + 3a + 4a + 5a + 6a = \_\_\_\_ Structural Leadership

1b + 2b + 3b + 4b + 5b + 6b = \_\_\_\_ Human Resource Leadership

1c + 2c + 3c + 4c + 5c + 6c = \_\_\_\_ Political Leadership

1d + 2d + 3d + 4d + 5d + 6d = \_\_\_\_ Symbolic Leadership

### Interpreting Scores

1. **Structural leaders** emphasize rationality, analysis, logic, facts, and data. They are likely to believe strongly in the importance of clear structure and well-developed management systems. A good leader is someone who thinks clearly, makes the right decisions, has good analytic skills, and can design structures and systems that get the job done.

2. **Human resource leaders** emphasize the importance of people. They endorse the view that the central task of management is to develop a good fit between people and organizations. They believe in the importance of coaching, participation, motivation, teamwork, and good interpersonal relations. A good leader is a facilitator and participative manager who supports and empowers others.

3. **Political leaders** believe that managers and leaders live in a world of conflict and scarce resources. The central task of management is to mobilize the resources needed to advocate and fight for the unit's or the organization's goals and objectives. Political leaders emphasize the importance of building a power base: allies, networks, coalitions. A good leader is an advocate and negotiator who understands politics and is comfortable with conflict.

4. **Symbolic leaders** believe that the essential task of management is to provide vision and inspiration. They rely on personal charisma and a flair for drama to get people excited and committed to the organizational mission. A good leader is a prophet and visionary, who uses symbols, tells stories, and frames experience in ways that give people hope and meaning.

## **APPENDIX C: SEMI STRUCTURED INTERVIEW PROTOCOL FOR PARTICIPATING SUBJECTS**

This interview protocol was designed to provide a rich and copious description of the following themes:

### **Demographic Information**

#### **1. Gender**

Please mark one answer.

\_\_\_\_\_ Male \_\_\_\_\_ Female \_\_\_\_\_ Other

#### **2. Age**

Please mark one answer.

\_\_\_\_\_ 25-30

\_\_\_\_\_ 31-35

\_\_\_\_\_ 36-40

\_\_\_\_\_ 41-45

\_\_\_\_\_ 46-50

\_\_\_\_\_ 51-55

\_\_\_\_\_ 56-60

\_\_\_\_\_ 61-65

\_\_\_\_\_ Over 65

### 3. Ethnic Origin

Please mark one answer.

- ☐ American Indian
- ☐ Asian or Pacific Islander
- ☐ Black, not of Hispanic origin
- ☐ Hispanic
- ☐ White
- ☐ Other

### 4. Years served as Academic Dean

Please indicate the number of years you have served as an Academic Dean in your career.

- ☐ 0–3
- ☐ 3–5
- ☐ 5–8
- ☐ 8–10
- ☐ 10–12
- ☐ 12–14
- ☐ 14–16
- ☐ 16–18
- ☐ 18+



5. Prior to Deanship, years served as an Administrator.

Please indicate the number of years.

\_\_\_\_\_ 0-3

\_\_\_\_\_ 3-5

\_\_\_\_\_ 5-8

\_\_\_\_\_ 8-10

\_\_\_\_\_ 10-12

\_\_\_\_\_ 12-14

\_\_\_\_\_ 14-16

\_\_\_\_\_ 16-18

\_\_\_\_\_ 18+

6. Please mark all positions previously held.

\_\_\_\_\_ Dean \_\_\_\_\_ Assistant Dean \_\_\_\_\_ Department Chair \_\_\_\_\_ Assistant  
Chair

\_\_\_\_\_ Director \_\_\_\_\_ Faculty \_\_\_\_\_ Adjunct Faculty \_\_\_\_\_ Other, please  
specify

7. Have you held a rank of full-time faculty for this or any previous institution?

a. \_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No

b. If so, how many years?

\_\_\_\_\_ 0-3

\_\_\_\_\_ 3-5

\_\_\_\_\_ 5-8

\_\_\_\_\_ 8-10

\_\_\_\_\_ 10-12

\_\_\_\_\_ 12-14

\_\_\_\_\_ 14-16

\_\_\_\_\_ 16-18

\_\_\_\_\_ 18+

#### 8. Supervision

Please indicate the number of employees you directly supervise.

\_\_\_\_\_ # full-time

\_\_\_\_\_ # part-time

#### 9. Degrees

Please indicate the degrees you have been awarded.

\_\_\_\_\_ Associates \_\_\_\_\_ B.S. \_\_\_\_\_ B.A. \_\_\_\_\_ B.F.A.

