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COMMUNITY COLLEGE PRESIDENTIAL TRANSITIONS: ENHANCING THE PROCESS BY UNDERSTANDING STAKEHOLDER PERCEPTIONS

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NATIONAL LOUIS UNIVERSITY

COMMUNITY COLLEGE PRESIDENTIAL TRANSITIONS:
ENHANCING THE PROCESS BY UNDERSTANDING
STAKEHOLDER PERCEPTIONS

A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT
OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE

DOCTOR OF EDUCATION

IN

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BY

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Enhancing the Process by Understanding
Stakeholder Perceptions

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Final Approval Meeting: 2/25/11

We certify this dissertation, submitted by the above named candidate, is fully adequate in scope and quality to satisfactorily meet the dissertation requirement for attaining the Doctor of Education degree in the Community College Leadership Doctoral Program.

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2/25/2011

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DEDICATION

I would like to dedicate this work to my father, Dennis Bradford. He passed away in January 2010 as I was half way through this journey and thus he did not live to see me complete it. Though I never fully demonstrated my appreciation for and to him while he was alive, I truly hope he knew how much he meant to me and how grateful I am that he chose to step up and rear two children as a single parent at a time when men rarely did this. My father was a very smart man who never finished high school and worked hard to take care of my sister and me. I don't think he fully understood exactly what I was doing in school, but I hope that he is proud.

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Without the support of my wife, Melissa, and my children, Cassie and Morgan, I do not think that I could have accomplished this goal. Melissa is the most understanding person on the planet. I missed her brother's wedding among many, many family events. She never complained. To the contrary, she offered comfort and support. I look forward to stress-free quality time with her. While I tried to be supportive of all of Cassie and Morgan's activities, I was never able to be there like my wife was. I'm relieved to be done and hope that it is not too late to spend time with them before they enter into adulthood.

Dr. Martin Parks, my dissertation chair, has been nothing short of amazing. He provided guidance and a deft hand that kept me on track and talked me off of the ledge more than once. I appreciated his ability to direct without dictating.

A very special thanks goes to my committee members: Drs. Rebecca Lake and Gena Proulx. The former is the program coordinator for the Community College Leadership program at National-Louis and was instrumental in getting me on the right track early in my journey by always making me focus on my purpose statement. The latter is a person I greatly admire as a community college leader and was the primary reason that I embarked on this particular area of research. She took the helm of Joliet Junior College as an outsider and relieved a highly popular retiring internal president. I believe she will be remembered as one of the best presidents the institution has ever had.

This may seem odd in the acknowledgments section of a dissertation, but I must thank my bandmates: Krissi, Doug, Darryn, Rich, Katie, Dave, and Keith. I started the

doctoral program after I had been in the band for a few years. My bandmates have been very generous in their respect for the time that I needed to complete my research and have been very supportive of my efforts. Playing on stage with these people was a major source of sanity for me over the last few years. I'm looking forward to playing many Yard Fulla Cars shows in the future. Thank you!

Music has been an important part of my life. Over 25 years ago I was introduced to the sounds of an innovative punk rock band called The Minutemen. Their do-it-yourself work ethic impacted me more than I realized at the time. As I have grown older, I realize that I am just an old punk rocker at heart. The pseudonyms for my three sites pay homage to D. Boon, George Hurley and Mike Watt...true pioneers of American punk rock.

Peggy Yates, a member of the Technical Department at Joliet Junior College, has been so supportive of my efforts. She was always there to check on my progress and offer words of encouragement. It was appreciated more than she knows.

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ABSTRACT

A leadership crisis is pending at America's community colleges. Presidents are serving shorter terms (Stanley & Betts, 2004) and retiring rapidly (Duree, Ebbers, Santos-Laanan, Curtis, & Ferlazzo, 2008). Weisman and Vaughan (2006) project that 84% of current community college leaders will retire by 2016. New chief executives need to be effective at implementing the goals set by the board of trustees in a timely manner. The purpose of this qualitative case study was to identify stakeholder perceptions during a community college presidential transition and strategies for assisting in a smooth transition.

In-person semi-structured interviews were conducted at three medium-sized Midwestern community colleges that were in the midst of a presidential transition. The stakeholders interviewed included one administrator, one faculty member and one staff member from each participating institution. Coding and theme identification assistance was provided by the use of *nVivo 8* qualitative research data analysis software. From the data analysis four themes emerged. *A priori* themes included (a) leaders view organizations in frames, (b) communication of the college's goals, and (c) stakeholder relationship development. One emergent theme was identified: positive bias towards the new president.

Implications for research yielded the Bradford Transition Model for Community College Presidential Transitions for community college presidential transitions. This model provides clarity to the employee-based aspect of presidential transitions by visualizing the relationships between organizational culture, four emergent frames, and

the inclusive stakeholder relationships. Recommendations for the improvement of community college presidential transitions were provided for both the new president and the institution collectively.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Background and Context of the Study

This qualitative case study sought to provide insight on administrator, faculty, and staff perceptions at select Midwestern institutions during a community college presidential transition. This chapter provides a brief history of the American community college and a discussion of the pending leadership crisis that community colleges face. It also introduces the purpose of this study and the related guiding questions. The chapter also highlights the need for this research and addresses the limitations, delimitations, assumptions, and definitions of operational terms used in the study. The organization of the study is highlighted. The chapter concludes with a chapter summary.

Dimensions of the American Community College

Although Joliet Junior College is acknowledged as the nation's first public community college (Kasper, 2003; Phillippe & Sullivan, 2005), the Morrill Act of 1862 laid the foundation for the community college movement. This legislation, often referred to as the Land Grant Act, sought to ensure equal access to higher education in part by providing a specific amount of land to each state for the establishment of a university. The act provided access to higher education to students that were previously excluded by introducing new curriculum areas (e.g., agriculture).

Joliet Junior College was founded by J. Stanley Brown (superintendent of Joliet Township High School) and William R. Harper (president of the University of Chicago) (Kasper, 2003). Although the exact date the college was founded is uncertain,

researchers tend to agree that the year was 1901. Sterling (2001) stated, “It is impossible to pinpoint the precise date when Joliet Junior College actually began. There was neither a legal charter filed nor an official resolution passed to mark the beginning of the formal two-year college program in Joliet” (p. 8). Brown and Harper sought to provide higher education opportunities to the community so that residents did not need to leave the area to access education. Respected universities that acknowledged the quality of instruction and curriculum in the infancy of Joliet Junior College included the Universities of Illinois and Michigan (Sterling, 2001). It should be noted that before 1901, several private 2-year schools existed in the United States; however, their primary purpose was to supply teachers to the expanding public education system (Phillippe & Sullivan, 2005).

The Great Depression changed the community college forever as those affected by the troubled economy sought out community colleges for job training (Kasper, 2003). In 1944, the Servicemen's Readjustment Act (GI Bill) was enacted to provide access to higher education for service members returning home at the conclusion of World War II. The impetus for this legislation was the concern there would not be enough jobs for returning military personnel; conventional wisdom was to provide funding for these veterans to attend college to improve their skills and to delay their reentry into the workforce. Institutions of higher education, including community colleges, received boosts in enrollment as a result of this legislation (American Association of Community Colleges, 2007).

The Leadership Crisis in the American Community College

Community college presidents are retiring at a rapid pace (Duree, Ebbers, Santos-Laanan, Curtis, & Ferlazzo, 2008); moreover, their tenures are becoming shorter and shorter (Stanley & Betts, 2004). New presidents must be able to rapidly and effectively assume their new positions in order to move their institutions forward in a timely manner. Duree et al. (2008) identify the top five challenges facing community college presidents as fund raising, student enrollment and retention, legislative advocacy, economic and workforce development, and faculty relations. How a president handles relations with faculty, staff, and administrators is vital to the institution's ability to meet its mission. This working relationship begins when a presidential candidate is invited onto the community college campus to begin the hiring process. Once the new president is hired by the Board of Trustees, this relationship with the stakeholders must be acknowledged, nurtured, and examined for opportunities for growth. This research focused on this phenomenon.

Purpose of the Study

While new presidents face many challenges as chief executives, this research will focus on identifying ways to optimize the transition relative to stakeholder perceptions of the transition. The intended outcome of this research is to assist new presidents making a clean, smooth transition as they assume their new duties. The purpose of this study was to identify stakeholder perceptions during a community college presidential transition and strategies for assisting in a smooth transition.

Statement of the Problem

Community colleges are at a critical juncture. The convergence of senior leadership retirements (Duree, Ebbers, Santos-Laanan, Curtis, & Ferlazzo, 2008), shorter presidential tenures (Stanley & Betts, 2004), and fewer qualified community college leaders in the pipeline (Amey & VanDerLinden, 2002) may lead to a leadership shortage and more frequent community college presidential transitions. Changes in presidential leadership impact not only the presidents, but the comprehensive college community stakeholders (Padilla, 2004). While change can be good for an institution, “too much change can create uncertainty and morale problems and may solidify behaviors” (p. 40).

According to Sanaghan, Goldstein, and Gaval (2008) presidents are tasked with communicating and implementing the board’s agenda. The inherent morale problems brought about by presidential transition may impede the new president’s ability to facilitate change at the institution. Padilla (2004) observed the following relative to newly hired presidents:

What is known is that it is exceptionally rare for any new chief executive—even one appointed from within the ranks of the institution, whose style is well known by the board and by the staff—to hit the ground at full speed. (p. 56)

He added that while this is considered normal behavior, many new presidents feel pressured to perform. This perceived need to perform is based on their desire to assure the board they selected the right person to be president. According to Padilla (2004), early presidential success is based on the president’s ability to implement board goals and their “understanding of critical dynamics within the stakeholder community” (p. 56).

Historically rapid turnover at the chief executive level coupled with the uncertainty that it brings to an institution and its stakeholders may present challenges to community colleges in the future. The need exists to create smooth transitions to minimize disruption to these institutions.

Guiding Questions

The guiding questions listed below were used to focus the research by centering on perceived transition responsibilities of new presidents, the relationships of stakeholders with each other, and with the president and organizational culture during presidential transitions.

1. What are the perceived transition responsibilities and obligations of various stakeholders towards a new community college president?
2. How are relationships of stakeholders, with each other and with the new president, affected during a presidential transition?
3. How and in what ways is the organizational culture affected during a presidential transition?

Significance of the Study

Presidential transitions should increase as presidential tenures decrease (Stanley & Betts, 2004) and senior leaders retire at increasing rates (Duree, Ebbers, Santos-Laanan, Curtis, & Ferlazzo, 2008) in the coming years. An increase in transitions will likely lead to uncertainty among institutional stakeholders (Padilla, 2004).

Other researchers (Drumm, 1995; Duree, 2007; Kincl, 2007; Quinn, 2007; Scott, 1975) have studied presidential transitions. This study fills a gap in the literature by

providing a model for understanding the presidential transition in community colleges by merging a review of the literature with stakeholder perceptions. This model incorporates the complex interrelationships between administrators, faculty, staff, and the new president; moreover, it bounds the relationship inside the concept of Bolman and Deal's (2008) four frames of politics, structure, human resources, and symbolism. These ideas are contained on a cloud of organizational culture as defined by Kuh and Whitt (1988).

New presidents may benefit from this research by understanding how they may be perceived by administrators, faculty, and staff at their institutions that could inform their actions as their school's chief executive officer. Incorporating an understanding of the Bradford Transition Model for Community College Presidential Transitions may provide insight to the complexities of the interrelationship between the community college's organizational culture, Bolman and Deal's (2008) four leadership frames, and the complex relationships between administrators, faculty, staff, and the new president.

Administrators, faculty, and staff may benefit from this study by understanding the need for a formal transition process and the need to foster a positive organizational culture. Although transitions will continue at community colleges, they may not be as disruptive to these stakeholders if the stakeholders understand their roles and responsibilities during a transition.

Limitations and Delimitations

Limitations

Limitations of research cannot be controlled completely by the researcher; however, steps may be taken to minimize their potential impact. For this study, the potential limitations included the following:

1. Researcher bias may impact any qualitative study. Steps have been made to minimize researcher bias and its impact on the study. Transparency of the process has been maintained to ensure an accurate view of the research process.
2. The frame of this study was limited to include only medium-sized schools in the Midwest. As a result, the findings of this research may be applicable only to participating institutions.
3. Job descriptions and/or union contracts were obtained for 6 of the 9 participants; thus, the conclusions drawn from this data were limited.

Delimitations

Delimitations are factors imposed by the researcher that place limitations on a study. In this study, the delimitations included the following:

1. Only faculty, staff, and administrative participants employed long-term (i.e., 5 years or more) were selected for semi-structured interviews. Perceptions based on experience were deemed to provide a broader understanding of the transition experience.
2. The researcher selected representative community colleges in geographical proximity to limit both time and expense.

3. Members of the Board of Trustees, students, and community members are regarded as stakeholders to community colleges. However, their perceptions were not solicited for this study.

Key Assumptions of the Study

This study was undertaken with the following assumptions:

1. All participants responded to each question honestly and candidly.
2. Effective, stable community college leadership is necessary to ensure long-term success of those institutions.
3. Smooth community college presidential transitions may expedite the achievement of institutional strategic goals.

Definition of Terms

For the purpose of this study, the following terms and definitions were utilized:

1. Transition is defined as the 3-year period beginning with the president's first day on the job and ending 3 calendar years from that point.
2. Stakeholder refers to faculty, staff, and administrators of the selected community colleges. Although members of the Board of Trustees, students, and community members are regarded also as stakeholders to community colleges, their perceptions were not solicited for this study.
3. Faculty members are tenured instructors with more than 5 years of experience at their institution.
4. Administrators are supervisory staff, at the dean level or above, with more than 5 years of service at their community college.

5. Staff is non-supervisory personnel with more than 5 years of service at their institution.

Organization of the Dissertation

The presentation of this research is organized into five chapters. Chapter 1 (Introduction) provides an overview of the study that includes an overview of the pending leadership crisis in American community colleges, the purpose and guiding questions for the research, and the study's significance. Chapter 2 (Literature Review) highlights the review of research and literature related to presidential transitions in higher education. A brief history of the American community college, trends in community college leadership, and presidential transitions and stakeholder perceptions are central to this research and form the foundation for this chapter. The conceptual framework for the study is introduced; such a framework includes a discussion of change theory and reframing model. Chapter 3 (Methodology) transparently and comprehensively illustrates how the qualitative case study was conducted. It includes a description of the qualitative case study design with emphasis placed on how the data was collected. The rationale for site and participant selection and interview protocol are described. The method of data analysis including coding, theme identification techniques, and the triangulation process are discussed. The chapter concludes with a discussion of subjectivity of the researcher and ethical considerations for the study. Chapter 4 (Findings) highlights the results of this study. The descriptive data obtained through semi-structured interviews was triangulated with field notes, documents (e.g., employee job descriptions), and a review of the relevant literature to compare and contrast the

findings. Chapter 5 (Discussion, Conclusions, Implications, and Recommendations) illuminates the research outcomes and presents conclusions, implications, and recommendations.

Chapter Summary

This chapter provided an introduction to this study by addressing the significance of the study; defining the purpose of the study and associated guiding questions; discussing the limitations, delimitations, and assumptions of the research; defining specific terms found in the study; and providing an overview of the organization of the study.

Presidential transitions are occurring more frequently as presidents and other senior leaders retire at accelerated rates (Duree et al., 2008). Incoming presidents would be well served to understand the perceptions of stakeholders at their new institutions and use this knowledge to help smooth their transitions. This knowledge will enable them to be more effective at a faster rate.

Chapter 2 focuses on literature pertinent to the research. Literature and empirical research related to the pending community college leadership crisis, the nature of presidential transitions, and the theoretical framework supporting and sustaining this study are discussed.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

This chapter provides a review of literature relevant to this study. It begins with a discussion of the historical context of community college leadership. Current community college trends are presented including fundraising, student enrollment and retention, legislative advocacy, economic and workforce development, as well as faculty relations. Community college presidential transitions are discussed with an emphasis on organizational culture, the institutional role in presidential transitions, transitions and transition models, marketing the presidential transition, faculty and staff in the transition, the transition as strategic moment, and stakeholder perceptions. The chapter continues with the theoretical and conceptual frameworks for the study and concludes with a summary of the chapter.

Historical Context of Community College Leadership

Although community colleges have existed since 1901 with the founding of Joliet Junior College, Phillippe and Sullivan (2005) noted that explosive growth occurred in the 1960s. This growth fueled an autocratic, top-down management style (Alfred & Carter, 1993). Institutions needed leaders to make hard, fast decisions in order to move the institutions forward. This forced leadership created some resentment among faculty and staff (Thaxter & Graham, 1999). Wing (1972) stated in his study that the 1960s saw the “position of the junior college president [had] been extensively professionalized in an extremely short time” (p. 16). He noted that the number of presidents who possessed

doctoral degrees doubled during this time; moreover, these presidents were from colleges of education. He argued this trend would lead to the following:

[A]n increasing degree of institutionalization that does not bode well for the future growth of the junior/community college toward a unique educational form aimed at the appropriate development of each and every member of the community not already served by a traditional form of education. (p. 17)

He added that Boards of Trustees should choose a chief executive based on a “declared philosophy and an individual value system rather than because of some previous experience of administering a traditional educational institution” (Wing, 1972, p. 18).

Collective bargaining, introduced in the 1960s and 1970s, added to the perceived resentment as community college faculties sought union representation and a voice in their institutions beyond the classroom. Cohen and Brawer (2003) point out that “collective bargaining drew a legal line” (p. 134) between faculty and the administration. Administrators were forced to deal with a more vocal and powerful faculty; in turn, faculty members were faced with the task of clearly identifying what they wanted their roles to be in the day-to-day governance of the institution.