\_\_\_\_\_ M. Ed. \_\_\_\_\_ M.S. \_\_\_\_\_ M.B.A. \_\_\_\_\_ M.D.

\_\_\_\_\_ J.D. \_\_\_\_\_ Ph.D. \_\_\_\_\_ Ed. D \_\_\_\_\_ Other, please  
specify \_\_\_\_\_

#### 10. Tell me about yourself.

11. Briefly describe the institution as you know it today.

12. Briefly describe the institution as you knew it prior to March 2020.

Institutional Role Expectations:

13. How would you describe the role of an academic leader?

- a. Is your role a line or direct staff assignment to the President?
- b. What successes have you had in this role before March 2020 and after March 2020 (pre and post).
- c. What difficulties do you face in this role today, verses before March 2020 ( pre-post).
  - 1. Are you aware of any difficulties that your direct reports perhaps faced?
  - 2. Are you aware of any difficulties that students or faculty perhaps faced?

14. How does your job description define or not define the expectations in your current role?

Self-Efficacy:

15. How do the institutional expectations attached to your position influence your ability to lead?

- 1. And is this different during times of change?

16. How do you see your role as an academic leader in your ability to affect change?

- a. How much autonomy do you believe you have in this role? (Pre 2020).
- b. Do you feel that your autonomy has changed after March 2020?
- c. What are your perceptions of your effectiveness in your current role?
- d. Based on what you have told me how does this affect your capacity to lead?

Leadership Practices:

17. Based on your experience, what do you believe are characteristics of effective leadership at a community college?
18. In the leadership orientation survey, you recently completed for this research, your orientation frame was identified as \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a. Structural: Do you feel that this frame adequately describes your style as a leader? Yes- Has this leadership frame assisted or hindered you in the institutional role expectations for your position? No- Please explain.
  - b. Human Resources: Do you feel that this frame adequately describes your style as a leader? Yes- Has this leadership frame assisted or hindered you in the institutional role expectations for position? No- Please explain.
  - c. Political: Do you feel that this frame adequately describes your style as a leader? Yes- Has this leadership frame assisted or hindered you in the institutional role expectations for position? No- Please explain.
  - d. Symbolic: Do you feel that this frame adequately describes your style as a leader? Yes- Has this leadership frame assisted or hindered you in the institutional role expectations for position? No- Please explain.
19. Based on your experience, what do you see as the major challenges to effective leadership during times of change at a community college?
  - a. Do you feel that your view has changed since March 2020?  
 Yes- Could you provide me with further details of how?  
 No- Could you explain to me why?
20. Based on your role as an academic leader have you seen any major positive outcomes brought about during times of change, that can inform leadership at a community college?
21. Finally, what do you see as the top three important leadership traits necessary to lead a community college during times of change?

## APPENDIX D: SJU IRB APPROVAL



Federal Wide Assurance: FWA00009066

Feb 15, 2021 2:21:01 PM EST

PI: Elizabeth Spagnola

CO-PI: Anthony Annunziato

Ed Admin & Instruc Leadership

Re: Expedited Review - Initial - **IRB-FY2021-257** *LEADERSHIP PRACTICES, SELF-EFFICACY, AND ROLE EXPECTATIONS OF COMMUNITY COLLEGE ACADEMIC LEADERS DURING CHANGE*

Dear Elizabeth Spagnola:

The St John's University Institutional Review Board has rendered the decision below for *LEADERSHIP PRACTICES, SELF-EFFICACY, AND ROLE EXPECTATIONS OF COMMUNITY COLLEGE ACADEMIC LEADERS DURING CHANGE*. The approval is effective from February 15, 2021 through February 14, 2022

Decision: Approved

PLEASE NOTE: If you have collected any data prior to this approval date, the data must be discarded.

Selected Category: 7. Research on individual or group characteristics or behavior (including, but not limited to, research on perception, cognition, motivation, identity, language, communication, cultural beliefs or practices, and social behavior) or research employing survey, interview, oral history, focus group, program evaluation, human factors evaluation, or quality assurance methodologies.

Sincerely,

Raymond DiGiuseppe, PhD, ABPP

Chair, Institutional Review Board

Professor of Psychology

Marie Nitopi, Ed.D.

IRB Coordinator

This email may contain proprietary, confidential and/or privileged material for the sole use of the intended recipient(s). Any review, use, distribution or disclosure by others is strictly prohibited. If you are not the intended recipient (or authorized to receive for the recipient), please contact the sender by reply email and delete all copies of this message.

## APPENDIX E: SJU IRB RENEWAL APPROVAL



Federal Wide Assurance: FWA00009066

Jan 20, 2022 3:33:27 PM EST

PI: Elizabeth Spagnola

Dept: Ed Admin & Instruc Leadership

Re: Renewal - IRB-FY2021-257 *LEADERSHIP PRACTICES, SELF-EFFICACY, AND ROLE EXPECTATIONS OF COMMUNITY COLLEGE ACADEMIC LEADERS DURING CHANGE*

Dear Elizabeth Spagnola:

The St John's University Institutional Review Board has rendered the decision below for *LEADERSHIP PRACTICES, SELF-EFFICACY, AND ROLE EXPECTATIONS OF COMMUNITY COLLEGE ACADEMIC LEADERS DURING CHANGE*.

The study is approved through January 19, 2023.

Decision: Approved

Sincerely,

Raymond DiGiuseppe, PhD, ABPP

Chair, Institutional Review Board

Professor of Psychology

Marie Nitopi, Ed.D.

IRB Coordinator This email may contain proprietary, confidential and/or privileged material for the sole use of the intended recipient(s). Any review, use, distribution or disclosure by others is strictly prohibited. If you are not the intended recipient (or authorized to receive for the recipient), please contact the sender by reply email and delete all copies of this message.



## APPENDIX F: SCCC IRB APPROVAL



IORG 0006694

2/18/2021

To: Elizabeth Spagnola  
Associate Dean of Academic Affairs  
Suffolk County Community College  
spagnoe@sunysuffolk.edu

From: Courtney Brewer, Co-chair  
Institutional Review Board  
Suffolk County Community College  
brewerc@sunysuffolk.edu

Re: Leadership Practices, Self-Efficacy, and Role Expectations of Community College Academic Leaders During Change

Dear Dean Spagnola,

After a review of your protocol, it was the decision of the Board that the study meets the federally designated criteria for an IRB exemption under category 45 CFR 46.101(b)(3). Your proposal has been granted authorization. Please note the following information:

- IRB# 21-002
- Expiration Date: 2/18/2022

Please note that changes to the protocol must be reported to the IRB immediately and that such changes may warrant a new review. An adverse event is any instance which places participants at risk or at a level or degree of potential harm outside of those indicated within the initial protocol. Should such an event occur, the College IRB must be notified within 48 hours of the event. This information will be forwarded to the Vice President for Planning and Institutional Effectiveness as well as to the Office for Human Research Protection.

Upon receipt of the adverse event report, the co-chairs of the IRB, in consultation with other members and administrators as appropriate, will require immediate suspension of the activity prior to review by the full membership.

Should you have any questions, feel free to contact either myself or my co-chairs, Dr. Helen Wittman and Rachael Millings.

Sincerely,

Dr. Courtney Brewer  
Associate Professor  
Co-chair, Institutional Review Board  
brewerc@sunysuffolk.edu 631-451-4986

Dr. Helen Wittmann  
Assistant to the Vice President  
Co-chair, Institutional Review Board  
wittmah@sunysuffolk.edu 631-451-4828

Rachael Millings  
Assistant Professor  
Co-chair, Institutional Review Board  
millinr@sunysuffolk.edu 631-548-3582

## REFERENCES

- American Association of Community College. (2018). *Competencies for community college leaders*. [https://www.aacc.nche.edu/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/AACC-2018-Competencies\\_111618\\_5.1.pdf](https://www.aacc.nche.edu/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/AACC-2018-Competencies_111618_5.1.pdf)
- American Association of Community Colleges. (2016). *Competencies for community college leaders*. <http://www.aacc.nche.edu/Resources/competencies/Pages/partc.aspx>
- Amey, M. J., Eddy, P. L., & Ozaki, C. C. (2007). Demands for partnership and collaboration in higher education: A model. *New Directions for Community Colleges*, 2007(139), 5–14. <https://doi.org/10.1002/cc.288>
- Amey, M. J., Garza Mitchell, R. L., Rosales, J., & Giardello, K. J. (2020). Reconceptualizing midlevel leadership. *New Directions for Community Colleges*, 2020(191), 127–132. <https://doi.org/10.1002/cc.20416>
- Amey, M. J., Vanderlinden, K. E., & Brown, D. F. (2002). Perspectives on community college leadership: Twenty years in the making. *Community College Journal of Research and Practice*, 26(7–8), 573–589. <https://doi.org/10.1080/106689202760181805>
- Anaconda, D. (2011). Framing and acting in the unknown. In S. Snook, N. Nohria, & R. Khurana (Eds.), *The handbook for teaching leadership*. Semantic Scholar. <https://www.semanticscholar.org/paper/The-Handbook-for-Teaching->