The notion of shared governance gained in popularity as these two sides determined how best to proceed for the betterment of their institutions. It was becoming evident that top-down management was ineffective within the community colleges (Thaxter & Graham, 1999) and that a new paradigm needed to emerge. More and more colleges adopted the concept of participative governance, which led to the blossoming of faculty senates. These senates sought to bring balance to the institutions. Critics contend that shared governance is ineffective as faculty often use this mechanism to become adversarial with the administration (Adams, 1988) and thus hinder the progress of the

college. Miller and Miles (2008) suggest that a “quiltlike” (p. 42) approach be used whereby administrators encompass the now traditional governance with student governance and staff governance, as well as input from Boards of Trustees when necessary.

The birth of the information age occurred in the 1980s; with that development came new challenges for community colleges. McCabe (1984) noted that the change from an industrial society to one of information would be more rapid than when the United States transitioned from an agrarian society to one of industry. Obtaining and maintaining funding became a challenge for community college presidents. To be successful in this environment, McCabe (1984) noted that a community college president should be an ideological, organized, educational leader that is involved in political activity both externally and internally.

The era of the 1990s and into the new millennium presented new challenges to community college presidents. The financial challenges that presented themselves in the 1980s continued. In Hood, Miller, and Pope’s (1999) study of 96 community college presidents, the authors noted that presidents primarily saw their roles as communicators, innovators, facilitators, and visionaries. Hood, Miller, and Pope (1999) confirmed the challenges of keeping colleges abreast of new technology as suggested by McCabe; they argued that presidents viewed their top priorities as obtaining the latest in technology for their campuses while keeping pace with the cost of obtaining such technology, increasing business and industry partnerships, and maintaining a high-quality faculty at their institutions.

Community college presidents face many challenges. They must deal effectively with faculty, staff, administrators, students, Boards of Trustees, and the general public. Although no manual details how a new president must lead, he or she must learn to lead arguably the most vocal constituency on campus—the faculty. As Goff (2002) concludes in his research on leadership traits required of the twenty-first-century community college president, “applying leadership skills and traits to the task is truly an art, not a science” (p. 15).

Community College Leadership Trends

Duree et al. (2008) identified the top five challenges faced by community college presidents as fundraising, student enrollment and retention, legislative advocacy, economic and workforce development, and faculty relations. These challenges are presented in the following section.

Fundraising

Fundraising was identified as the most important challenge in Duree’s (2007) research. Eighty-five percent of the 415 community college presidents that responded to Duree’s survey deemed fundraising as challenging or very challenging. Historically, presidents were chosen to lead an institution based on their level of scholarship; however, this has changed since 1950. Presidents are now expected to be the school’s chief fundraiser (Muller, 2004). However, the president should not abandon scholarship. As Vaughan (1989) states, “[T]he president should be a scholar” (p. 62). With the tightening of fiscal budgets, more emphasis is placed on institutional foundations to assist in filling budgetary needs. The president is an integral part of this outreach. Phillippe and

Sullivan (2005) state that “fundraising has become a primary function of community college presidents (up to 40% of their time)” (p. 130). Cohen and Brawer (2003) agree with Phillippe and Sullivan’s contention that fundraising is now more than ever a pressing issue for community college presidents.

Student Enrollment and Retention

Student enrollment and retention refers to the challenges facing community college leaders in maintaining enrollment via recruitment and retention (Cohen & Brawer, 2003). Focusing on student enrollment and retention was cited as challenging or very challenging for 80% of respondents in Duree’s (2007) survey of community college presidents.

Cohen and Brawer (2003) suggest that “community colleges will sustain their enrollments because the demand for postsecondary education will remain high”; however, they contend that “the rate of college going is less predictable” (p. 430). Farrell (2003) reports that for-profit colleges are experiencing a rise in minority student enrollments. She noted that students complained about not being able to see counselors at their community colleges; moreover, general education requirements were impeding their ability to take the classes that they sought to take. These students are choosing for-profit colleges based on these and other impediments. Pope (2009) expresses concern with the rise in for-profit college lending. Through the streamlined lending practices of these schools, they may be attracting students that would likely attend community colleges.

Declining state revenue will force community college presidents to defend tuition and fee increases as they try to maintain enrollment (Phelan, 2005). While not directed at presidents specifically, Walters and McKay (2005) identified student retention as a key leadership challenge as community colleges are being scrutinized by government agencies more closely. Accountability is paramount. Retention should be part of the strategic planning process and “leadership of the college president is crucial to the success of the strategic planning process” (p. 57).

Legislative Advocacy

Legislative advocacy was chosen by nearly 76% of community college presidents surveyed as challenging or very challenging (Duree, 2007). According to Phelan (2005), “[B]ecause most community colleges cannot afford to hire a lobbyist, the president becomes the de facto lobbyist” (p. 89). Given the current economic climate in which community colleges must navigate, this skill is essential to presidential success. The American Association of Community Colleges (AACC) identified legislative advocacy as a necessary leadership skill in its *Leading Forward* initiative (AACC, 2004). For its part, the AACC (2010) is advocating for funding of Pell Grants as its top legislative priority. Increased funding for institutional programs for minorities and other underrepresented groups, funding for workforce training initiatives, and passage of the Development, Relief, and Education for Alien Minors (DREAM) Act are also on the group’s agenda for lobbying.

Phelan (2005) provides community college presidents with suggestions for becoming more effective advocates:

Where possible, college presidents should leverage legislators' constituents, including college trustees, students, retirees, and local business leaders, to make the case for strong state support. The president should also have at command a "telephone tree" of selected community members to be called on a moment's notice to write letters make telephone calls, and send e-mails to legislators about vital funding legislation. (p. 89)

With continued declines in federal and state support for community colleges, institutions will be challenged fiscally. Legislative advocacy by the president assists with this challenge.

Economic and Workforce Development

According to Cohen and Brawer (2003) economic and workforce development in the community college has been part of its mission since the earliest community colleges and will continue to be in the future. They state that it is generally composed of the following areas: adult education, continuing education, lifelong learning, community services, community-based education, and contract training.

Seventy-two percent of surveyed community college presidents responded that economic and workforce development was a significant leadership challenge (Duree, 2007). Meeting the needs of the community is a pillar of the community college. Many challenges impede economic and workforce development. Jacobs and Dougherty (2006) correctly identify that "one of the most significant contributions of community colleges to American higher education is their workforce preparation activity" (p. 53). A reduction in demand for corporate customized training, a decline in state financial support for these activities, and a rise in new competition from the private sector is challenging the community college workforce development arm of the community college. When

coupled with charges that academic freedom is being supplanted by a reliance on corporate-sponsored curriculum (Wilson, 2010), the president is presented with a leadership dilemma.

Faculty Relations

Duree (2007) found that 63% of community college presidents surveyed believed that relationships with faculty were a challenge. When a new president arrives on campus, he or she is given a metaphorical bucket of goodwill coins (Sanaghan, Goldstein, & Gaval, 2008). With each decision that is deemed unpopular by a constituent group, the president spends a coin. On rare occasions the president may add a coin to the bucket if he or she takes an action that is popular across the campus (Sanaghan, Goldstein, & Gaval, 2008).

[M]any decisions involve personnel, and some faculty members almost always care about every personnel decision. As a result, any negative personnel decision produces unhappy faculty. Unhappy faculty stay unhappy. They do not leave or find alternative employment and the president cannot fire them. (p. 42)

Once the coins are spent, it is time for the president to consider retiring or finding another position elsewhere (Sanaghan, Goldstein, & Gaval, 2008).

Gregorian and Martin (2004) state that “presidents need to develop close understandings with their faculty” (p. 27). They suggest the president’s role is to assist the faculty, which will strengthen the institution and make it a better place for students. They conclude by saying “to succeed, new presidents must know and respect academics” (p. 28).

According to Sanaghan, Goldstein, and Gaval (2008), the presidential cultivation of faculty relationships starts during the search process. Faculty often participates in the

hiring process of new presidents and asks difficult questions of the candidates. The answers provided to these questions by the candidate will set the initial tone with faculty. Sanaghan, Goldstein, and Gaval (2008) also suggest that once hired the new president should be invited to faculty senate meetings and to develop relationships with faculty leaders. Faculty, for their part, should “educate the president about faculty perspectives on aspirations, culture, governance, and politics” (p. 61).

Community College Presidential Transitions

A recent Iowa State University study (Duree, Ebbers, Santos-Laanan, Curtis, & Ferlazzo, 2008) indicates that 79% of community college presidents plan to retire by 2012 and that 84% plan to retire by 2016. These planned retirements will create job openings not only at the presidential level but also at the vice presidential levels as current vice presidents advance their careers into presidencies. These findings indicate that opportunities will abound for qualified candidates; however, the traditional pool of candidates is still relatively small. Between 1983 and 1997, a 78% decrease occurred in graduates of community college leadership programs (Duree et al., 2008). These graduates are individuals who would now likely be ready to move into the top spot at a community college.

The Duree et al. (2008) study suggests that leaders are serving for shorter terms. Stanley and Betts (2004) corroborate these findings; they note that presidential tenure has been decreasing for 25 years. These shorter terms combined with a significant number of early retirements presents challenges to the institutions that will be hiring new presidents. Easing and expediting the transition of the new president such that the president is able to

quickly become effective and move the institution forward is critically important for the institution as a whole and equally so for the constituents of the college.

Community colleges must develop, implement, and revise strategies designed to enable the new president to move forward as soon as he steps on campus in his new role. Sanaghan, Goldstein, and Gaval (2008) observed that new presidents face many challenges; among them are “the power of institutional culture, the ‘shadow’ of the previous president, the hidden problems, connection on a personal level with diverse stakeholders, managing the learning curve, [and] whom to trust” (p. 7). Navigating these challenges will increase the likelihood of a smooth and successful transition.

Organizational Culture

Kuh and Whitt (1988) define organizational culture as “the collective, mutually shaping patterns of norms, values, practices, beliefs, and assumptions that guide the behavior of individuals and groups” (pp. 12-13). They further explain that it is “an interpretive framework for understanding and appreciating events and actions” (Kuh & Whitt, p. 13).

Kouzes and Posner (2007) make the link between understanding organizational culture and leadership success:

Important as it is that leaders forthrightly articulate the principles for which they stand, what leaders say must be consistent with the aspirations of their constituents. Leaders who stand for values that aren’t representative of the collective won’t be able to mobilize people to act as one. Leaders set an example for all constituents based on a shared understanding of what’s expected. (p. 60)

Furthermore, Kouzes and Posner assert shared values allow an organization to flourish as those shared values energize the organization and provide a sense of satisfaction to stakeholders.

Organizational culture should not be confused with organizational climate. Climate can be differentiated from culture in several ways. Culture is based on deeply held beliefs by the participants; however, climate is a function of common, but individual, views of an organization by its members (Peterson & Spencer, 1990). Culture has its roots in sociology and anthropology; climate's foundation is found in cognitive and social psychology. Changing an organization's culture generally requires more time than modifying its climate (Peterson & Spencer, 1990).

For new presidents to be effective, they must learn the culture and subcultures of their institutions quickly (Sanaghan, Goldstein, & Gaval, 2008). Bensimon (1990) encourages these new leaders to “understand the lived experience of the campus, interpret the themes of the campus, and decipher the shared meanings of campus participants and the symbolic processes through which these meanings are manifested and sustained” (p. 80). To understand how faculty and staff perceive their roles and responsibilities during a presidential transition, one must understand the cultures in which they operate.

Locke and Guglielmino's (2006) study focused on four subcultures within the community college: administration, senior faculty (10 or more years at the institution), newer faculty (less than 10 years at the institution), and support staff. Specifically, they sought to understand how subcultural groups respond to and influence organizational change and whether their perceptions of the planned change in each subculture differed.

The implications from Locke and Guglielmino's (2006) research included the following: (a) know and understand the organization's subcultures, (b) factor subcultural differences into the change initiative, (c) recognize that subcultural differences can facilitate change, (d) recognize that subcultural differences can hinder change, (5) allow time and patience for subcultural changes to occur, and (e) integrate subcultural differences to effect college-wide change. Locke and Guglielmino suggest the implications from their study may assist leaders in understanding the subcultures at their institutions and "contribute to more effective leadership of change efforts" (p. 126).

Institutional Role in Presidential Transitions

While research regarding the institutional role in presidential transitions is minimal, agreement exists that institutions are instrumental in the transition process (Sanaghan, Goldstein, & Gaval, 2008; Zimpher, 2004). Colleges should assist the new president by forming a transition team. Transition teams should be composed of key constituencies including faculty from all divisions and staff from all key departments and headed by a transition manager (Sanaghan, Goldstein, & Gaval, 2008). The transition manager should be the sole spokesperson for the group to ensure accurate information is communicated during the transition.

Moore and Burrows (2001) make a salient and easily missed observation in their work in that they note that "many individuals are undergoing transition along with the departing and entering leaders...[and that] their needs must be considered during the transition as well" (p. 3). Zimpher (2004) states "[i]n any institutional transition, there is an array of constituents whose needs and contributions must be taken into account" (p.

123). She contends participating in the transition process may enable stakeholders to have some of their needs met.

Transitions and Transitional Models

Andringa and Splete (2005) provide a six-step integrated view of presidential transitions set in private colleges. Their phases include anticipating a departure, departing with dignity, searching successfully, preparing for a new presidency, launching a new presidency, and evaluating presidential and board performance. Their work is a guide for new presidents; although it is written for and to them, it asks more questions than it answers.

Similar to Andringa and Splete (2005), Moore and Burrows (2001) offer a guide for presidents seeking to assume a presidency, determining when to leave a presidency, and outlining career options after leaving the presidency. Furthermore, they offer suggestions to governing boards on how to manage the process.

McLaughlin (1996) edited a volume for *New Directions for Higher Education* devoted solely to college presidential transitions. Contributors addressed such topics as entering the presidency, confronting value conflicts, finding a balance, and developing a vision. Of importance to this research was Martin's (1996) section on establishing key relationships. In this section, Martin described the challenges that a new president faces when taking on the responsibility of leading an institution. He stressed that presidents must get out and introduce themselves to members of the college community.

The Marten and Samels' (2004a) model for transition management stems from research they conducted with 150 presidents in higher education. They sought to

determine what demands of higher education leadership would motivate presidents to change careers. They found the following to be the top five reasons why presidents leave the presidency:

1. The pressure to raise extraordinary amounts of money.
2. The pressure to do more with less.
3. The pressure to decide about distance education.
4. The pressure to compete with and outperform for-profit competition.
5. The pressure to overcome deprofessionalization. (pp. 8 – 10)

Deprofessionalization, as the term is used above, refers to the separation that occurs when a traditional president removes herself from academics to take on an administration role. Marten and Samels (2004a) contend that deprofessionalization may cause more faculty members to find the position of college president “less attractive, less desirable, and less prestigious” (p. 10) and thus may not consider pursuing the position professionally.

Marten and Samel’s model (2004a) requires the transitioning president to adopt new leadership skills. The new skills identified by Marten and Samels (2004a) are as follows: (a) master technology choices, (b) vanquish adversaries, (c) build a brand, (d) seek selective excellence, (e) value bricks and clicks, (f) leverage mentoring networks, and (g) ensure entrepreneurial advantage.

Mastering technology choices means that the president must understand both the short-term and long-term implications of the technologies that he will introduce on campus (Marten & Samels, 2004a). Moreover, Marten and Samuels (2004a) stress that mastering technology choices is not the same as “mastering new technologies” (p. 13),

which is also important to a presidency. Long-term success depends on the presidents' understanding of their technology choices.

According to Marten and Samels (2004a), partnerships include not only business and industry but also other colleges and even for-profit educational institutions. They claim that today's new president must produce—not just design—these partnerships. These partnerships must be flexible and able to be changed dynamically instead of the traditional static partnerships.

Presidents should immediately dismiss anyone on campus that is not on board with the agenda they were hired to implement (Marten & Samels, 2004a). The researchers said that they received strong reactions to this skill from many of the presidents they interviewed; however, in retrospect, these presidents acknowledged the need for doing so.

Brand building by the president must occur within weeks of his or her arrival because it can be used to sell the institution and his presidency. Brand building requires teamwork and personal conviction (Marten & Samels, 2004a). While presidents may be given credit for the brand, they note that an institution's stakeholders committed to promoting the image and brand is required for it to succeed.

Selective excellence suggests that an institution cannot be everything to everyone and as such should focus on what the institution does well and eliminate programs on the margins (Marten & Samels, 2004a). They point out that for presidents to survive at an institution long term, the president must walk “the thin gray line between institutional

expansion and the need to eliminate dated, resource-draining programs along with the faculty who support them” (p. 15).

Marten and Samels (2004a) suggest both on-campus and online offerings should be sought for a college. The right strategies for the institution must be used to balance the *bricks* and *clicks*.

New presidents should maximize their use of peer networking as a means to maximize their learning of the transition process (Marten & Samels, 2004a). Peer networking is not new; however, the way in which it occurs is changing.

College and university presidents have always, to some degree, networked politically, socially, and strategically; the new skill for presidents today is leveraging these networks, often via the Internet, more intentionally and strategically and, when a needed network does not exist, simply inventing it. (Marten & Samels, 2004a, p. 16)

The concept of entrepreneurial advantage means that new presidents should take more responsibility in managing their own transitions (Marten & Samels, 2004a). This skill is an incorporation of the previously identified skills “into a new approach to presidential leadership and its role in institutional growth and positioning” (p. 17).