Leadership%3A-Knowing%2C-and-Snook-

Nohria/5ca3ac7caa302b93f41ebbbaae9f0f46c3555484

Anaconda, D., Malone, T., Orlikowski, W., & Senge, P. (2007). In praise of the incomplete leader. *Harvard Business Review*, 85(2), 92–100.  
<https://hbr.org/2007/02/in-praise-of-the-incomplete-leader>

Astin, A., & Astin, H. (2000). *Leadership reconsidered: Engaging higher education in social change*. W.K. Kellogg Foundation.  
<https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED444437.pdf>

Astin, A. W., & Oseguera, L. (2004). The declining “equity” of American higher education. *The Review of Higher Education*, 27(3), 321–341.  
<https://doi.org/10.1353/rhe.2004.0001>

Austin, A. E. (1984). The work experience of university and college administrators. *Administrator's Update*, 8. <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED259690.pdf>

Bandura, A. (1998). *Self-efficacy: The exercise of control*. W.H. Freeman.

Bergquist, W. H., Pawlak, K., & Bergquist, W. H. (2008). *Engaging the six cultures of the academy: Revised and expanded edition of the four cultures of the academy* (2nd ed). Jossey-Bass.

Birnbaum, R. (1988). *How colleges work: The cybernetics of academic organization & leadership*. Jossey-Bass.

Bogdan, R., & Biklen, S. K. (2007). *Qualitative research for education: An introduction to theories and methods* (5th ed). Pearson A & B.

Bolman, L. (n.d.). Frames quick self-rating scale.

[http://www.leebolman.com/frames\\_selfrating\\_scale.htm](http://www.leebolman.com/frames_selfrating_scale.htm).

Bolman, L. G., & Deal, T. E. (2015). Think or sink. *Leader to Leader*, 2015(76), 35–40.

<https://doi.org/10.1002/ltl.20176>

Bolman, L. G., & Deal, T. E. (2017). *Reframing organizations: Artistry, choice, and leadership*.

<https://www.vlebooks.com/vleweb/product/openreader?id=none&isbn=9781119756859>

Bolman, L. G., & Deal, T. E. (2020). *Bolman and Deal's Leadership Orientation Survey*.

[http://www.leebolman.com/frames\\_selfrating\\_scale.htm](http://www.leebolman.com/frames_selfrating_scale.htm)

Bolman, L. G., & Gallos, J. V. (2011). *Reframing academic leadership* (1st ed). Jossey-Bass.

Borden, M. (2000). *Leadership orientations of area campus administrators in Florida's state university and community college systems: A frame analysis* [Doctoral dissertation]. Order No. 9990629. Proquest Dissertations and Theses.

[www.proquest.com](http://www.proquest.com)

Bowker, L. (1981). The academic dean. *Administrator's Update*, 3(2), n2.

<https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED216652.pdf>

Bragg, D. D. (2000). Preparing community college deans to lead change. *New Directions for Community Colleges*, 2000(109), 75–85. <https://doi.org/10.1002/cc.10909>

Breneman, D. W., & Nelson, S. C. (1981). *Financing community colleges: An economic perspective*. Brookings Institution.

- Brick, M. (1964). *Forum and focus for the junior college movement: The American Association of Junior Colleges*. Bureau of Publications, Teachers College.
- Bright, D., & Richards, M. (2001). *The academic deanship: Individual careers and Institutional roles*. Jossey-Bass.
- Bushra, F., Usman, A., & Naveed, A. (2011). Effect of transformational leadership on employees' job satisfaction and organizational commitment in banking sector of Lahore. *International Journal of Business and Social Science*, 2(18), 261–262.  
<https://www.semanticscholar.org/paper/Effect-of-Transformational-Leadership-on-Employees%27-Bushra-Usman/a7a443f864aaba3c3cf8a5ed4084531a4f4a2188>
- Chitpin, S. (2021). Making sense of conflict: A case study for educational leaders. *International Journal of Educational Management*, 35(7), 1445–1457.  
<https://doi.org/10.1108/IJEM-04-2021-0131>
- Cleverley-Thompson, S. (2016). The role of academic deans as entrepreneurial leaders in higher education institutions. *Innovative Higher Education*, 41(1), 75–85.  
<https://doi.org/10.1007/s10755-015-9339-2>
- Cohen, A. M., Brawer, F. B., & Lombardi, F. b. (2003). *The American community college*. John Wiley & Sons.
- Creswell, J. W. (2012). *Educational research: Planning, conducting, and evaluating quantitative and qualitative research* (4th ed). Pearson.
- Creswell, J. W., & Creswell, J. D. (2017). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches* (5th ed). SAGE.

- Creswell, J. W., & Creswell, J. W. (2013). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches* (3rd ed). SAGE Publications.
- Creswell, J. W., & Gutterman, T. (2019). *Educational research: Planning, conducting, and evaluating quantitative and qualitative research* (6th ed). Pearson.
- Creswell, J. W., & Poth, C. N. (2017). *Qualitative inquiry & research design: Choosing among five approaches* (4th ed). SAGE.
- Cross, K. P. (1981). Community colleges on the plateau. *The Journal of Higher Education*, 52(2), 113. <https://doi.org/10.2307/1981085>
- Dalcher, D. (2018). The wisdom of teams revisited: Teamwork, teaming and working for the common good. *PM World Journal*, 7(9), 1–13. <http://pmworldlibrary.net>
- de Boer, H., & Goedegebuure, L. (2009). The changing nature of the academic deanship. *Leadership*, 5(3), 347–364. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1742715009337765>
- Deci, E. L., & Ryan, R. M. (1987). The support of autonomy and the control of behavior. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 53(6), 1024–1037. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.53.6.1024>
- Deegan, W. L., & Tillery, D. (1986). Narrowing the gap between theory and practice: Proposals for a fifth generations of community colleges. *The Review of Higher Education*, 10(2), 183–192. <https://doi.org/10.1353/rhe.1986.0007>
- Dill, W. (1980). The deanship: An unstable craft. In D. Griffiths & D. McCarthy (Eds.), *The dilemma of deanship* (pp. 261–284). <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED184472>
- Dougherty, K. J., & Bakia, M. F. (1999). *The new economic development role of the community college*. Community College Research Center.

<https://ccrc.tc.columbia.edu/media/k2/attachments/economic-dvpt-role-community-colleges.pdf>

Dougherty, K. J., & Reddy, V. (2011). *The impacts of state performance funding systems on higher education institutions: Research literature review and policy recommendations*. Community College Research Center.

<https://ccrc.tc.columbia.edu/media/k2/attachments/impacts-state-funding-higher-education.pdf>

Dwyer, L. P. (2019). Leadership self-efficacy: Review and leader development implications. *Journal of Management Development*, 38(8), 637–650.

<https://doi.org/10.1108/JMD-03-2019-0073>

Eckel, P. D., & Kezar, A. (2003). Key strategies for making new institutional sense: Ingredients to higher education transformation. *Higher Education Policy*, 16(1), 39–53. <https://doi.org/10.1057/palgrave.hep.8300001>

Eddy, P. L. (2003). Sensemaking on campus: How community college presidents frame change. *Community College Journal of Research and Practice*, 27(6), 453–471. <https://doi.org/10.1080/713838185>

Eddy, P. L. (2010a). *Community college leadership: A multidimensional model for leading change*. Stylus.

Eddy, P. L. (2010b). Leaders as linchpins for framing meaning. *Community College Review*, 37(4), 313–332. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0091552110362744>

Eddy, P. L., & Amey, M. J. (2014). *Creating strategic partnerships: A guide for educational institutions and their partners* (1st Ed). Stylus Publishing.



- Eddy, P. L., & VanDerLinden, K. E. (2006). Emerging definitions of leadership in higher education: New visions of leadership or same old “hero” leader? *Community College Review*, 34(1), 5–26. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0091552106289703>
- Edmondson, A. C. (2012). *Teaming: How organizations learn, innovate, and compete in the knowledge economy*. Jossey-Bass.
- Erwin, J. S. (2000). The dean as chief academic officer. *New Directions for Community Colleges*, 2000(109), 9–17. <https://doi.org/10.1002/cc.10902>
- Fernandez, A. A., & Shaw, G. P. (2020). Academic leadership in a time of crisis: The Coronavirus and COVID-19. *Journal of Leadership Studies*, 14(1), 39–45. <https://doi.org/10.1002/jls.21684>
- Findlen, G. L. (2000). Aspects of difficult decisions. *New Directions for Community Colleges*, 2000(109), 33–39. <https://doi.org/10.1002/cc.10905>
- Fisher, L. A. (1988). State legislatures and the autonomy of colleges and universities: A comparative study of legislation in four states, 1900–1979. *The Journal of Higher Education*, 59(2), 133–162. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00221546.1988.11778319>
- Forthun, G., & Freeman, S. (2017). Community college leadership preparation programs: A review of the literature. *Community College Enterprise*, 23(1), 69–81. <https://home.schoolcraft.edu/cce/23.1.69-81.pdf>
- Fullan, M. (2002). The change leader. *Educational Leadership*, 59(8), 16. <https://search-ebscohost-com.jerome.stjohns.edu/login.aspx?direct=true &db=tfh&AN=6675189 &site=ehost-live>
- Fullan, M. (2005). *Leadership & sustainability: System thinkers in action*. Corwin Press.