A proactive model for presidential transitions is offered by Stanley and Betts (2004). Their model consists of five phases: (a) before the search process begins, (b) during the search process, (c) after the selection of the new president, (d) role of the former president after the new presidency begins, and (e) the new president’s inauguration. They identified four crucial “lessons learned” associated with a proactive transition model:

1. A careful analysis, before the search begins, of the position and the type of leader the institution needs.
2. A search process that not only allows all stakeholders to have input but also allows both the institution and all candidates to assess the appropriate match required for long-term success.
3. A transition plan with schedule and goals to be initiated prior to the time of appointment and carried out several months into the new president's term.
4. An inaugural celebration that conveys the symbolic transfer of leadership in a meaningful manner congruent with the particular institution's culture. (pp. 95–96)

Zimpher (2004) proposes a model that includes steps each constituent group can take in the transition process. She identifies constituents as academic leaders, faculty and staff, students, system leadership and trustees, elected officials, alumni and friends, and business/civic leaders. Her model is unique in that it focuses primarily on the actions of institutional stakeholders both as individual groups and as a whole entity. Zimpher declares that the institution-at-large reflect on the college's mission, build bridges amongst constituent groups, and effectively communicate the upcoming change in leadership college-wide. She adds that presidents should learn all they can about their institutions prior to arrival, seek to deeply understand the institutional history, initiate relationship building, and develop an infrastructure.

Sanaghan, Goldstein, and Gaval (2008) focus on establishing a transition map, which is the roadmap that will lead to their success. They offer a checklist for each of the phases in their process. The six phases in their transition map creation process includes

the following: (a) exit strategy, (b) search process, (c) introduction of the new president, (d) early activities, (e) installation ceremony, and (f) first-year milestones. Each phase includes specific goals, key considerations, and steps to be performed.

While each of these models (Andringa & Splete, 2005; Marten & Samels et al., 2004; McLaughlin, 1996; Moore & Burrows, 2001; Sanaghan, Goldstein, & Gaval, 2008) is grounded in higher education, none is specific to community colleges. Many of the models presented mention presidential inaugurations or installation ceremonies.

Vaughan (1989) observed that formal inaugurations were denied to many community college presidents during the 1960s and 1970s. This was meant as a means of expediency as the president's roles and responsibilities were delineated formally in institutional documents. This is a tradition that is still missing today on many community colleges. Vaughan (1989) argues that "presidents should take every opportunity to establish and maintain the legitimacy of the office" (p. 45); formal installation ceremonies should be a part of that legitimization.

Marketing the Presidential Transition

Armstrong (2004) discusses the marketing of the transition to the internal and external communities relative to the presidential transitions at Sinclair (OH) Community College in 1997 and 2003. The activities included such items as press releases, newspaper articles, open meetings featuring both the incoming and outgoing presidents, and parties for the different constituencies involved in the transition. Armstrong (2004) concludes that "the result of these efforts was that the transition was not a trauma. Instead, it was a time of celebration and opportunity" (p. 6).

Andringa and Splete (2005) urge caution with making the public announcement of a new president. They suggest “this seemingly simple step has the potential to advance or set back any [college]” (p. 55). Furthermore, they urge that constituents be notified in the following order: chosen candidate’s former employer, board members not in attendance at the final vote, members of the search committee not serving on the board, the college communications officer, the college community, unsuccessful candidates, alumni and donors, presidents of peer institutions and national associations, and the general public. According to Andringa and Splete (2005), members of the college community must be told within a day of the others being told. This protocol enhances public relations on college campuses.

Faculty and Staff in the Transition

Research regarding faculty and staff involvement in presidential transitions is limited. Zimpher (2004) identified three specific action items directed at faculty and staff: organize walkthroughs of academic areas for the new president to increase her knowledge of the institution; create focus groups to be utilized before, during, and after the hiring of the president to address concerns; and address morale issues as well as monitor rumor control during the process.

In addition to Zimpher’s (2004) suggestions for faculty and staff, she also has recommendations for senior administrators, students, trustees, elected officials, alumni, business leaders, and civic leaders. Of all constituent groups, alumni along with faculty and staff get the fewest recommendations while senior leadership and trustees receive the most.

Another view of faculty's role in the transition comes from Gregorian and Martin (2004):

Having chosen the new president, the faculty should give him or her time and support, most importantly. Faculty should also not tie the hands of the president with minutia. The president needs to set priorities. If one loves every cause with equal vehemence and dedication, one loves no cause. Total commitment equals total apathy, and there will be no room for action. (p. 27)

The Transition as Strategic Moment

A large number of vacancies, a shortage of traditionally qualified candidates, and a trend towards shortened tenures of presidents suggest that challenges facing institutions in finding qualified chief executives will only increase (Duree, Ebbers, Santos-Laanan, Curtis, & Ferlazzo, 2008; Stanley & Betts, 2004). Community colleges must prepare for this inevitability by planning strategically for replacing their president and senior-level administrators. More importantly, they must develop strategies that will enable the new chief executive to hit the ground running as he or she takes over the new position at the institution. Presidents often have a vision and know what they must do to fulfill it; however, institutions often create barriers to change instead of embracing the vision. Faculty and staff often fail to realize that they have a vested interest in the success of the president. Instead of fighting every move of the new president, it is imperative that faculty and staff work with the new president to move the institution forward for their benefit and the benefit of its students.

Marten and Samels (2004b) suggest that the transition be treated as a "strategic moment" (p. 226). Marten and Samels further contend that the transition should be "viewed as an event in the life of the institution that is greater than the choice of its next

leader” (p. 226). Regardless of who is leading the institution (an in-house candidate, an outsider from another community college, or a person with a corporate background) opportunities abound to move the institution forward in a positive, meaningful way (Marten & Samels, 2004b).

Although many indicators of the transition’s end exist, a telltale sign is when the faculty (either individually or through committees) voices their true concerns with the direction of the president (Marten & Samels, 2004). A well-designed and implemented transition would encourage this dissent to surface very early in the process, ideally before the potential president is chosen. Problems normally occur before, during, and after a transition. The institutional goal should be to speed up the transition and minimize the disruption to the operation of the school. This goal is greatly aided by gaining the buy-in of faculty and staff.

Stakeholder Perceptions

For the purpose of this study, *stakeholder* refers to faculty, staff, and administrators at a community college. Boards of Trustees, students, and community members are considered stakeholders of community colleges but were excluded from this research. Research on stakeholder perceptions of community college presidents is limited. Scott (1975) conducted a study to identify the role of the community college president using a past, present, and future model. Historically, his research, which focused on Illinois community college presidents specifically, was significant; it was conducted in response to the explosive growth of community colleges as a result of the passage of the Illinois Junior College Act of 1965. One of his stated purposes is relevant

to this study: “to determine if the president is now performing each of the perceived role activities and whether this performance affects the perceived present role activities of the college president as perceived by presidents, board members, administrators, faculties, and students” (Scott, 1975, pp. 5–6).

Scott’s (1975) quantitative study included 37 role expectations in the form of a questionnaire completed by community college presidents. Among these expectations were maintaining an open-door policy, having a written strategic plan for the institution, and making no program cuts without properly vetting the process. Significant to Scott’s findings was his conclusion that those expectations that belonged primarily to a specific group had considerable differences. For example, on items directly related to concerns by faculty, the answers were uniformly to the extreme positive or negative side of the instrument’s scale. This pattern was repeated for the other stakeholder groups in the study. He also noted that questions related to political issues were ranked highly by administrators only.

Quinn (2007) focused on how stakeholders are affected when presidential transitions fail and must be repeated. Her research focused on one community college with multiple failed, short-term transitions and how constituents were impacted. She sought to learn how future transitions could be improved from the view of the stakeholders. An emergent theme from her study was that all stakeholder groups agreed on all major issues. Quinn (2007) observed that “unity emerged in the face of a common problem to be resolved. Here, the problem was that of poor leadership, or no leadership, acknowledged by the stakeholders who were interviewed” (p. 80). Quinn’s conclusions

were in contrast to Scott's. However, his study was not focused on transitions; it was focused on presidential expectations of sitting presidents.

Prior to Quinn's (2007) study, Drumm (2005) conducted an ethnographic case study wherein he chronicled the presidency of a short-term community college president. His research indicates, based on the perceptions of the stakeholders, the importance of the transition period at an institution.

Leadership transitions sew the seeds for future success or failure in a leadership role. Leadership transitions are like first impressions. It only takes a short time for constituents to develop an impression during a leadership transition. But it can take an eternity to overcome those impressions if the new leader does not act on organizational change in a timely manner. The transition period significantly affects much of what transpires well after the legendary 'honeymoon' period is over for new leaders. (Drumm, 2005, pp. 198-199)

Drumm adds in his conclusions that newly appointed presidents adhere to the existing organizational culture to be successful. He states that this conclusion "does not mean an obsequious leader who substantially conforms" but one who is merely "a good fit" for the institution (p. 198).

Theoretical and Conceptual Framework

Theories are used in research to provide a set of parameters to guide the research and a lens through which to view the phenomenon when collecting and analyzing data. Anfara and Mertz (2006) state that a "useful theory is one that tells an enlightening story about some phenomenon. It is a story that gives you new insights and broadens your understanding of the phenomenon" (p. xvii).

While multiple theories and concepts were explored for their appropriateness relative to the study, the theoretical framework that formed the basis of this study was

Lewin's (1951) change theory. Newly hired community college presidents must be able to obtain stakeholder buy-in from day one. To obtain buy-in, presidents must understand thoroughly how organizations function and recognize the embedded culture of an institution.

The reframing model developed by Bolman and Deal (2008), chair of the Bloch School of Business and Public Administration at the University of Missouri—Kansas City and retired professor at the University of Southern California's Rossier School of Education respectively, was the conceptual framework for viewing this research. It presents a clear picture of organizational behavior and contains a roadmap to effective change. When viewed from the vantage point of faculty, staff, and administrators, the model helps to illuminate the issues that presidents may face when taking on the role of leading a community college. This insight may enable administrators, faculty, and staff to understand their roles and responsibilities and where they fit into making a presidential transition a success.

Change Theory

Change theory has its roots in the work of Kurt Lewin, a prominent social psychologist who conducted research in many areas (Schein, 1999). While he conducted voluminous amounts of research over his lifetime, organizational theorists are particularly interested in his three-step change model. Lewin (1951) observed that organizations tend to go through a period of unfreezing, changing, and refreezing. He suggested that organizations tend to be frozen until some meaningful change occurs that causes it to unfreeze, adapt to the change, and then refreeze.

Unfreezing as a concept entered the change literature early to highlight the observation that the stability of human behavior was based on “quasi-stationary equilibria” supported by a large force field of driving and restraining forces. For change to occur, this force field had to be altered under complex psychological conditions because, as was often noted, just adding a driving force toward change often produced an immediate counterforce to maintain the equilibrium. (Schein, 1999, pp. 59–60)

Schein (1999) further observed that the equilibrium could be further changed if one removed the restraining forces because driving forces already tended to exist in the systems. The challenge with removing these restraining forces was that these were deeply personal and psychological or possibly grounded in group norms found in the institutional culture.

In 1975, a study was concluded that sought “first to investigate successful and unsuccessful applications of management science using Lewin’s theory as a framework and second to operationalize the theory” (Zand & Sorenson, 1975, p. 536). They concluded that Lewin’s change theory was valid. Zand and Sorenson (1975) found that for the manager to be successful she must pay close attention to unfreezing as her “later efforts to implement a solution may be futile because the organization may not have been ready for change from the outset” (p. 542). Resentment by stakeholders created in unfreezing will likely cause problems during the movement phase. Clear communication and a non-adversarial environment are paramount and success will be more likely. Refreezing is acceptable upon a satisfactory change effort.

Later research (Argyris & Schön, 1978; Bolman & Deal, 2008; Redding & Catalanello, 1994; Senge, 1990) expounded on the change cycle along with Lewin’s

concept of action research and sought to exploit it to enhance the breadth and depth of organizational learning via change.

Argyris and Schön (1978) sought to bring practicality to change models such as Lewin's by differentiating between theories. They stated that "theories that help people understand and predict may be different from theories created to help people make events come about" (Argyris & Schön, p. 5). Their notion of espoused theories and theories-in-use seek to clarify the apparent gap that exists between what people say they do and what they actually do (Greenwood, 1993). Greenwood contrasts espoused theories and theories in use: espoused theories are those "theories of action to which practitioners claim allegiance and which they communicate deliberately to others, in contrast, theories-in-use are the theories that actually govern and issue in practice" (pp. 1183–1184).

Senge (1990) introduced the concept of the learning organization in his seminal management text entitled *The Fifth Discipline*. It is a direct descendant of Lewin's change theory and Argyris and Schön's action research. It created a practical model for the implementation of organizational learning and change based on the concepts of personal mastery, mental models, shared vision, and team learning. The strategic learning cycle developed by Redding and Catalanello (1994) embraced the tenets of Senge's work and codified it into a functional model for managers implementing change within their organizations. Figure 1 is an illustrative representation of Redding and Catalanello's model.

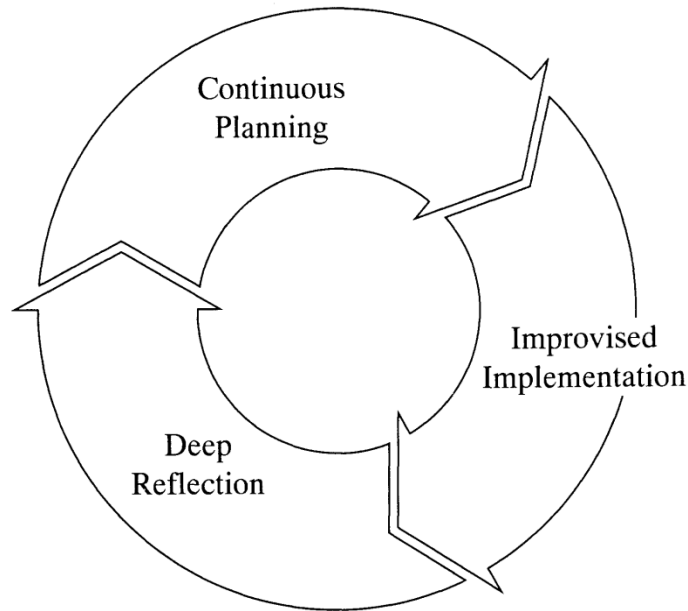


Figure 1. Redding and Catalanello's Strategic Learning Cycle illustrates the cyclic and iterative nature of institutional change. From *Strategic Readiness: The Making of the Learning Organization* (p. 24), by J.C. Redding and R.F. Catalanello, 1994, San Francisco: Jossey-Bass. Copyright 1994 by Jossey-Bass. Reprinted with permission.

Redding and Catalanello (1994) believed that change can and should be implemented continuously and cyclically. Planning is a continuous process that involves improvised implementation followed by deep reflection. The goal of cyclic iteration is to achieve a greater breadth and depth of meaningful learning and change.

Reframing Model

Sociologist Erving Goffman (1974) introduced the concept of frames in his book entitled *Frame Analysis*. His intent was to explain how humans organize their social experiences. He often used the metaphor of a picture frame. The frame represented the structure; the picture represented the context.

Historically, many scholars have used differing terms to describe similar phenomena. Mental models (Senge, 1990), paradigms (Kuhn, 1970), and schemata

(Fiedler, 1982) are a few of the related expressions. Bolman and Deal (2008) intentionally mix metaphors using such terms as “windows,” “filters,” “perspectives,” and “prisms” (pp. 10–11).

In their model, Bolman and Deal (2008) argue that breaking frames is crucial to success; hence the term *reframing*, in organizational change efforts. It requires leaders to recognize the frames that exist but to view organizations differently—to break the mental models, the paradigms, the schemata that they hold in their world view of how an organization should function. They explain the challenge of changing one’s mindset:

In Western cultures, particularly, there is a tendency to embrace one theory or ideology and to try to make the world conform. If it works, we persist in our view. If discrepancies arise, we try to rationalize them away. If people challenge our view, we ignore them or put them in their place. Only poor results over a long period of time call our theories into question. Even then, we often simply entrench ourselves in a new worldview, triggering the cycle again. (p. 40)

Bolman and Deal’s (2008) model is composed of four frames: structural, human resources, political, and symbolic. A metaphorical snapshot of those views is provided in Table 1.

Table 1

Organizational Views of Bolman and Deal’s Frames

| Organizational Frame | Organizational Metaphor |
|----------------------|-------------------------|
| Structural | Factory |
| Human Resources | Family |
| Political | Jungle |
| Symbolic | Temple |

The key to effective organizational change is the integration of these four frames in the management of an organization while being willing and able to smash the preconceived notions that have formed around these four frames.

The structural frame is a metaphor of a factory. It exists to provide a means for creating, organizing, and developing effective teams. Concepts at its core include rules, goals, policies, and technology. Structural changes at organizations may include changes in reporting hierarchies, defining roles and responsibilities, and physical expansion of the facilities.

Family is the metaphor for the human resources frame. This leg seeks to satisfy human needs, improve the overall strategic human resource function, and to nurture interpersonal relationships. Needs and skills form its foundation. Implementing supervisory training, ensuring conformity in hiring practices, and expanding employee benefits may be inclusive of this frame.

The political frame is known as the jungle. This area is identified by power, conflict, and competition. Building coalitions, dealing with conflict and power, and honing one's political skill and savvy serve as the focus. Building relationships with employees, providing transparent lines of communication, and deftly navigating the organizational culture are leadership traits exhibited by the frame.

The symbolic frame is served by the temple, which is not of a religious nature but with a core of culture, meaning, ritual, and ceremony. The challenge in this frame is to create an environment that gives purpose and meaning to work and build an *esprit de corps*. Leaders focused on this frame may promote institutional ceremonies, focus on the

cosmetics of an organization to promote professionalism, and strive to head the organization by leading by example.

Kouzes and Posner (2007) claim that leadership is a learned skill and suggest it is a myth that leaders are born.