- Fullan, M. (2011). *Change leader: Learning to do what matters most*. Jossey-Bass/Wiley.
- Gmelch, W. (2013). The development of campus academic leaders. *International Journal of Leadership and Change*, 1(1), 7.  
<https://digitalcommons.wku.edu/ijlc/vol1/iss1/7/>
- Grubbs, S. J. (2020). The American community college: History, policies and issues. *Journal of Educational Administration and History*, 52(2), 193–210.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/00220620.2019.1681385>
- Hays, D. G., & Singh, A. A. (2012). *Qualitative inquiry in clinical and educational settings*. Guilford Press.
- Heifetz, R. A. (1994). *Leadership without easy answers*. Belknap Press of Harvard University Press.
- Heifetz, R., Kania, John V., & Kramer, Mark R. (2004). Leading boldly. *Stanford Social Innovation Review*, 2, 2031. <https://doi.org/10.48558/T9XW-N926>
- Heifetz, R., & Linksy, M. (2002). A survival guide for leaders. *Harvard Business Review*, 80(6), 65–74. <https://digitalcommons.wku.edu/ijlc/vol1/iss1/7/>
- Holcombe, E., Kezar, A. J., Elrod, S. L., & Ramaley, J. A. (Eds.). (2021). *Shared leadership in higher education: A framework and models for responding to a changing world*. Stylus Publishing, LLC.
- Holmes, W. T., & Scull, W. R. (2019). Reframing organizations through leadership communications: The four-frames of leadership viewed through motivating language: *Development and Learning in Organizations: An International Journal*, 33(5), 16–19. <https://doi.org/10.1108/DLO-09-2018-0107>

- Ibeawuchi, N., Nwagbara, U., Alhassan, Y., & Brown, C. (2021). Leading change in difficult times: The role of effective leadership in confronting educational challenges of Coronavirus Pandemic. *Economic Insights – Trends and Challenges*, 2021(1), 11–20. <https://doi.org/10.51865/EITC.2021.01.02>
- Kanter, R. (1994, August). Collaborative advantage: The art of alliances. *Harvard Business Review*, 72(4). <https://hbr.org/1994/07/collaborative-advantage-the-art-of-alliances>
- Katzenbach, J. R., & Smith, D. K. (1992). *The wisdom of teams: Creating the high-performance organization*. Harper Business.
- Keim, M. C., & Murray, J. P. (2008). Chief academic officers' demographics and educational backgrounds. *Community College Review*, 36(2), 116–132. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0091552108324657>
- Kezar, A. (2001). *Understanding and facilitating organization change in the 21st century: Recent research and conceptualization* [ASHE-ERIC Higher Education Report]. <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED457711>
- Kezar, A. (2005). Redesigning for collaboration within higher education institutions: An exploration into the developmental process. *Research in Higher Education*, 46(7), 831–860. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11162-004-6227-5>
- Kezar, A., & Eckel, P. (2002a). Examining the institutional transformation process: The importance of sensemaking, interrelated strategies, and balance. *Research in Higher Education*, 43(3), 295–328. <https://doi.org/10.1023/A:1014889001242>

- Kezar, A., & Eckel, P. (2002b). The effect of institutional culture on change strategies in higher education: Universal principles or culturally responsive concepts? *The Journal of Higher Education*, 73(4), 435–460.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/00221546.2002.11777159>
- Kezar, A. J. (2018). *How colleges change: Understanding, leading, and enacting change* (2nd ed). Routledge.
- Kouzes, J. M., & Posner, B. Z. (2012). *The leadership challenge: How to make extraordinary things happen in organizations* (5th edition). John Wiley & Sons, Inc.
- Krueger, R. A., & Casey, M. A. (2015). *Focus groups: A practical guide for applied research* (5th ed). SAGE.
- Levin, J. S., & Kater, S. (Eds.). (2018). *Understanding community colleges* (2nd ed). Routledge.
- Maitlis, S. (2005). The social processes of organizational sensemaking. *Academy of Management Journal*, 48(1), 21–49. <https://doi.org/10.5465/amj.2005.15993111>
- Mann Gagliardi, J. (2006). *Temperament types and perceived leadership styles of North Carolina community college Chief Academic Officers* [Doctoral dissertation]. Order No. 3209568. Proquest Dissertations and Theses. [www.proquest.com](http://www.proquest.com)
- Manning, J. (2017). In Vivo Coding. In J. Matthes, C. S. Davis, & R. F. Potter (Eds.), *The International Encyclopedia of Communication Research Methods* (1st ed., pp. 1–2). Wiley. <https://doi.org/10.1002/9781118901731.iecrm0270>

- Mckenney, C., & Cejda, B. (2000). Profiling chief academic officers in public community colleges. *Community College Journal of Research and Practice*, 24(9), 745–758. <https://doi.org/10.1080/106689200750034504>
- Mills, G. E., & Gay, L. R. (2016). *Educational research: Competencies for analysis and applications*. Pearson.
- Mitchell, R. L., & Eddy, P. L. (2008). In the middle: Career pathways of midlevel community college leaders. *Community College Journal of Research and Practice*, 32(10), 793–811. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10668920802325739>
- Mohnot, H., & Shaw, T. (2017). The study of academic leadership preparedness and leadership style in higher education. *International Journal of Education and Management Studies*, 7(3), 408–416. <https://www.semanticscholar.org/paper/The-Study-of-Academic-Leadership-Preparedness-and-Mohnot-Shaw/1a8b743f6c5ef44487fef12500effdf22e1dd7c2>
- Montez, J. M., Wolverton, M., & Gmelch, W. H. (2003). The roles and challenges of deans. *The Review of Higher Education*, 26(2), 241–266. <https://doi.org/10.1353/rhe.2002.0034>
- Moon, H., Mariadoss, B. J., & Johnson, J. L. (2019). Collaboration with higher education institutions for successful firm innovation. *Journal of Business Research*, 99, 534–541. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2017.09.033>
- Moore, K., Twombly, S., & Martornana, S. (1985). *Today's academic leaders: A national study of administrators in two- year colleges*. Center for the Study of Higher Education. <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED264922.pdf>

- Mountjoy, J. (2019). Community colleges and upward mobility. *Mountjoy, J. (2019). Community Colleges and Upward Mobility. Labor: Human Capital EJournal.*  
<https://www.semanticscholar.org/paper/Community-Colleges-and-Upward-Mobility-Mountjoy/eb1ffc66e2cd6cef325f9d9afb9d66537d75ddae>
- Nevarez, C., & Wood, J. L. (2010). *Community college leadership and administration: Theory, practice, and change*. Peter Lang.
- Nicolaides, A., & McCallum, D. C. (2013). Inquiry in action for leadership in turbulent times: Exploring the connections between transformative learning and adaptive leadership. *Journal of Transformative Education, 11*(4), 246–260.  
<https://doi.org/10.1177/1541344614540333>
- Parrish, D. R. (2015). The relevance of emotional intelligence for leadership in a higher education context. *Studies in Higher Education, 40*(5), 821–837.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/03075079.2013.842225>
- Pedersen, R. (1987). State government and the junior college, 1901-1946. *Community College Review, 14*(4), 48–52. <https://doi.org/10.1177/009155218701400407>
- Randall, L. M., & Coakley, L. A. (2007). Applying adaptive leadership to successful change initiatives in academia. *Leadership & Organization Development Journal, 28*(4), 325–335. <https://doi.org/10.1108/01437730710752201>
- Riggs, D. (2005). *Entrepreneurial activities in independent college and university presidents: A view from the top* [Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Pittsburg]. <http://d-scholarship.pitt.edu/9237/>

- Riggs, J. (2009). Leadership change and the future of community colleges. *Academic Leadership-Online Journal*, 7(1), 22. <https://scholars.fhsu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1265&context=alj>
- Roberts, C., & Hyatt, L. (2010). *The dissertation journey: A practical and comprehensive guide to planning, writing, and defending your dissertation* (2nd ed). Corwin, a SAGE Publishing Company.
- Robillard, D. (2000). Toward a definition of deaning. *New Directions for Community Colleges*, 2000(109), 3–8. <https://doi.org/10.1002/cc.10901>
- Rodriguez, F. C. (2015). Why diversity and equity matter: Reflections from a community college president. *New Directions for Community Colleges*, 2015(172), 15–24. <https://doi.org/10.1002/cc.20160>
- Roman, M. (2007). Community college admission and student retention. *Journal of College Admission*, 194, 18–23. <http://www.eric.ed.gov/contentdelivery/servlet/ERICServlet?accno=EJ783945>
- Rosser, V. J., Johnsrud, L. K., & Heck, R. H. (2003). Academic deans and directors: Assessing their effectiveness from individual and institutional perspective. *The Journal of Higher Education*, 74(1), 1–25. <https://doi.org/10.1353/jhe.2003.0007>
- Russell, C. (2000). *Community college academic deans: Leadership frames and stress* (Order No. 9990484) [Doctoral dissertation]. Proquest Doctoral Dissertations and Theses. [www.proquest.com](http://www.proquest.com)
- Saldaña, J. (2016). *The coding manual for qualitative researchers* (3E [Third edition]). SAGE.