Leadership is not a gene, and it's not a secret code that can't be deciphered by ordinary people. The truth is that leadership is *an observable set of skills and abilities* that are useful whether one is in the executive suite or on the front line, on Wall Street or Main Street, in any campus, community, or corporation. (pp. 339–340)

Facets of leadership include strategic planning, decision making, reorganizing, evaluating, approaching conflict, goal setting, communication, meetings, and motivation (Bolman & Deal, 2008). The strategies employed in each of these areas differ with the primary frame of the organization; however, most organizations function in all four domains. For instance, in the structural frame, communication is very matter-of-fact in that it is just a presentation of the facts. The human resources frame seeks to provide an avenue for sharing feelings and providing a mode for involvement for the participants. Politically, it is an opportunity to influence others; symbolically, it is an opportunity to tell and share stories.

Understanding these domains, or frames, and how they can be used to move an institution forward is a necessary skill for senior leadership at an academic institution. As Bolman and Deal (2008) point out, “confusion...can result when people view the world through different lenses” (p. 315). Since people do view the world through different lenses, the skilled leader knows this and adjusts her strategies to encompass and

embrace these differing views. Bolman and Deal (2008) state that good leaders do the following:

[They] sustain a tension-filled poise between extremes. They combine core values with elastic strategies. They get things done without being done in. They know what they stand for and what they want and communicate their vision with clarity and power. But they also understand and respond to the vortex of forces that propel organizations in conflicting trajectories. They think creatively about how to make things happen. They develop strategies with enough elasticity to respond to the twists and turns of the path to a better future. (p. 436)

Chapter Summary

Community college presidential transitions are expected to occur more frequently due to shorter presidential tenures (Stanley & Betts, 2004) and an increase in the senior leadership retirements (Duree, Ebbers, Santos-Laanan, Curtis, & Ferlazzo, 2008). This chapter reviewed historical and contemporary leadership trends for American community colleges. It provided a review of the literature related to presidential transitions and presented the theoretical and conceptual frameworks for this study.

The next chapter, Chapter 3, highlights the study's methodology. The design of the study is presented and the data collection methods are described. The procedures utilized for data analysis (including coding and theme identification) are highlighted. Ethical considerations and researcher subjectivity are discussed. The chapter concludes with a summary.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY AND PROCEDURES

Introduction

With an increase in community college president retirements (Duree, Ebbers, Santos-Laanan, Curtis, & Ferlazzo, 2008) and the need for those that become presidents to implement change quickly due to shortened presidential terms (Stanley & Betts, 2004) the need for new presidents to be effective from day one is paramount.

As community college presidents retire, a critical need has arisen for new and effective leadership (Duree, Ebbers, Santos-Laanan, Curtis, & Ferlazzo, 2008). New community college presidents must be prepared for the challenges ahead; presidential tenure can be short (Stanley & Betts, 2004).

Understanding how to navigate the new institution while being mindful of the needs of stakeholders can be a challenge for the chief executive. New presidents face many challenges. This research focuses on identifying ways to optimize the transition relative to stakeholder perceptions of the transition. The intended outcome of this research is to assist new presidents in making a clean, smooth transition as they assume their new duties. The purpose of this study is to identify stakeholder perceptions during a community college presidential transition and strategies for assisting in a smooth transition.

The purpose of this chapter is to highlight the research methodology employed for this study. Further, this chapter discusses data collection and data analysis procedures. In the data collection section, the selection criteria for both sites and participants is

described as well as the interview protocol, document review process, expert review procedures, and the pilot process. The data analysis section includes coding procedures, theme identification techniques, and the triangulation process. Other areas relevant to the study and included in this chapter are a discussion of researcher subjectivity and ethical considerations. The chapter concludes with a brief summary.

Guiding Questions

To synthesize strategies that are necessary for a smooth transition, several research questions must be addressed. These questions seek to illuminate the phenomenon that is a community college transition and assist the researcher in developing meaningful recommendations. The questions arising from the research purpose are as follows:

1. What are the perceived transition responsibilities and obligations of various stakeholders towards a new community college president?
2. How are relationships of stakeholders, with each other and with the new president, affected during a presidential transition?
3. In what ways is the organizational culture affected during a presidential transition?

Design of the Study

This study is a qualitative inquiry situated in the interpretive paradigm. Denzin and Lincoln (2008) stipulated as follows:

All research is interpretive; it is guided by the researcher's set of beliefs and feelings about the world and how it should be understood and studied. Some beliefs may be taken for granted, invisible, only assumed, whereas others are highly problematic and controversial. Each interpretive paradigm makes

particular demands on the researcher, including the questions the researcher asks and the interpretations he or she brings to them. (p. 31)

Quantitative research focuses primarily on deductive, statistical reasoning by testing a specific hypothesis; in contrast, qualitative research utilizes inductive reasoning with the focus to explore the perceived problem in greater breadth and depth (Johnson & Christensen, 2004). Consequently, this research involved interviewing participants engaged in presidential transitions to examine the issues that inherently affect those transitions.

Qualitative Research

Qualitative research goes beyond generating empirical data; it seeks to reach a greater breadth and depth of understanding of the research problem. Creswell (2007) states that when “we need a complex, detailed understanding of the issue” (p. 40), a qualitative study is required. According to Johnson and Christiansen (2004), qualitative research is naturalistic and is “subjective, personal, and socially constructed” (p. 31). This is desirable when studying a topic or phenomenon like community college presidential transitions, where little research exists and the desire for a deeper understanding is sought.

The interpretive researcher has been described as a *bricoleur* or “jack-of-all-trades” with many metaphors employed: jazz musician, filmmaker, and artist. She uses the tools and techniques at her disposal, and if necessary creates new ones to further her craft while maintaining a pragmatic approach to her work (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). This research will utilize interviews, field notes, and documents as the tools of the trade and will do what is necessary to ensure a sound study is conducted.

Interpretivist research does not yield generalizable data. The nature of the knowledge gleaned within this paradigm is contextual and situationally specific (Greene, 1990). One may ask how worthwhile broader knowledge is attained in this paradigm. Transferability changes the locus of control from the researcher to that of the reader of the research. The researcher presents a detailed explanation of the phenomena, which allows the reader to determine if the research as a whole, or specific parts, may be transferable to his situation (Green, 1990).

Case Study Method

This research was conducted as a case study. Case study research occurs in the natural setting and is exploring a topic that is socially constructed. It is contextual, based on the lens of the persons being interviewed and the setting in which they experience the phenomena (Johnson & Christensen, 2004).

Case study is a research design “that provides a detailed account and analysis of one or more cases,” and a case is a phenomenon that is “bounded” (Johnson & Christensen, 2004, p. 376). Kincl (2007), a researcher at Florida State University, authored a dissertation on stakeholders during a presidential transition; he states that “case studies are appropriate for exploratory and discovery-oriented research” (p. 60). Creswell (2007) suggests that a collective case study is appropriate when studying multiple instances of a phenomenon. This study involved viewing a presidential transition through the eyes of internal stakeholders of three institutions in the Midwest.

Data Collection

This section outlines the procedures that the researcher performed to maintain transparency of the data collection process to ensure that the study can be repeated by fellow researchers. The areas of discussion included site selection, participant selection, interview protocol, document review, expert review, and process pilot.

Site Selection

Three medium-sized community colleges located in Midwestern region of the United States were selected for inclusion in this study. Schools that had a new president between and including the academic years of 2004–2005 and 2008–2009 were sought for this study. The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching (2009) defines medium-sized 2-year institutions as those with full-time equivalent enrollments of 2,000 to 4,999 students. These schools, nationwide, enroll more students than the other Carnegie classifications and may provide more consistency to the results. Selected schools must be at least 1 year into the transition and less than 3 years out of the transition to participate. For the purpose of this study, transition is defined as the 3-year period beginning with the president's first day on the job and ending 3 calendar years going forward.

Community colleges were identified initially utilizing the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) database. The initial search identified schools in Illinois and bordering states that have a fall 2008 full-time equivalency between 2,000 and 4,999. It was also used to identify the chief executive officer of those

schools for each of the pre-identified academic years. This search formed the basis for sites selected for this study.

The initial search of IPEDS yielded 138 qualifying institutions. The search criteria included the following fields: 2008–2009 institutions, state abbreviations (which includes Illinois and bordering states), sector of institution (public, 2-year), grand total (full-time equivalent) of fall 2008 undergraduate enrollment, and name of chief administrator (for academic years 2003–2005 through 2008–2009). The data was sorted by enrollment. Institutions falling below 2,000 or above 4,999 were removed from the list. This reduced the data set to 53 community colleges. Of the remaining schools, slightly less than half ($n=26$) had the same chief executive for this period. After these schools were purged from the list, the final number of qualified institutions is 27. During the time the initial search was performed and the time the sites were invited to participate, two schools changed presidents. The remaining 25 institutions were invited to participate in the study.

The researcher was assisted by a community college president who sent personal letters to potential participating institutions meeting the research criteria. The goal was intended to extend a personal touch from a new community college president with a vested interest in leadership transition.

A follow-up e-mail (see Appendix B) was sent by the researcher to each community college president at the remaining 25 schools to verify eligibility and to solicit participation in the study. The president was asked to identify an internal staff member to be the researcher's contact person at the institution. This person was used to

assist the researcher in how best to identify potential interviewees at their institution and how to gather key institutional documents. The president's contact information at each institution was gleaned from the American Association of Community College's website. The first three responding institutions that met the eligibility requirements and agreed to participate in the study became the research sites. The researcher received six responses from community college presidents offering their institutions as potential sites and chose the first three institutions.

Participant Selection

Each community college in the study (3) was to be represented by one faculty member, one staff member, and one administrator (totaling 9 participants). The selection criteria for each participant category are identified in Table 2.

Table 2

Participant Selection Criteria

| Constituency | Selection Criteria |
|----------------|---|
| Faculty | Tenured with more than 5 years of service at the institution |
| Administrators | Supervisory staff (dean or above) with more than 5 years of service |
| Staff | Non-supervisory staff with more than 5 years of service |

Gerald Cusack (2009), staff researcher at St. John's University, noted that "Loyalty is the sustaining wind that keeps the organization afloat and on course" (p. 20). Employees with substantial longevity (more than 5 years) bring a measure of loyalty to their community colleges and a vested interest in their success. This rich history with their institutions may inform their perceptions of presidential transitions. This research

sought to gain from their inside knowledge of their institutions and help paint a vivid picture of the community college presidential transition.

Once the participating institutions were identified, and permission had been granted by each college's president or representative to proceed, the researcher contacted each institution's internal contact person. Through this contact, the researcher determined the best method for identifying participants.

At two of the three schools, the internal contact provided an e-mail list of all employees fitting the criteria. The third institution's contact selected participants for the study on behalf of the researcher. For this school, the contact collected the demographic data for the chosen participants. For the remaining two schools, an e-mail (see Appendix C) was sent to employees on the contact list soliciting participation. Interested participants were sent a demographic survey (see Appendix D) electronically and asked to return it to the researcher for consideration. The first three employees at each institution that met the criteria and returned their completed demographic surveys were included in this study.

Interview Protocol

Semi-structured interviews served as the primary data collection technique for this research. Semi-structured interviews lead to a greater breadth and depth of understanding and also allow for probing questions (Fylan, 2005). This can be helpful in clarifying answers to questions and may lead to amplifying information that may not be possible during a structured interview. All interviews were recorded utilizing two digital

recording sources to ensure that the interview would still be captured in the event of a technology failure.

Field notes are an integral part of the interview process (Creswell, 2007; Johnson & Christensen, 2004). These notes capture the researcher's observations during the interview as well as capture his reflections upon completion of the interview. They can provide perspective to the interview's answers and assist the researcher in analyzing the data and assist in data triangulation. As part of the field notes, the researcher created a brief sketch of the environment in which the interview occurred. This aids in contextualizing the verbal contents of the interview.

Expert Review

The proposed interview questions were reviewed by three experts to ensure that they adequately address the research questions and to ensure that they will do no harm to the participants. Each of the identified experts chosen for this study holds a doctorate from an accredited institution and was selected based on his/her experience in and understanding of the presidential transition process. The panel included one college president in a transition and two vice presidents who have experienced one or more transitions. Based on feedback from members of the expert review team, two questions were added and one was modified (see Appendix G).

Process Pilot

Johnson and Christensen (2004) insist the interview process be pilot tested. This is to ensure that the process functions as intended. Pilot interviews were conducted with one representative from each of the participant groups (i.e., faculty, staff, and

administrators not otherwise participating in the study). The purpose of this pilot was to acquaint the researcher with the interview process, verify that the identified interview questions can be answered in a reasonable amount of time, and allow the researcher an opportunity to practice his interviewing technique.

Data Analysis Procedures

Coding

Coding is the assigning of labels to data to be analyzed (Johnson & Christensen, 2004). Methods of coding include manually and using computer software. Software was used for this study because it helped to provide a system for data organization and storage, a concept mapping capability to allow for visualization of the data, and a notation feature to allow the researcher to retrieve notes attached to the data (Creswell, 2007).

The data, acquired by digitally recorded interviews with 9 employees at 3 Midwestern community colleges coupled with field notes, was analyzed utilizing *nVivo 8* qualitative research data analysis software. This software codes audio, data, and graphical presentations and was used due to its support in the research community and its ability to sift through multiple sources of data. To ensure completeness of the coding, both the audio transcripts and the typewritten transcripts were analyzed to ensure congruity.

The researcher utilized a feature of *nVivo* that allows digital transcriptions to be synchronized with the original audio recordings. The transcriptions were specifically formatted to allow for the direct importation into *nVivo*. This feature provides

asynchronous audio and text features, enabling the researcher to listen to the actual audio recording while reading the accompanying transcript. Pauses, laughs, voice inflections, and related audible signals that are typically lost to printed transcriptions and may have been missed in the field notes come alive and allow the researcher to utilize this information to assist in the triangulation of the data.

Theme Identification Techniques

Stake (2005) states that “the selection of key issues is crucial” (p. 448) in case study research. The issues, or themes, help the researcher provide a rich, thick description of the studied phenomena that may lead to a deeper understanding of it. He further asserts that these issues “may or may not be the ones used to report the case to others” and that these themes “often serve to draw attention to important functioning of the case in a situation of stress, as well as to tease out more of its interaction with contexts” (p. 449).

The initial themes were generated utilizing *nVivo* during the software coding process. These themes were juxtaposed to the tenets of Bolman and Deal’s (2008) reframing model, Kuh and Whitt’s (1988) definition of organizational culture and the remainder of the literature review. Bolman and Deal’s theory consists of four frames: structural, human resource, political, and symbolic. Components of these frames were included in the interview questions (see Appendix E), and it was expected that these themes would emerge in the data set. Concurrently, Kuh and Whitt’s (1988) definition of organizational culture were embedded in the interview questions and as such were expected in the data set.

As such, Bolman and Deal's (2008) reframing model and Kuh and Whitt's (1988) definition of organizational culture formed the basis for *a priori* theme identification; however, they did not limit emerging themes. Emergent themes were given equal treatment in the analysis phase of this study because they could yield new insight to the phenomenon.

Triangulation Process

In quantitative research, the precepts of reliability and validity are foundational in substantiating a study. Willis (2007) asserts that triangulation "is often used as a qualitative equivalent of validity and reliability" (p. 218) in qualitative research. He contends that "the idea of triangulation is to find multiple sources of confirmation when you want to draw a conclusion" (p. 218). The multiple sources of data for this research include interviews with faculty, staff, and administrators at three Midwestern community colleges and field notes.

Stake (1995) suggests that the need for and the degree of triangulation is dependent on the sources of data to be considered. Data requiring minimal effort towards confirmation include clearly identified efforts by the author to persuade the reader and descriptions that cannot be contested. Debatable descriptions require a modest degree of confirmation via triangulation. Data that is crucial to an attestation or any major analysis that is offered requires a higher level of confirmation (Stake, 1995).

Via the coding process, the two sets of data were analyzed to verify common themes and trends that lead to convergence. This process was also used to identify inconsistencies and contradictions in the data set (Mathison, 1988). The latter is expected

to lead to a deeper understanding by allowing the researcher to construct a more meaningful description of the transition process.

Subjectivity: The Researcher as Instrument

Much has been written about the researcher as instrument (Creswell, 2007; Denzin & Lincoln, 2008; Johnson & Christensen, 2004; Poggenpoel & Myburgh, 2003) in qualitative research. There are pros and cons to having the researcher intimately involved with the data collection in a qualitative study. Some of the positive aspects include researchers developing their own instruments for data acquisition instead of using predefined samples (Creswell, 2007), researchers utilizing data triangulation as a means to validate the data analysis (Johnson & Christensen, 2004), and researchers observing disparate phenomena and becoming the “conduit for making such voices heard” (Denzin & Lincoln, 2008, p. 35).

Poggenpoel and Myburgh (2003), faculty at Rand Afrikaans University, identify four criteria that should be addressed to avoid the possible pitfalls of having the researcher intimately involved with the research process: *credibility*, *transferability*, *dependability*, and *confirmability*. To address *credibility* in this study, field notes, member-checking of interviews, and data set triangulation was performed. *Transferability* was addressed utilizing a demographic survey that contextualized the findings when coupled with an in-depth analysis of the data. Methods to ensure *dependability* included utilizing software coding of the data sets to minimize researcher bias and the inclusion of the procedures used for conducting the interviews such that they can be replicated by fellow researchers. Finally, for this research study, *confirmability*

was addressed by maintaining transparency of the research process such that other researchers may clearly verify each step of the process independently.