- Schein, E. H. (2017). *Organizational culture and leadership* (5th ed). Wiley.
- Schön, D. A. (1983). *The reflective practitioner: How professionals think in action*. Basic Books.
- Senge, P. M. (1990). *The fifth discipline: The art and practice of the learning organization*. Doubleday/Currency.
- Senge, P. M. (Ed.). (2008). *The necessary revolution: Working together to create a sustainable world*. Broadway Books.
- Senge, P. M., Smith, B., Krushwitz, N., Laur, J., & Schley, S. (2008). *The necessary revolution: How individuals and organizations are working together to create a sustainable world*. Broadway Books.
- Shults, C. (2001). *The critical impact of impending retirements on community college leadership*. American Association of Community Colleges.  
<https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED451833.pdf>
- Slemp, G. R., Kern, M. L., Patrick, K. J., & Ryan, R. M. (2018). Leader autonomy support in the workplace: A meta-analytic review. *Motivation and Emotion*, 42(5), 706–724. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11031-018-9698-y>
- Snook, S. A., Nohria, N., & Khurana, R. (Eds.). (2012). *The handbook for teaching leadership: Knowing, doing, and being*. SAGE Publications.
- Sypawka, W. (2008). *A study of division deans in the North Carolina community college system self-perceived leadership style based on Bolman and Deal's Four Frame Theory*. <http://hdl.handle.net/10342/1075>



- Sypawka, W., Mallet, W., & McFadden, C. (2010). Leadership styles of community college academic deans. *The Community College Enterprise*, 16(1), 63–73.  
<https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ889183>
- Undung, Y., & De Guzman, A. B. (2009). Understanding the elements of empathy as a component of care-driven leadership. *Journal of Leadership Studies*, 3(1), 19–28.  
<https://doi.org/10.1002/jls.20092>
- U.S. Department of Education. (2019). *Total undergraduate fall enrollment* (Table 303.70). National Center of Education Statistics.  
[https://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d18/tables/dt18\\_303.70.asp](https://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d18/tables/dt18_303.70.asp)
- U.S. Department of Education. (2020). *Associate degrees conferred* (Table 321.20). National Center of Education Statistics.  
[https://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d20/tables/dt20\\_321.20.asp](https://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d20/tables/dt20_321.20.asp)
- U.S. Department of Education. (2021). *Undergraduate enrollment* [Annual Report]. National Center of Education Statistics.  
<https://nces.ed.gov/programs/coe/indicator/cha>
- Usunier, M., & Squires, V. (2019). Pursuing change in a learning university: The role of the dean. *Journal of Higher Education Theory and Practice*, 19(1).  
<https://doi.org/10.33423/jhetp.v19i1.675>
- Van Wagoner, R. J. (2004). Influencing the perception of organizational change in community colleges. *Community College Journal of Research and Practice*, 28(9), 715–727. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10668920390254690>
- Vaughan, G. (1983). *Issues for community college leaders in a new era*. Jossey-Bass.

- Wallin, D. L. (2012). Future leaders institute: Rising leaders and the AACC competencies. *New Directions for Community Colleges*, 2012(159), 19–28.  
<https://doi.org/10.1002/cc.20023>
- Wolverton, M., Gmelch, W., Montez, J., & Nies, C. (2001). *The changing nature of the academic deanship* (Jossey-Bass Higher Education and Adult Education Series).  
<https://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED457708>
- Wolverton, M., Wolverton, M. L., & Gmelch, W. H. (1999). The impact of role conflict and ambiguity on academic deans. *The Journal of Higher Education*, 70(1), 80.  
<https://doi.org/10.2307/2649119>
- Yin, R. K. (2018). *Case study research and applications: Design and methods* (6th ed). SAGE.
- Yukl, G., & Mahsud, R. (2010). Why flexible and adaptive leadership is essential. *Consulting Psychology Journal: Practice and Research*, 62(2), 81–93.  
<https://doi.org/10.1037/a0019835>

## Vita

Name	<i>Elizabeth Kristen Gandt Spagnola</i>
Baccalaureate Degree	<i>Bachelor of Business Administration, Dowling College, Oakdale Major: Marketing</i>
Date Graduated	<i>May, 2001</i>
Other Degrees and Certificates*	<i>Master of Business Administration, Dowling College, Oakdale Major: Management</i>
Date Graduated	<i>May, 2004</i>
	<i>Associate in Arts, Nassau Community College, Garden City Major: Liberal Arts</i>
Date Graduated	<i>May, 1999</i>