The researcher for this study is tenured faculty at a Midwestern community college teaching in a career and technical education program. Prior to becoming faculty, he was a junior-level administrator at the same institution. In addition to his teaching responsibilities, he is a program coordinator and student academic advisor. His non-traditional route to academia (i.e., starting his college career at age 25 while working full-time) coupled with 9 years spent in the United States Navy informs his view on community colleges and leadership.

Ethical Considerations: Protection of Human Subjects

National-Louis University's Institutional Research Review Board (IRRB) requires that all researchers submit an application that details the procedures for collecting research data. Furthermore, this application requires the researcher to identify the purpose of their study, the role of the participants in the research, as well as any potential harm that may come to the participants. Basic demographic information of the participants to include age and gender as well as the total number participating must be provided. Lastly, the researcher is required to describe how informed consent will be accomplished (Institutional Research Review Board Application Form, 2004). This application is based on the university's IRRB Criteria for Ethical Research policy that was shaped in part by the October 1, 1997, revision of the *Code of Federal Regulations, Title 45, Public Welfare, Part 46, Protection of Human Subjects*.

The following three ethical considerations must be taken into account when conducting research interviews: informed consent, the right to privacy, and protection from harm (Denzin & Lincoln, 2008). National-Louis University's application process addresses these concerns thoroughly and includes the requirement of having the interview transcriber complete a confidentiality agreement to help ensure no harm comes to the participants.

Each interviewee was provided with an informed consent form (see Appendix F). The purpose of this document is to brief the interviewee on the nature of the research (to include the purpose and the driving questions to be addressed by the research) and to assure the participants that their participation is confidential, entirely voluntary, and that their permission to participate may be withdrawn at any time. Relatedly, each participant was provided with a written transcript of her interview. This member checking assists in protecting the interviewee and the integrity of the study by allowing the interviewer to review the transcript for accuracy and allows him to strike any statements that he would like removed post interview.

Chapter Summary

This research is timely because the length of presidential tenure appears to be growing shorter (Duree, Ebbers, Santos-Laanan, Curtis, & Ferlazzo, 2008); moreover, the pool of successors is diminishing (Stanley & Betts, 2004). Through semi-structured interviews, field notes, and the review of relevant institutional documents, a picture is expected to emerge regarding the perceptions of internal stakeholders during community college presidential transitions.

Employee perceptions can assist in facilitating strategies that may be employed by presidents upon their hiring. Equipped with this knowledge, a smoother transition may be possible; this transition should not only be advantageous to the president, but to all stakeholders (including those not identified in this study), and the community at large. The next chapter, Chapter 4, highlights the study's findings. Participant and case profiles are provided. The findings are presented by guiding question, *a priori* themes, and emergent themes.

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS

Introduction

This study sought to identify stakeholder perceptions during a presidential transition at a community college as well identify strategies for assisting in a smooth transition. Data collected included responses from semi-structured interviews conducted with stakeholders in three job classifications at three Midwestern community colleges, stakeholder job descriptions, and field notes. These three sources were used to triangulate the data to increase the credibility and validity of the results. This chapter includes a review of the research questions, a presentation of the data findings by research question and *a priori* themes, a description of the emergent themes gleaned from the interviews, and a summary of the chapter.

Guiding Questions

A qualitative case study research design was the methodology used to answer the three research questions. These questions sought to identify the stakeholder's perceptions of the transitioning president in relation to Bolman and Deal's (2008) four frames of leadership and to identify how relationships within an institution may impact a transition as well as the role that organizational culture may play. The stakeholders for this study included administrators, faculty, and staff with 5 or more years at the institution. The questions that guided this research were as follows:

1. What do the various stakeholders perceive as the transition responsibilities and obligations of a new community college president?
2. How are relationships of stakeholders affected during a presidential transition (both with each other and with the new president)?
3. In what ways is the organizational culture affected during a presidential transition?

Research Protocol

The guiding questions were answered by employing a case study research methodology. Nine interviews were conducted at three medium-sized Midwestern community colleges with constituents in three job classifications: administrative, faculty, and staff. The institutions were selected utilizing the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) database to search for institutions in Illinois and bordering states that are medium-sized and had a transitioning president. Participating intuitions were at least 1 year into the transition and less than 3 years out of the transition. For the purpose of this study transition was defined as the 3-year period beginning with the president's first day on the job and ending 3 calendar years going forward.

A sitting community college president facilitated the research by advocating for participation via a personal letter distributed the presidents of community colleges meeting the research criteria. Subsequent to this letter, the researcher sent an e-mail asking each of these presidents to agree to participate and provide an internal contact to

the researcher. The first institutions to respond affirmatively were selected for the study. To protect the identities of the featured community colleges, pseudonyms were assigned to each institution. The pseudonym for each school appears in parentheses after each college's name: Boon Community College (BCC), Hurley Community College (HCC), and Watt Community College (WCC).

Participants

Research participants for this study included senior-level administrators (dean or equivalent and above), tenured full-time faculty, and non-supervisory staff with 5 or more years at their respective institutions. Although there are many stakeholders in community colleges apart from employees (e.g., trustees, students, and community members), the research focused on employees as more closely affected by a presidential transition.

Presidents from the selected community colleges provided access to internal contact persons at their schools. In each case these employees were senior-level administrators who assisted the researcher to identify constituents that met the selection criteria. The contacts at Boon Community College and Hurley Community College provided an e-mail list of all employees they believed met the criteria. A targeted e-mail was sent to all of the employees on the list along with a request for brief demographic information, which was used to verify that the employees met the selection criteria.

The first three respondents at each of these institutions were interviewed for this study. At Watt Community College, the contact person selected participants for the study. Once identified these candidates were verified by completing a brief demographic survey. To protect the interviewees' identities and ensure participation both their names

and their institutions were assigned pseudonyms. When necessary, specific incidents at institutions were described abstractly to protect the identity of the institution and all the participants. The gender of each participant and related president has been obscured intentionally by rotating pronouns between she/he and him/her throughout this document when referring to a specific interviewee.

Table 3 provides the pseudonym for each of the interviewees along with their job classification and the community college for which they work.

Table 3

Participant Location, Job Classification, and Pseudonym

| Location | Job Classification | Pseudonym |
|--------------------------|--------------------|-----------|
| Boon Community College | Administrator | BCCA |
| | Faculty | BCCF |
| | Staff | BCCS |
| Hurley Community College | Administrator | HCCA |
| | Faculty | HCCF |
| | Staff | HCCS |
| Watt Community College | Administrator | WCCA |
| | Faculty | WCCF |
| | Staff | WCCS |

Community college presidents were also assigned a pseudonym. The pseudonyms for the presidents are as follows: Boon Community College President (BCCP), Hurley Community College President (BCCP), and Watt Community College President (WCCP).

The demographic survey completed by the interviewees asked them to identify their institution's name, their job classification, the number of years they have worked at their institution, their current job title, a brief description of their job responsibilities, the number of years spent in their current position, and contact information.

The participant information was applied to determine eligibility for the research. Further, employment history at the institution informed responses. A summary of these data appears in Table 4.

Table 4

Participant Demographic Data

| Participant | Years at Institution | Years in Current Position |
|---|----------------------|---------------------------|
| Boon Community College Administrator (BCCA) | 10 | 3 |
| Boon Community College Faculty (BCCF) | 20 | 20 |
| Boon Community College Staff (BCCS) | 13.5 | 13.5 |
| Hurley Community College Administrator (HCCA) | 22 | 22 |
| Hurley Community College Faculty (HCCF) | 19 | 19 |
| Hurley Community College Staff (HCCS) | 34.5 | 34.5 |
| Watt Community College Administrator (WCCA) | 20 | 4 |
| Watt Community College Faculty (WCCF) | 23 | 23 |
| Watt Community College Staff (WCCS) | 9 | 5 |

Of the nine participants in this study, six have been in the same position at their institutions since they began working at the institution. The remaining three participants have changed positions within the past 3 to 5 years. All participants have been at their

institutions for 9 years or more, which is nearly twice the minimum number of years solicited for this study.

Case Profiles

While all three community colleges in this study are located in rural Illinois and encompass similar geographical areas (approximately 1,500 to 2,400 square miles) and populations (approximately 70,000 to 100,000), each has unique characteristics that differentiate it from the other colleges relative to this study. These differences relate to the presidents' professional backgrounds and are discussed later in this section.

Documents pulled from each institution are identified in Table 5.

Table 5

Comparative Institutional Documents

| Location | Board Minutes | Planning Documents | Job Descriptions and/or Union Contract | |
|----------|---------------|--------------------|--|-----|
| BCC | Yes | Yes | Administrator | No |
| | | | Faculty | No |
| | | | Staff | Yes |
| HCC | Yes | Yes | Administrator | Yes |
| | | | Faculty | No |
| | | | Staff | Yes |
| WCC | Yes | Yes | Administrator | Yes |
| | | | Faculty | Yes |
| | | | Staff | Yes |

The board minutes from each institution cover at least one academic year. Planning documents include institutional goal statements, strategic plans, and annual reports. Job descriptions and/or union contracts were obtained for six of nine participants. More than one attempt was made to obtain these documents. The purpose of these documents for this study was to provide a means to provide support for the data collected via the interviews and the field notes and observations.

Boon Community College (BCC)

Boon Community College was rurally located in Illinois in a district encompassing over 1,500 square miles. In addition to the main campus, it boasted several satellite campuses located throughout the area and awards more than 375 degrees and certificates each academic year.

Boon Community College's President (BCCP) has a long history as an administrator and as faculty in higher education. He has worked at both 2-year and 4-year institutions in both capacities in numerous states during his career. At the time of study, he was near the end of his presidential transition.

Boon Community College Administrator (BCCA). BCCA has been with Boon Community College (BCC) for 10 years and in the position of Chief Information Officer for 3 years. The Chief Information Officer at BCC is on the President's Senior Leadership Team and works closely with the president. He is not originally from the area but was a student at the school. He began his career as teaching faculty and moved into administration; he first served as faculty and then as an administrator.

Boon Community College Faculty (BCCF). BCCF has been at Boon Community College for 20 years as a professor. BCCF served as the chair of the college's internal governing body when the new president arrived and thus worked closely with the new president at the beginning of the president's transition.

Boon Community College Staff (BCCS). BCCS is a lifelong resident of the district and a former student. He has held the same support staff position during his time at BCC and has served under two presidents.

Hurley Community College (HCC)

Hurley Community College is a relatively new institution; it first opened its doors in the early to mid 1970s. By comparison, the first community college in the nation, Joliet (IL) Junior College, was founded in 1901. Like BCC, it is rurally located and encompasses a large geographical area. Thus, it offers satellite campuses to its constituents. Its annual commencement ceremony awards nearly 700 degrees and certificates.

Although he is a native of Illinois, the president of Hurley Community College (HCCP) pursued a non-academic career that took him across the country. He became HCC's president post retirement from an area outside of academia. He is extremely active in his college's district serving in many civic organizations. He is in the infancy of his transition.

Hurley Community College Administrator (HCCA). HCCA has been with Hurley Community College (HCC) for 22 years serving as a vice president. Per her choice, HCCA's office is not located near the other senior administrators. HCCA added

that she told HCCP that “I will not stay up there” (referring to the senior administrators’ suite of offices) because she lives “in the student world.” HCCP respected her request, and her office was moved to a more accessible location.

Hurley Community College Faculty (HCCF). HCCF has been at HCC for 19 years serving as a liberal arts professor. Prior to working at HCC, she was an administrator in secondary education. In addition to serving on numerous college committees, she has served as part of the union negotiating team in years past.

Hurley Community College Staff (HCCS). HCCS has worked only for senior-level administrators during her 34-year career at HCC (primarily in administrative assistant roles). Her desk is centrally located in the executive suite of offices that house all of the senior administrators except the Hurley Community College Administrator (HCCA).

Watt Community College (WCC)

Of the 102 counties in Illinois, the Illinois Community College Board identifies 74 as non-metropolitan and 28 as metropolitan. Of the three institutions in the study, Watt Community College is a rural institution; however, it includes part of at least one metropolitan county in its district. Like its contemporaries, it has several satellite campuses to service the geographically diverse population. WCC grants over 300 degrees and certificates annually.

Watt Community College President (WCCP) began his educational career at WCC when he accepted a director’s position. Over the years he has served as an

academic dean and a vice president at the institution. WCCP is at the approximate midpoint of his transition.

Watt Community College Administrator (WCCA). Watt Community College's (WCC) WCCA has been with the college for 20 years. She was originally a professor who decided to move into the administrative ranks 4 years ago.

Watt Community College Faculty (WCCF). WCCF has been with Watt Community College (WCC) for 23 years in career and technical education. Like WCCA, WCCF has worked in the same department with the current president when he held another administrative position in the institution.

Watt Community College Staff (WCCS). WCCS has been at WCC for 9 years and in his current position of advising students for 5 years. He works directly with students every day. Though relatively new to the institution, he has served under two presidents.

Findings Related to Guiding Questions

Guiding Question 1: What Do Various Stakeholders Perceive as the Perceived Transition Responsibilities and Obligations of a New Community College President?

To provide a framework for viewing the perceived transition responsibilities of community college stakeholders, four questions were posed to the participants. These questions addressed the president's handling of his responsibilities, presidential successes and challenges, the board's goals for the new president, and stakeholder's roles and responsibilities in assisting the new president.

The first of these questions was as follows: How has the president handled his/her responsibilities so far specifically as it relates to the following: structural (goals, policies, environment), human resources (basic needs, relationships), and political (power, conflict, competition)? The responses to this question are summarized below and have been grouped by the three distinct presidential responsibility areas addressed in each question. For clarity, the content areas are further divided into grouping for each participating institution.

Structural. The first part of this interview question focused on any structural changes made by the new president during his transition. These changes may have included actions such as restructuring the organization, implementation of different work rules, and spearheading physical changes to the campus. Participants were asked how the president has handled her or his responsibilities as it related to this area.

Boon Community College. Boon Community College Administrator responded by saying that his president had made “significant changes structurally.” BCC has been “streamlined” because the “structure has been realigned.” The organizational flow of the institution was changed to bring continuity to the job titles and a consistency from department to department. BCCA said that the president did meet resistance during this process; however, he was successful because he constantly communicated what he was doing and told the college “why he’s doing it” when making the changes. In the structural area, BCCA sees the president as being “effective.”

Boon Community College faculty commented on the president's focus on the institution's strategic plan, his efforts at reorganization of the college, and his efforts to communicate with the college. Regarding the strategic plan, BCCF said:

[H]e's put a pretty heavy emphasis on strategic plan as a really operating, living kind of document and a plan for the college overall. That's one of the things I noticed first about him. His administration did not create the strategic plan or put it in its current form, but he has really been very proactive... about keeping it updated, informing the general community of the college about the ways it has been updated and...there's always been occasional e-mail with a link to our shared drives saying, "Here are the most recent updates on the strategic plan. Please read it."

Boon Community College faculty said that the college had "begun to feel as if we maybe are a little bit top heavy with administration right now." She commented that the number of faculty has been reduced and administrative positions have been increased since this president started. BCCF questioned the president's rationale for assuming a "management-oriented model" with the college (and state) being in such a dire fiscal crisis.

Boon Community College faculty noted that this president strives to communicate with the college at large via weekly e-mail updates. In addition to these weekly updates, the president distributes copies of articles that he is reading in *The Chronicle of Higher Education* to solicit feedback from stakeholders. Regarding these communications, she commented:

I know it's a way that he has tried to reach out, for example, to the faculty. And like a lot of our presidents that I've served under, he's not so much about the direct relationship, working relationship, with the faculty. He does mostly leave that to the instructors and administrators.

Boon Community College staff made notes prior to the interview; all participants were provided a copy of the interview questions in advance. In referencing his notes he said, “I think that the perception is that the vice president does a lot of that stuff here....We really don’t go to our president for that kind of stuff.” BCCS echoed BCCF’s observation that the institution had become more “top-heavy.” He shrugged it off by saying it is how “education kind of goes in any government. It’s almost a governmental system, really.” He went on to say that from his vantage point, the president had not made any changes that could be considered “drastic.” He added the following when reflecting on the structural changes at the college:

[A] lot of that has just been a natural evolution of the college...there’s always that fear when you have a new president or a new boss...that they’re going to come in and wipe the slate clean and just do everything their way. He didn’t really come in and do that...which was nice.

Hurley Community College (HCC). The Hurley Community Administrator (HCCA) commented that the president had made minimal structural changes at the institution. The college recently updated its 5-year strategic plan; the new president now “has some of his authorship on it at this point.” When prompted on structural issues again he responded, “No specific big policy changes, no. Those are concrete.” Compared to the previous president, HCCA added that the new president is at “opposite ends of the spectrum in terms of approach, involvement, [and] dynamics.” From his vantage point HCCA knew he had a new supervisor because “we knew that we put in a day’s work by the time we left” each day. HCCA added that Hurley Community College president specifically sought to improve the cosmetics of the campus with the rationale that the

campus must look better when corporate chief executives visit the campus. HCCA said that some of the average employees questioned where the money came from for the improvements; however, the changes were made. He believes they have “increased donations and ...enhanced connections with the community.”

In contrast to HCCA’s structural view of the president, Hurley Community College faculty paints a different view. “I think what I see is the president coming in and trying to put his stamp on things right away,” stated HCCF. He then added that he thought that the president “might have come in and tried to make too many changes too quickly.” He elaborated on his statements by pointing out that this president implemented a “chain of command structure” at the institution that was not previously present. The president wanted and expected employees to report issues to their immediate supervisors, who in turn reported it up the hierarchy as necessary. He said it was “frowned upon” to talk directly to one’s supervisor’s supervisor. This led to a “feeling of frustration” among employee groups; “a lot of people seem to be open to that, but I think there’s a lot of confusion because some of us are continuing to go the old route.” While Hurley County Community college faculty was not opposed to this change in operating procedures, HCCF suggested that if this had been implemented incrementally instead of “boom,” it would likely have led to less confusion among the college staff. He further amplified implementation of this policy change by saying that the president needed to make this change as “to do what’s comfortable so [you] can be effective.”

Hurley Community College staff noted that this president, unlike his predecessor, had purchased new furniture around the campus including casual benches for the common areas as well as new office furniture for himself. She also noted that he had been the driving force at the college in acquiring an external property for business and industry training. This site meets the needs of the community because the population is stagnant and “a lot of folks that had jobs for years have to be retrained now.” She added, “We’re stepping up to the plate to do that.” HCCS listed companies that the college is now working with to promote economic development and partnerships in the community. This is a change in direction for the college and has been driven by this president because of his (and the board’s) willingness to go “out on a limb” to purchase the external site.

Watt Community College (WCC). The Watt Community College Administrator (WCCA) commented that structural changes at the institution were “not anything overly significant.” Structurally, he cited the president’s push for two new programs at the college as significant because they required the institution to “step out on faith” and invest a large amount of money in doing so. He said that a possible reason that these programs went forward was because the institution had a “willingness to realize that we can’t do the same old thing” long term.

Open communication by the president was also a structural change to the institution and was in apparent contrast to the college historically. WCCA commented that past presidents had been “ruling under fear.” WCCP, an internal candidate, was aware of this because “people have been complaining about communication” for years. WCCA stated, “This president is much better as far as collaborating, constant

communication, keeping everybody in the loop.” WCCA added that as part of WCCP’s open communication agenda, instead of the president saying that there is no money for a specific request, he produces the “documentation” from the state (i.e., budgets, strategic planning documents, and legislative correspondence) to support his assertions.

Watt Community College faculty observed that the president has changed the organization of the college since taking over. Part of this change was to realign positions to better accommodate the goal of implementing a common intake process for students. This change has required existing personnel to learn new skills to enable the change to occur.

[P]eople handling more than one thing, I think with the idea that can we get by with a few fewer people. So instead of director of this and a director of that, we now have kind of a combined [position] where we took three jobs and split it among two people.

This structural change has also meant creating new positions and combining and/or eliminating some offices. He added that the perception exists that because new positions are being created “[I]t doesn’t look like you’re really cutting people or saving anything because the same person is here getting a paycheck...” What WCCF made clear is that this person is “doing a different job.”

Watt Community College staff mirrored his colleagues when he discussed the reorganization of the college under this president. While he admitted it has worked “fairly well,” he still seemed to have some concerns about the process.

When new positions were created, they were created specifically for someone. So it was never an option to apply for a position. And whether that person...was qualified for the job or not, I don’t know. They’re doing a fine job at it.

Although this process is behind him, WCCS admits to “hard feelings, but you just deal with it” and said that his frustration comes from not having the process explained.

Human resources. The second part of this interview question related to human resource changes made by the president. These changes might include changes within the department itself, changes related to employee assistance such as training and benefits, and the college’s hiring process. Participants were asked how the president has handled her or his responsibilities as it related to this area.

Boon Community College. BCCA said that this president had implemented supervisors’ training. Included in this training was an analysis of job roles and responsibilities and the respective salary for those jobs. The employee evaluation system was changed as well. While BCCA said that the implementation of a 360-degree evaluation system to replace their form that was “huge” and “monotonous” and a product of the human resources department, the president’s support of it was “very strong.”

When asked about human resources, BCCF’s sole focus was on reducing full-time faculty, increasing administrators, and relying heavier on part-time faculty. Several programs at the college were eliminated because this president was brought in by the board. BCCF expressed concern that not enough action was taken on behalf of the college prior to the cancelling of these programs.

I have found myself wondering whether more could have been done to increase enrollment, to increase numbers in some of these programs rather than saying...the axe is our first tool of addressing these problems in enrollment and numbers. We’re a small college. We have limited resources. We have a very poor tax base here. We have a population that is not growing in our district...These are financial realities, but at the same time, I wonder if the right leadership could be

brought to bear on a program review process that might look at alternative ways of seeing better numbers and keeping a program that would help better.

Boon Community College staff noted that the human resources department has “grown by leaps and bounds” since this president arrived. He noted that the department seems like it is in its “own world.” Health initiatives that include onsite massages have been started; however, he felt that services like this only catered to a select few at the institution due to the prohibitive cost to many employees. He used the term “clique” to refer to this group repeatedly during the interview. This clique is composed of primarily administrative staff at the college.

Boon Community College staff also commented on the president’s regular monthly meetings with representatives from all employee classifications at the college in an effort to act on stakeholders’ needs and concerns. He said that he welcomes these meetings as previous presidents did not do anything similar. He said he appreciated the “extra open line of communication” that did not exist prior to this president. BCCS pointed out that even with this extra communication tool with the president, the president still maintains an open-door policy. He said he felt “comfortable” in utilizing that policy if necessary.

Hurley Community College. Hurley Community College Administrator asked for clarification of what was meant by “human resources” and noted that hiring practices were examined. He said that it took some “getting used to where [HCCP] want[ed] to go” regarding hiring and how to use “our existing structure to get there.” Among the items considered was “Does the president have the authority to go and encourage people

to apply for a job without giving the wrong impression [to internally qualified candidates]?”

Hurley Community College Faculty illuminated the hiring practices at the college, specifically as they related to the president hiring his choice for key positions regardless of the wishes of the campus community. The hiring committee recommended a specific candidate for an important internal position; however, the president vetoed the selection and chose his own candidate. While HCCF believes that the new hire was “very good for that position” and likes the person, employees were concerned that this employee was handpicked. She also noted that this president brought in an external candidate with whom he had previously worked to become his “second-in-command.” HCCF did not indicate that this was an issue with the campus community.

Hurley Community College Faculty also indicated that with the new president at the helm, “a lot of jockeying of positions for power” occurred. The human resources department felt threatened because it “felt...sometimes that other people had more power than they did when it came to certain things.” As she phrased it, without elaborating, the human resources department tried to “solidify power.” She clarified this comment by saying the following:

I know that there's been some issues with the human resources department in the past going beyond what the job description would be. For example, human resources, if a position comes open, [is] supposed to filter out those who do not meet the minimum requirements and let the committee look at everybody who had the minimum requirements and decide from there. Well, the director of human resources was going in and...well, I don't think...they meet the minimum requirements, but I don't think they would be a good fit, so I'm not even going to put them in the pool. And as that came to light with a lot of faculty, then faculty began to assert differences of opinion with that. There's some dynamics that went

on between faculty and human resources because of that. Of course, with the new president and his chain of command thing, it fit well with human resources because if we don't like what they're doing, go to your supervisor, go to their supervisor, and that further insulates human resources and allows the human resources to have more of a play to possibly continue to do that ...without a lot of interference.

Hurley Community College Faculty claims that there is "frustration" with the new president regarding the human resource office. Some employees feel while he has not given the human resources director more power, he has failed to keep her existing power in check.

[I]t's like you're damned if you do and you're damned if you don't. Here he's taking action and they don't like it, and here they see he's not taking action and they don't like it. So what are you going to do?

According to HCCS, a key change to the hiring practices at HCC was initiated by the new president. He noted that prior to this president, the only candidates that met the president prior to being hired were at the vice president level. This president meets with all candidates for faculty, director, dean, and vice president positions. HCCS also said that he conducts all exit interviews for these staff. To be involved further with the college, this president invites several stakeholders to share a meal. During this meal, the president answers questions the stakeholder may have; he also asks the stakeholder to answer questions. HCCS said that the current president "goes around a lot to see employees, which the one before him did not."

Watt Community College. Watt Community College Administrator offered the implementation of supervisory training as a change in the human relations area. While she believes it worthwhile, she also added that it was likely "to prevent litigation down

the road.” Candidly, WCCA implied that “[I]t wasn’t like, wow, I want to grow my people. It was like, I don’t want to get our butts in trouble.” However, she followed with her observation that “instead of sticking your head in the sand, just hoping something will get better,” this president was making changes to help employees and protect the institution.

While discussing the human resources question, WCCF focused on the human side of the term. He noted that when interacting with others at the college, the president can be viewed as trying “to accommodate many different sides of things.” WCCF reflected on this perception; she suggested that since WCCP has many long-term relationships with many employees of the college, he believes that “sometimes those harder decisions are more difficult for [WCCP].” He said “Sometimes you need to make a stand or a decision,” and WCCP has trouble doing so; this inability can impact the institution’s human resources.

As a staff member, WCCS listed the completion of a compensation study as a human relations change initiated by the current president. As positions were reviewed, job titles and descriptions changed. She noted that no salaries were lowered; some salaries increased whereas the remainder held at current levels.

Political. This segment of the question focused on institutional politics—internal and external—and how the president has navigated this area thus far. This area may include handling conflicts, power perception, and understanding institutional politics. Participants were asked how the president has handled her or his responsibilities relative to politics.

Boon Community College. Boon Community College Administrator noted that this president had to address a hot political topic almost immediately upon his arrival and described this situation as “a political nightmare.” The details are not included in this study to protect the anonymity of the school; however, this event had repercussions both within and outside of the college. Moreover, it involved the image of the college. The board wanted one thing; students wanted something else. College employees were caught in the middle. When discussing this event, BCCA commented on the board of trustees; she said “Like any board, they want to dictate terms, not request...” Ultimately, she said that the president convinced the board to let the students decide the outcome of this situation with the understanding that the board is still in charge. She said that the president, when referring to college politics, is “walking that minefield all the time.”

Boon College Community Administrator also discussed closing programs at the institution. When referring to one specific program, she called it a “political minefield.”

We had to close it because it was not money making...being a small college, we don't have that kind of luxury to support a section of it that is losing big-time money. So we had to make a hard call... there [were] pickets outside.

She clarified that the picketing involved students and staff, but no faculty. Some of the equipment used for this program can still be seen on the campus. Near the end of this exchange BCCA suggested that at BCC the president and the trustees are in charge of the school.

Boon Community College Faculty first met the current president at an open forum when he was a candidate for the position.

I admired his candor in the way he answered some of the questions that were put to him. What I noticed, though, was that he didn't seem to be a political beast

himself. And so the candor was maybe more of a...of a political tin ear. You know, to a certain extent you expect to hear, you know, happy answers.

BCCF was concerned about the president's "lack of enthusiasm for alternative delivery" methods of instruction as well as programs for gifted students during this first encounter. Once the president was hired, he chose to speak to the college community as a whole during a staff development day. At this address, he fielded questions.

Somebody asked him, "What do we call you?" And I remember an answer that went on for two or three minutes. And everyone in the room was smart enough to figure out that means we call you Dr. And that felt to me, and does still feel to me, like a decision that has political consequences. Even if the answer is, "Call me Dr. BCCP," rather than "Call me [first name omitted]," that's fine. To then walk around it this way was, I think it made everyone in the room uncomfortable.

Boon Community College Faculty prefaced his prior statement by saying that in the more than 20 years that he has been faculty at BCC, this is the first president that has not preferred to be called by his or her first name.

In the political frame, BCCS commented on the president's forceful message that employee groups were equal in his eyes. BCCS said that the president "made a point to say basically I don't care what group you're in that the rules are for everybody." At a recent college-wide meeting the president raised his voice at the staff. He said that the president does this if "he feels like he needs to yell" at us for something. BCCS offered her personal thoughts on this: "...if somebody is not following the rules, you address it with that person. Don't yell at everybody for it." Like BCCF, BCCS views the vice presidents as the persons that run the institution. In concluding his thoughts on the president, he said the following:

I really like him, but there have been different instances where I've thought, "You're the president. Make him stop that." Or, you know, why do you let him run the show? You're the president. But I'm not anybody out here, you know... So you can't just go in and yell at the president and say, "Do your job!"

He added that current president is much more involved than the previous president; however, he believes that the president "lets others make too many decisions."

Hurley Community College. When first starting at the college, Hurley Community College President "stumbled a little bit" internally, said HCCA. He noted that HCCP solicited his advice because HCCA had been at the institution for a long time. He said to HCCA, "If I'm starting to step off a cliff, you need to...you need to let me know." And so we have pretty open communication, and he listens. And he'll back off if he sees that that's probably a better thing to do. HCCA said that "the most important thing is he listens and evaluates," although HCCA said that he has had to "go catch him" on occasion. HCCP is still learning to maneuver the "different cultures" of the campus.

Hurley Community College President believes in a "transparent administration." As such, he instituted a quarterly campus-wide meeting. At these meetings, the president (along with his vice presidents) takes the stage and fields questions from the campus community. The questions are anonymous; they can be submitted by anyone on campus. All questions are answered publicly in this forum. HCCA said that president has taken many shots from employees at these meetings.

[HCCP] says, "I understand your point, but do you understand where I'm coming from?" You know, I know what it's like to walk in your shoes, but have you ever walked in mine? Have you ever been forced to make some of the decisions that I've had to make?

Hurley Community College Administrator believes that the president has handled this pressure well without backing down from the question. When reflecting on the external politics, he said, “[H]e’s done a real good job politically. He got to know early on the power brokers and pays them due [respect] on a regular basis. He hasn’t stumbled out there at all.” HCCA views the president as being in charge of HCC. He said that when the current president was hired the board warned HCCP that one of the vice presidents was wielding more power than he should. HCCA said that the perception by the staff at the school was that this vice president was “calling the shots” at the institution prior to the current president being hired. This is no longer the case. HCCA claimed that the president is adept at the politics external to the campus and that “he does well with people in the community.”

Hurley Community College Faculty presented a contrary view of the president’s visibility on campus. He said that he sees the president’s door “shut a lot” and that “He seems to be out and about within the community more.” While that is important, he said that college personnel will not feel they have “access” to the president if his door is closed often. As a result of his view that the president is less available than his predecessor, HCCA said, “I’m not so sure that he is as aware of those [internal politics].” Nor does he “like the internal politics” he sees. He summarized his view of the president’s handling of politics this way: “...there’s no gray. It’s black and white. You do it this way....When he gets into a gray area, he doesn’t know what to do when he gets out of his comfort zone.”

Hurley Community College Faculty attributed the president's apparent frustration in dealing with the internal politics to his prior experience; "It's not frustration because he's upset with people; I think it's frustration because he just doesn't know how to operate. He's kind of like a fish out of water, so to speak." Although he did not explicitly state it, HCCF viewed the president as being in command of the institution. He offered that HCCP likes to leave dealing with the internal dynamics of the institution to his "second-in-command." HCCF said that this person appeared "real aloof to a lot of people" and may be affecting the internal dynamics negatively.

Hurley Community College Staff stated that the president likes to be upfront with pending changes and not to allow the "grapevine" to take root. She implied recent program cuts were unpopular within the college community, but the president took a stand. He reminded the college that the state of Illinois is in a fiscal crisis and budgets needed to be tightened. She said that he has taken the same tone with the faculty during recent contract negotiations. He told them that they would get a specific annual pay increase but nothing more. She said he was being "honest" with them regarding the school's financial situation and added that staff was told they would not get a raise at all. HCCS clearly sees HCCP as running the institution along with the board. She added that "He comes right out and says, 'The board is my boss.' He said, 'You know, if there's something you don't like, you come and tell me or you tell my boss, the board.'"

Watt Community College. Watt Community College Administrator said that he would like to see the politics handled "a little better." His frustration stemmed from the president being "afraid to upset some people" at the institution. He added "It's good to

get buy-in but sometimes having to get buy-in across campus on some very basic policy and procedures and stuff takes forever and then it's frustrating to me." To describe his concern further, he said the following:

It's not like a consensus and then the decision is made because depending on who you have in that group, the leadership might not agree with that decision. So sometimes you have to step up and say, 'You know what? Thank you for your work and your input, but I'm going another way.'

WCCA said that his preferred method of handling conflict was to address that person; he had talked with the president about this issue. He believed that this is how the president conducts himself because "He's probably learning that that's a better way" and being indirect. WCCA was indecisive regarding his perception of who runs the school. He suggested faculty, the administrators, the board, and the president's leadership team. This president inherited a cabinet of approximately 22 people. WCCP decided to have that group become an advisory panel and to have his cabinet made up of a few key senior personnel. While recognizing the leadership team as "good people," he suggested WCCP's leadership team possessed "some gaps in the academic side of things." After even further contemplation, he said "the stakeholders...the customer...is king."

After being reminded that Watt Community College President had worked previously in the same area of the college as WCCF, he said that the president has handled the politics "better in some [areas] than others. He noted that "... I think when it comes to interpretation [of policies], sometimes people that work under [WCCP] make interpretations of policy...and [WCCP] does not really step in and say go one way or another with it." WCCF said that this tended to "frustrate" employees that look to WCCP as an arbiter.

Although Watt Community College Faculty does not have any personal issues with WCCP's handling of internal politics and conflict, WCCF said that he had "heard that it's hard to get [WCCP] nailed down on things," that "it's more a conflict avoidance kind of a thing," and "that if you try to push [WCCP], it's like pushing a cloud." WCCF said that he believed that employees of the college viewed WCCP as being in charge, although he did not think that he "has taken the control as much."

Watt Community College Staff was unhappy with how the common intake process was implemented. His position was directly impacted by the decisions that were made but was never solicited for input. "...nobody that was a part of that that was going to do it every day was really a part of the planning process...That's hard to get on board with something that you were never a part of," lamented WCCS.

He offered another example of the president's handling of internal politics:

[T]here was a certain faculty and he likes to just say whatever he wants to say. He tends to do it in e-mail, so everybody's e-mailing back and forth and pretty soon you've got, like, 40 e-mails coming from all these different people that are talking. Well, [WCCP] doesn't want to squash that, but he wants to make it a place where not everybody has to read it.

In this situation he had the information technology department set up an area specifically for such discussions; the dialogue can still flow freely but will not impact those in the community who did not want to be bombarded with "reading 40 emails of something that doesn't involve" them. Externally, he believes that the president has done a good job. WCCS said, "He's really big about making sure that community stays part of [Watt] Community College." He added that the president wants the college to remain visible to the community. WCCS viewed the students as being in control of the institution; they

determine what classes are offered, when they are offered, as well as what faculty is hired and fired. In the long term, WCCS sees the board as being in control because they answer to the voters of the district.

Presidential successes. To better understand the perceptions of stakeholders towards their presidents during the president's transition, participants were asked the following question: "What have been the successes of the new president from your vantage point?" Their observations provide insight to the potential strengths of their presidents and how stakeholders may assist them in furthering the board's goals. Stakeholder responses appear below and have been grouped by institution.

Boon Community College (BCC). The Boon Community College Administrator cited strategic planning, upgrading community outreach (foundation), and streamlining the hiring process as examples of the current president's success. When asked if the strategic plan existed prior to this president, she said, "It did not. No." This response contrasted with BCCF's earlier observation that while this president has made strategic planning a high priority for the institution, he did not bring the idea initially to BCC. Regardless, BCCA said that the success of the strategic plan was "huge" because "we needed the direction." An additional success of the president was his focus on expanding the college's foundation. BCCA said that it was "very weak" and that this president brought in someone new to head the effort with great success. While he could not provide an actual number, he said the amount of money the college currently brings in is "significantly" higher than it was prior to the current president. He went on to say that this position was elevated to the vice president level under the current president. The

hiring process was streamlined, which simplified the process. The new policy leaves the makeup of the hiring committee to the discretion of the hiring supervisor. Before this change, all hiring committees were required to represent a specific cross-section of employees, which made the process cumbersome.

Boon Community College Faculty lauded the new president's efforts to communicate with the college. He pointed out he thought "Regular communication is a plus and I think this president has done a good job with that. I really do." He also cited the president's ability for "setting a tone that is probably the one that he prefers." He commented that while it may not be everyone's preferential tone, he thought the president had been "very successful in tone setting." He went on to state that the president's tone is that "expectations may not be especially stringent, but the expectations are intended to be very clear. This is what is expected of you and this is the way it will be."

Boon Community College Staff (BCCS) cited morale as a success of the president. He thought that the president "being more approachable" and showing trust in employees "to do our jobs" has contributed to the apparent morale boost. Communication by the president to the college community was also identified as a success. BCCS said that because the president initiated these various modes of dialogue he believes the president wants "what's best for people equally."

Hurley Community College. Hurley Community College Administrator (HCCA) cited the president's reconnection of the college to the community as a major success. Since accepting the presidency at HCC, the Hurley Community College President has been very active in the community both in the larger cities and the more rural locales.

[C]ommunity leaders want to see the college leader, not one of the vice presidents. They want to see the president out there. [HCCP's] done an incredible job...there's hardly an activity, both on campus or in the community, that he's not at. The guy's killing himself. But he's doing it.

HCCA said that his actions are reaping dividends; the donations to the college have risen since this president started at the institution. His visibility on campus was also cited as a success; however, HCCA said, "I've noticed that ebbs and flows," which meshes with HCCF's observation that the president is not always visible.

Hurley Community College Faculty echoed HCCA's view that the president has found success in community outreach. He said that the president has "built a lot of bridges within the community" and "increase[d] outside funding" for the institution. HCCF said in relation that HCCP has helped the community view HCC as "being an institution of learning, not a junior college." The president has accomplished this in many ways; however, one significant way has been promoting "ceremonial" activities on campus. He summarized his thoughts by saying, "[I]t's not only building bridges or rebuilding bridges within the community, but elevating the academic awareness of [HCC] within the community and within the surrounding area."

Hurley Community College Staff (HCCS) agreed with his colleagues that HCCP has done a good job in community outreach. He said that HCCP does a lot of "meeting and greeting" and hosts many of the local chief executive officers on the campus to share meals. In commenting on HCCP's political savvy, she said, "He's really great at shaking your hand and almost picking your pocket at the same time, but he has the finesse to do that."

Hurley Community College Staff also viewed the president's shift to zero-based budgeting as a success. He said that while it was a "struggle" for some involved in the budgeting process, many of these same people said "they've really enjoyed that because now they understand" the budget much better than they did. He said that the president is "working on [a] compensation classification plan for hourly employees." This is viewed as positive because employees can increase their pay based on an agreed-upon plan instead of an "across the board raise" for everyone.

Watt Community College. The two major successes of this president as perceived by Watt Community College Administrator (WCCA) include changing the attitude of the campus and the addition of two new programs. The previous president created an environment that if "you don't agree with the president, you're going to lose your position." As an insider at the college, WCCP stepped in to change this attitude.

He comes in as a known entity and he has allowed people to speak openly and freely to him. He can take it. Obviously, he doesn't want to be called out in a meeting in front of 20 of his peers, but he will willingly listen to you and has changed. He has changed the attitude.

While being known helps, WCCA identified one of the key ingredients to his success in changing the institution: "[WCCP's] going to be here for us. You know, it's not all about trying to build his résumé to move on to the next level."

Watt Community College Faculty (WCCF) mirrored the response of WCCA. "[WCCP's] brought peace to the place again," said WCCF. He works well with the board, the faculty, and the staff at the college. He added the new president "has put a good image on the college," which he felt had been "tarnished" in past years. His efforts

to push the creation of two new programs at the college were also viewed as a success, although WCCF said balancing the finances has presented a challenge.

Like his colleagues, Watt Community College Staff (WCCS) viewed the change in attitude at the campus as a success of this president as well as the addition of two new programs. The previous president was not actively involved in the community and ran the institution with a “this is the way it’s going to be” attitude. WCCP had to return the institution to the idea of “feel[ing] good about being here at [WCC] and being part of the institution and being happy to come to work and liking it.” Without hesitation he ended his thought by saying “that’s what his greatest accomplishment was because of how far he had to come to get there.”

Presidential challenges. Challenges, as the question was posited during the interviews, could be viewed positively, negatively, neither, or both. Specifically, stakeholders were asked, “[W]hat have been the challenges for the new president from your vantage point?” The responses to this question illuminated potential areas of improvement and areas that stakeholders may assist the president in attaining the board’s goals and provided a glimpse of the stakeholders’ views of their presidents’ hurdles. Stakeholder responses are included by institutional grouping.

Boon Community College. For Boon Community College Administrator (BCCA), the president’s interaction with the stakeholders, including the board of trustees, was viewed as a challenge such as “getting the hang of individual eccentricities, egos, and bullies.” She said that he was “questioned for every change, every move” that he made by the status quo. She defined *status quo* as those senior employees with 20 to 25

years on the job. She added that most of those employees have retired now. As previously discussed, eliminating programs presented a challenge to the president. BCCA suggested that the process was a “proper,” “valid,” and “justifiable” manner; however, the board meeting where these programs were cut was “chaotic” due to the nature of the meeting agenda

When Boon Community College Faculty (BCCF) was asked about the president’s challenges, she said, “[T]hat sounds like a question for him.” Upon reflection, she thought that the college’s culture was “highly flexible.” By this she meant that at a small institution such as BCC, change can occur more quickly than at larger institutions. She said what the Boon Community College President had not prepared for was “maybe dealing with the fact that what seems like a small... a small action has a very large reaction sometimes.” BCC’s bargain unit, specifically faculty, presented a challenge for the new president. She offered that she did not think this was any different for any previous president. She brought up her earlier observation about the president not being “politically astute”. She suggested the current president’s challenge is not what he’s saying (as she said she agrees often with the content of his message) but in his delivery. As she put it, “[T]here’s a better way to handle this.”

Boon Community College Staff elaborated on a point he made earlier regarding the perception of who is in charge of the institution when asked about challenges faced by the president. His perception is that the vice presidents run the institution and that “they thought they owned everything” and “who thought they had more power” than they actually possessed. He believed the president has reigned them in somewhat. He briefly

mentioned improving morale as a success, as well as making policy changes as challenges for the president.

Hurley Community College. “Getting to know the cultures...maneuvering in the community and getting to know folks” are challenges for the new presidents according to HCCA. He also added “understanding Illinois” and the “Illinois community college system” as challenges. To be fair, he said these “would be a challenge to any new person.”

Hurley Community College Faculty said that a major challenge for the president is the current economy. While some institutions receive a relatively small portion of their budget money from the state, the percentage is significant at HCC.

And that’s the problem is we’re just a rural community farming without a lot of business and industry. And not wanting to raise taxes, not wanting to raise tuition, it becomes a real issue with regard to funding of the institution.

Internal politics are also a challenge. When a new president arrives, people are like “sharks circling in the water” because they want to protect themselves and their areas of the college. HCCF believes that HCCP has struggled with trying “to figure out those internal dynamics” and how to deal with them.

Also on HCCF’s radar of challenges for the new president is the idea of developing an institutional identity. He said that HCC lacks an identity and posed a rhetorical question: “What’s it mean to be, you know, a [HCC] student?”

You’ve got Home Depot and you’ve got Menard’s and you’ve got Lowes. How do you get people to identify I’m a Home Depot guy? I won’t go to Lowes and I won’t go to Menard’s. How do you do that? It’s tough in business.

He suggested that the school needs an identity to garner long-term support for the school.

When asked about the president's challenges, HCCS simply identified the following without elaboration: dealing with the faculty union, getting out and meeting the employees, and the upcoming reaccreditation of the college.

Watt Community College. WCCA listed finances, the president's perceived indecisiveness, and his tendency to create new policies instead of enforcing existing ones as challenges. He noted that WCC is located in an "economically depressed area." When coupled with the state funding crisis, the depressed finances of its surroundings present a challenge for the president. WCCA believes that the president "gives a little more credence to a few, four or five, [employees]" which "slows him down" in making decisions. He offered this advice to the president when dealing with these employees: "Talk with them, understand them, but I don't agree with you and I'm going to move on." He added that this president has a tendency not to assert his authority in situations when it may be warranted. He pointed out that on more than one occasion at the college, a policy was not being followed by a minority of the constituents. Instead of enforcing the policy, WCCP created a new policy ostensibly to avoid conflict. As WCCA viewed the situation, "The whole world had to change. Instead of just telling the person, 'That was a mistake....Please don't do that anymore.'" He summarized his thoughts in this idea by saying the following:

Instead of just stepping up and taking care of the situation with leadership and the power he possesses, it's let's build a whole policy. We don't want to tick anybody off or pull anybody on the carpet and make them feel bad or seem like we're being tough on them.

He then added that in one case the revised policy seemed so onerous to many that one long-term “veteran of this school” took a day off because he felt like he was “now being treated like a convict.” WCCA said “it’s just ridiculous” when this could have been solved by just “handling the situation.”

School finances were the primary challenge for the president as viewed by WCCF. He believed that this issue is “the one that eats up the most of [WCCP’s] mind.” He reiterated how funding has changed over the years, which required the president to perform a “juggling act.”

Watt Community College Staff viewed morale and finances as major challenges for the president. He believed that getting “everybody back on a nice even keel with working here” has been a challenge. However, the financial struggle for the institution has loomed large. He said that WCCP communicates the financial concerns of the college with the stakeholders well; he does so regularly via e-mail. However, “...not knowing when we’re going to get money, if we’re going to get money, how much is going to be, you know, if we get any at all” is still a struggle for the president and the college community.

Board’s goals for president. Participants were asked, “What goals have the Board set for the new president?” These goals are fundamental to directing the president’s agenda for the institution and provide a foundation for stakeholders’ roles and responsibilities during a presidential transition.

Uncertainty permeated each respondent’s answers. Of the 9 interviews conducted, only 3 provided substantive answers to the question. The body language of

many of the interviewees indicated uneasiness with the question. Boon Community College Administrator said that he thought one of the goals was a three percent annual increase in enrollment. Hurley Community College Administrator commented that “one of the bigger ones was rural engagement.” Hurley Community College Staff said that “they want to increase offerings” and ensure that when new faculty are hired that they will be “an asset” to the school.

Stakeholder roles. Whether the individual stakeholders knew the specific goals for the president, they each provided insight to their perceived roles and responsibilities by answering the following question: “What role or roles do you have, if any, in assisting the new president to implement these goals?” This question was essential to the purpose of this study, which sought to identify stakeholder perceptions during a community college presidential transition and strategies for assisting in a smooth transition. Knowing the perceived transition responsibilities of stakeholders can add clarity to their transition perceptions.

Boon Community College. Boon Community College Administrator provided details for his involvement in helping the president achieve one of his goals: enrollment. His answer suggested that he viewed assisting the president as part of his job because he reminded him that he was a member of the “president’s cabinet” and that he received his directives from his supervisor.

Although BCCF was unaware of the board’s goals for the president, he believed that he has a role in accomplishing these goals.

I come back to the strategic plan because it’s something that the board and the president and the administration take quite seriously. And, by the way, I’m

personally in favor of that. I know that a lot of us don't feel personally connected to it in our jobs, particular when it comes to faculty.

He understands that the college's mission and goals, in part, "revolves around instruction and I know that I'm a part of that." BCCF said that the president has stated that the strategic plan is important to the college and that he expects everyone to read and understand it.

Boon Community College Staff was also unfamiliar with the board's goals for the president. Not knowing the specific goals did not deter her from adding the following regarding her perceived responsibilities. She stated that, "I would say that my responsibility would be to help him." Reflecting on the president's role she said, "[H]e's kind of just a liaison between the board and the college." She stated that the board makes many of the final decisions involving the college, and it was her responsibility to "support" those decisions.

Hurley Community College. Hurley Community College Administrator explained it was his responsibility, along with the other vice presidents, to help HCCP meet his goals that were set by the board. He added that he and the other vice presidents also "have a special place at board meetings" and "are looked at as part of the administrative team that's to help the president implement those things." HCCA's job description contains two relevant responsibilities that could be perceived as applying to assisting the president in this regard. These responsibilities are to serve as a "consultant to the President" and to "perform duties as assigned by the President."

Although Hurley Community College Faculty did not know the specific goals of the president, he made the following comment utilizing a military analogy:

I think we're the first line of defense...if there's going to be some goals with regard to academic excellence, with regard to how we treat our students, how we try to make sure our students have a successful life, how we make sure they transfer on when they do transfer on, that other educational institutions look upon us as a quality learning institution, I think we're on the...front line. We're the ones that are doing the actual fighting. We are the foot soldiers, so to speak.

He stated emphatically that "we have an immense responsibility and an immense duty" to ensure that those specific goals [above] are completed."

Although this duty was not specifically listed in his job description, HCCS viewed it as his responsibility to support his supervisor, who was part of the chain-of-command at the institution. He said about assisting his boss, "I help him in every way I can." He noted that the president was very demanding and "expects action." He added that the president follows up on assignments that he gives employees. If he tells someone that he will follow up with them in a few weeks, he will. As she said repeatedly, "[H]e remembers."

Watt Community College. Watt Community College Administrator provided specific examples of working to assist the president in achieving the board's goals. He even suggested that while his supervisor provides tasks to accomplish in this regard, he should be proactive "instead of waiting for someone to come see me" to initiate action.

Watt Community College Faculty clearly saw his role as assisting the president in achieving the college's goals. He said the following:

[I]f we were to say that one of his goals is to make sure the college meets its goals, one of my roles would be to participate on committees and be a part of any process to move us along in those directions.

He also commented that he had served on the cabinet (an advisory position at WCC) in the past and believed that this participation helped in assisting the president's agenda. WCCF also believed that it was his responsibility to "put a good face on the college" within the community. He added that he goes out in the community on behalf of the college to conduct presentations in schools; this helps WCCP when he is out in the community because WCCF presents a positive image of the college.

Watt Community College Staff saw his role in a practical manner. His role "trickles" down from above; it is his responsibility to the community to perform. Due to the nature of his position he saw that his role will be very prominent in some goals and more advisory on others. For instance, when describing the promotion of a goal that he is not actively involved in, he said the following:

[M]y role as a member of the college is to let other people know that ask me about it, why it's important. I think that's...everybody's role here, is to let them know this is why we want to get this.

Guiding Question 2: How are Relationships of Stakeholders, with Each Other and with the New President, Affected During a Presidential Transition?

A series of three questions were asked of the participants to determine how, or if, these relationships are affected by a transition. These questions sought to gain insight into (a) the interrelationships among the administration, faculty, and staff at select community colleges, (b) the relationship each participating stakeholder perceived that she or he possessed with the president, and (c) the impact that these relationships potentially have on the board's agenda for the new president. Stakeholders provided responses that were answered relative to the current relationships, although some provided a historical

context to their answers to provide a means of comparison or contrast. At the time of the interviews, every participating school was in a presidential transition.

Stakeholder relationships with each other. This section focuses on the perceived relationships between stakeholders within the institution. At each institution the relationship between administration and faculty; faculty and staff; and staff and administration will be examined. Stakeholders were asked, “What is the working relationship like here between faculty, staff and the administration?” Their responses are provided below in institutional groupings.

Boon Community College. Boon College Community Administrator began his career at BCC as an instructor. He noted that as a faculty member, a “very brotherly feeling” existed. However, when he accepted an administrative position at the institution the feeling changed. While he said he did not perceive “resistance” from the faculty, he felt that “they don’t feel very close to you anymore” and “they’re still friendly, but there’s definitely some reservation.” When discussing the relationship between staff and the administration, he said there is “not a huge gap” and posited that may be due to the small size of BCC. Based on his experience working in other organizations, he said that he had seen “a lot more disconnect between administrators and the professional [and the] classified [staff].” As an administrator, his comments reflect his observations of the interactions between faculty and staff. He described this relationship as “a good working relationship.” He summarized up his view by stating, “That’s what I see in...maybe I’m a little biased, the way I look at it. But there’s a very good working relationship with the faculty, staff, and administration.”

Boon Community College Faculty offered the following as her view of the relationship between faculty and the administration at BCC:

It mostly feels as if for administration in particular, full-time faculty may be more trouble than they're worth....Not that there isn't value in what full-time faculty do, not that they don't recognize that we actually have the core mission of teaching, educating....We are...little birds in nests with our mouths open all the time...crying for whatever it is that we [want].

She said that earlier in her career this relationship was described as “inherently adversarial.” At the time, she did not believe this characterization. However, she said, “[I] believe there probably is something to that now.” She also described the apparent “rancor” as an “ebb and flow.” BCCF added that it is her belief that administrators tend to focus primarily on the bottom line. Accordingly, HCC tends to rely on adjunct faculty because they are more cost effective; adjunct faculty do not need office space or employment benefits. BCCF opined that “once you set this kind of relationship in motion, once you set that kind of level of rancor, then I think it's kind of self-sustaining. It is its own perpetual motion machine.”

Her observation on the relationship between faculty and staff suggested that this relationship is likely “driven by individual personalities” and also “may be a function of us being a small institution.” Personally she said that she gets along well with some and “not so much” with others, which corroborates her observations. Regarding the relationship between the administration and staff she clarified her perception by noting that she “tend[ed] to speak intimately like this with people who are generally of my own frame of mind” and thus one should interpret her comments with a “grain of salt.” She then offered some specific comments offered by staff that would likely be considered

negative about some of the administrators. While some of these comments were directed at the new president she had never heard anyone in any position say that they have “an intense personal dislike” for BCCP.

Boon Community College Staff clarified that two classifications of staff exist at BCC: classified and professional support. The former is unionized; the latter is not. For the purpose of this study no effort has been made to differentiate the two classes. He suggested that both the classified and professional support staff have a good relationship with faculty because each provides necessary services to faculty. When commenting on the relationship between faculty and the administration, it was his view that occasional conflicts were likely due to differing opinions on how to accomplish a specific task. He said, “Faculty think they need to be done a certain way and they think because they’re faculty they should be done their way. Well, administration may not think that because they’re looking maybe at the dollar signs.” The relationship between the staff and the administration was viewed as “okay...interpersonally”; however, BCCS stated there is a feeling that “there’s the haves and the have-nots.” She suggested that there is a double-standard in play because “sometimes those and other groups maybe take longer lunches. Yet, if somebody at my level were to take a longer lunch, [we’d] get in trouble for it, but they don’t.” She said that there’s “a certain amount of that that you have to just tolerate being an employee anywhere” and that she didn’t “find that to be unusual here.”

Hurley Community College. On a scale of 1 to 10, HCCA views the overall interrelationships at HCC to be “between a 7 and an 8.” She added that there are “folks that...and they’re kind of far down the food chain” that “don’t get the bigger picture.”

They do not understand “why we do some of the things we do...and so they question that.” To help these employees understand the bigger picture HCC is holding quarterly meetings with these employees so these issues and concerns can be addressed. She specifically stated that the direct relationship between the administration and faculty is “good...for the most part” but did not elaborate. HCCA said that because the staff assists the faculty to do their jobs by handling a myriad of tasks (e.g., advising and registration), she viewed that relationship as “good” as well. She described the relationship between administration and staff as being “a 7 or an 8” and said to get it to a 10 “would be like dying and going to heaven.” She has been employed in higher education nearly 40 years and has “never seen a 10” but has seen some “3s and 4s” during that time. She said “where we are here is probably the best I’ve seen it.” The numerical ratings given by HCCA were a personal rating scale and were offered freely during the interview.

Hurley Community College Faculty said that to understand the current relationship between faculty and staff, one must understand the history. At the inception of HCC, the college operated on more of a “business model.” Everyone was viewed as “employees.” The faculty later unionized and became “a little different.” She added that the staff’s perception of faculty is that “they feel that the faculty feel that they’re better than everybody else.”

The HCCF believes that instinctively faculty take “too much on” and in turn they “expect staff to read [their] minds or to know just instinctively what we need to have done.” HCCF cited lack of communication as “[hurting those] dynamics.” She also noted that she believes that staff members think that they work harder than faculty. For

example, faculty do not need to work during spring break. However, staff must work those hours. She claimed that this perception hurts the relationship as well.

The HCCF also claimed economics affect the relationship between staff and the administration. To support her assertion, she said, "...I think the staff sees the administration as saying this is what you're going to do. If you don't like it, go and try to find another job." She discussed the restructuring of HCC and stated the staff members do not believe that they have had any "input" into the plan; no committee or committees helped "sort things out." The staff at HCC tried to unionize at least once in the past but she believes the prevailing "negative sentiments about a union" led to its defeat.

The HCCF thinks the root of any perceived relationship issues between faculty and the administration is that each side believes the other does not have "the best interest of the college at heart." From the faculty perspective she offered the following:

One of the things that is evidence for the faculty is that they've tried to propose a joint committee made up of the president or his designee and maybe one board member and maybe one other vice president and one or two faculty members to try to sit together on a committee and when issues come up, how can we resolve these issues together...there's been a reluctance on the part of the administration to put that committee together.

From the administration's vantage point, she thinks they believe that faculty members are "all about the money" and "don't want to work, but yet they want more money." HCCF points out that when the union vote for faculty occurred at HCC, she voted against it.

Although she is supportive of her union, she believes the union may have "asked for too much too quickly," which has created this perception over the years by the administration. She added the following:

I think if everybody would just sit back and listen to each other, you're saying the same thing. It's just that you're shouting your justification so loud, you can't hear what the other person is saying. And they're both saying the same thing.

Hurley Community College Staff stated that historically "there was quite a division between faculty and staff and faculty and administration." He claimed that the failure of the previous president to take "care of some housekeeping of employees" led to the unionization of faculty. Since the current president arrived, things have changed. He added that "the saying around here for a while was we're rewarding people for bad behavior." However, that view is "in the process of changing." He noted that one issue that is causing "a rift between faculty and staff" is that per the faculty's last union contract they are now paid to be on committees; however, staff is expected to serve on committees as part of their jobs.

A review of HCCS' job description is not clear on this issue; no line item lists participation in committees as a job requirement. However, serving on committees may fall under "other duties as assigned." He said that while some faculty members participate in numerous committees and "do a good job," others "are on one committee and you wouldn't know they were even on the committee." He claims the president "does not like that fact of paying faculty to be on committees. He looks at it as bribery."

Hurley Community College Staff noted that recent changes in administration created problems between faculty and the administration in one area. The dean in charge of this area routinely did work that HCCS felt was the department chairs' responsibility because the department chairs were getting 3 to 6 hours of release time per semester. These tasks included budgeting. A new dean was hired and refused to do these tasks for

the department chairs. However, the HCCS now believes “[the department chairs] really see how important this is.”

Watt Community College. Watt Community College Administrator stated that in his area he believes the relationships are “golden.” Overall, he said that this is “a great place to work” and “people in general have good relationships.” Specifically the relationship between faculty members is good sans one administrator in particular. He noted that this administrator has been at the institution for years; although faculty has come and gone, “they’re [faculty and this administrator] are never going to see eye-to-eye.” He added it is her view that faculty possess “some animosity” towards the administration because it appears that the administration as a whole does not hold individuals accountable “when somebody isn’t doing their job.” He clarified by saying that these folks who are apparently getting away without performing their jobs properly exist in all stakeholder areas.

Watt Community College Faculty said that faculty and staff “get along well.” He suggested there are outliers, as described by WCCA; however, overall the relationship is good between these two groups. He also added that in his view, the relationship between staff and the administration is also “pretty good.” He added that he has “always seen this as a very positive place to work.” During this discussion WCCF mentioned an annual survey conducted at the college that explored internal relationships and job satisfaction. Attempts to acquire this document were unsuccessful.

Watt Community College Faculty thought that the relationship between faculty and the administration at WCC can be “contentious” at times. He provided an example that helped create this perception.

We have a vice president who in the past has changed grades without any knowledge of the faculty member who gave the original grade.... And the faculty member does not necessarily have...any rebuttal to whatever has been said...it has been an ongoing one for a number of years, but it's got more to do with that individual administrator than it does the administration as a whole.

He asserted that the president is aware of this specific issue because of “complaints” that have been submitted to his office. He said that the president’s response is to “work it out with that administrator.” He added that a desire exists among faculty to avoid the grievance route at WCC; however, issues like these continue and have become issues for contract negotiations.

As an observer, WCCS sees the relationship between faculty and the administration as “a butting of heads.” He said, “Faculty is thinking one thing and administration is thinking another thing and for me as the staff, I just want them to do what’s right for the students...[there is a] kind of a tug of war...between the powers that be.” In describing the relationship between staff and the administration she said, “I think the administration tried to listen to what the staff is saying, but there’s always a possibility that what the staff thinks is best is not what’s best. And it’s just hard for them to change.”

Although her comment was specifically directed at faculty, WCCS affirmed the view that one tries to “avoid calling” some members of the community if some assistance is needed. She described the three stakeholder groups (administration, faculty, and staff)

as “the triangle” and said that they “don’t mix a lot.” She said it takes “a lot of organization” to bring the three sides together. As an example, she described a fundraiser to generate funds for one of the new programs the president was promoting. Since all stakeholders had potential to gain from this program going forward and “realized that it was an important thing to do” the event was a success. HCCS concluded by saying, “I had fun. It was fun.”

Impact on board’s agenda. Participants were asked, “In what ways does this relationship impact the new president in moving the board’s agenda forward? Some felt that it had no impact; others felt that it did whereas others were indifferent. Table 6 provides a summary of their answers.

Table 6

Impact on Board’s Agenda by Stakeholder Relationships

| Participant | Impacts | Participants’ Observations |
|-------------|---------|---|
| BCCA | Yes | [If] the president is trying to spend all this time or the administrator is trying to spend all their time to resolve this kind of conflict, this kind of resistance, trying to reduce it. So definitely he’s going to have problems. |
| BCCF | No | I think that the people he needs in order to move certain things forward are people that he doesn’t have to negotiate with. |
| BCCS | Yes | I think that things like that have to bog him down [when referring to relationship issues]. |
| HCCA | Maybe | [H]e feels that he can go to any of the constituent groups and tell them what’s going on and where he’s thinking we need to go... |
| HCCF | Yes | I think the impact is significantly, especially with the current economics. |
| HCCS | Yes | I don’t think he’s letting it get the best of him. You know, I think he wants to work with them and get these things solved. |

| Participant | Impacts | Participants' Observations |
|-------------|---------|---|
| WCCA | No | At this point, there's nothing that I've known that has slowed down. |
| WCCF | Yes | I think the relationship as a whole moves forward. I think it could move forward better if we address some things more directly. |
| WCCS | Yes | So I think just that resistance makes it hard for the president to move forward with a change. But that's what a leader is about. You have to...you have to get people on board and make the change happen. |

Boon Community College. Boon Community College Faculty does not believe that stakeholder relationships impact the ability of the president to move forward with the board's agenda. BCCA believes that "there's going to be resistance and conflicts" and that "puts the constraints on trying to get the board's agenda" being moved forward. BCCS provided a concrete example that illustrated his point that the president seemed to possibly get slowed down in dealing with this crisis. The details of this conflict are not provided to protect the participants of this study; however, they can be summarized to support her contention when she said "it just became too much discussion."

Hurley Community College. The consensus at HCC is that stakeholder relationships may impact presidential implementation of the board's goals. HCCA suggests that there is no impact, although she never clearly states it by her comments as noted previously in Table 6. Therefore, the implication is that this president is a strong leader. HCCF views the interrelationships as potentially harmful. HCCF described "those kind of feelings" such as stakeholders complaining about what they did not get and faculty refusing to work at home as examples of attitudes that may impede progress.

Watt Community College. The stakeholders at WCC are divided in their views on their impact of stakeholder relationships on the president's ability to move the board's agenda forward. WCCA stated, as noted in Table 5, that the president has not been slowed down by the relationships at the institution; however, he did say that "not having everybody on the same page" could possibly have an impact. She did not view this as an issue by commenting that it is just "like any other company would deal with." WCCF and WCCS are more firm in their assertions that these relationships both affect the president's ability to do his job. To explain his view, WCCF provided the following analogy involving his children:

[W]hen boys seem to have an issue...they'll knock it down, slug it out, get over with it, and then they go on from there...girls let things simmer and I think in many cases we let things simmer and they never get solved.

WCCS acknowledges that the president has put people in leadership positions who he trusts to assist him; however, he is still concerned that "resistance is what will keep him from going forward."

Stakeholder relationship with the president. Participants were asked to share their perception of their relationship with the president by answering this question: "What is your relationship with the president?" Based on their position at the institution, this relationship could be indirect or direct (and in some cases personal). Guiding Question #2 sought to determine how stakeholder relationships are affected during a presidential transition. Understanding stakeholders' perceptions of their relationship with the presidents helped to inform this question.

Boon Community College. As a senior-level administrator, BCCA attends functions on behalf of the college in the community as does the president; however, BCCA was quick to point out that the relationship is “strictly work-related” and would not elaborate further other than saying “the president is open-minded to other ideas” and “that definitely helps in alleviating any situation.” On a personal level, BCCF describes her relationship with the president as “good.” Although she is faculty, she said that she had worked with him directly on projects at the college.

I found a person that...could be worked with. But it required...a certain level of allowance for personality....I have a volatile personality myself, so I understood that....So my personal working relationship with him is... perfectly fine. I hope he thinks so, too.

Boon Community College Faculty said, “[E]ven if I don’t necessarily agree with everything they do” that she can have “a working relationship” with that person. BCCP has an open-door policy that Boon Community College Staff has availed herself of on occasion and seemed to really like him personally. She said, “He’s a nice guy. He really is” and “I didn’t like past presidents, so it’s a nice change to have someone that you can respect that you work for.”

Hurley Community College. Hurley Community College Administrator, along with the other vice presidents and their spouses, have attended several social gatherings with the president. They viewed it as something “we need to do” although added that it was “enjoyable.” At work, the vice presidents meet with the president weekly to “drink coffee and talk about what’s keeping us up at night” regarding the operation of the institution. On occasion he said that people have raised their voices; however, these conflicts did not involve him. He commented that one vice president has not learned how

to approach HCCP and that sometimes there are “sparks flying.” HCCF called his relationship with the president as not “great” or “bad” but “okay.” He vividly described his relationship with the past president and said they shared a love of sports; the prior president would stop in his office just to talk about the topic. He suggested his lack of a relationship is because he has not “had the opportunity to get to know him like [he] did the other president.” HCCS has an office in proximity to the president’s office and pointed out that he talks to HCCP every day. He said their relationship is “good.”

[O]ur [president] before a couple of times I had made a suggestion to him and he said, “Oh, I’m the president. I can do whatever I want.” You never hear this guy say that. He’s willing to listen and...maybe he doesn’t like your idea, but at least he will listen.

Hurley Community College Staff reiterated several times that this president “listens.”

Watt Community College. All three participants at WCC consistently referred to WCCP by his first name throughout their respective interviews. Although they have known each other for about 20 years, they have no relationship outside of work. However, they may see each other out in the community. He described the relationship as “good” and that “[WCCP’s] never done anything but show me support” at work. WCCF sees his relationship with WCCP as “very positive.” They know each other’s spouses and kids because it is a small community. At one time before WCCP was the president, he served as WCCF’s direct supervisor. He said that WCCP has been there to “encourage” him and his fellow faculty members in his division when they had enrollment issues a few years ago. WCCS described his relationship with the president as informal. He added that WCCP is “really good...as far as bosses go” and that he makes me “feel comfortable.”

Guiding Question 3: In What Ways Is the Organizational Culture Affected During a Presidential Transition?

To understand how the organizational culture may be affected during a presidential transition, participants were asked three questions. These questions sought to gain an understanding of each organization's culture from multiple institutional perspectives, to determine the role that symbolism may play, and whether the college's organizational culture impedes the board's agenda for the new president. These questions are as follows: Describe the organizational culture at your college. How has the transition been shaped by the culture of your institution specifically in the realm of symbolism (ceremony, ritual)? Does the college's organizational culture impede the board's agenda and if so, in what ways? Stakeholders' responses are presented by institution.

Organizational culture. Participants were asked to "describe the organizational culture at your college" and were provided with Kuh and Whitt's (1988) definition: "Culture is the collective, mutually shaping patterns of norms, values, practices, beliefs, and assumptions that guide the behavior of individuals and groups" (pp. 12-13) for clarification.

Boon Community College. Boon Community College Administrator's first comments described the organizational culture as resistant to change.

It's changing. Good and bad. Overall the good thing is we're very customer service-oriented in our organization....By the same token, we believe in the status quo...when you have people working here a long time...they're set in some...in their way of doing things....I'm sure the president had a hard time breaking

that...tie. That's the way we've been doing it. We've been doing this for ten years, twenty years.

Although Boon Community College Administrator acknowledged that he was “beating up on the people who have been here longer,” he stated that those same individuals “had a sense of ownership” and “feel proud of the institution.” Although provided a copy of the questions in advance, BCCF did not review them in advance. She said, “What is the organizational culture? I don't know. Does top-down, is that a description?” She added that since this president arrived that there has been an attempt to communicate better. However, she also said a “dividing” was occurring at the institution that she said could be either by “intent” or “just by...in practice.” She paused, reflected, and started to describe some remodeling that occurred at the campus; the remodeling involved adding walls in an area that had been an open space near the entrance to the campus. BCCF said the administration claimed this remodeling was a legal issue in that doors in this area “have to be able to close” when employees are present. “Everything is just being closed off...it feels symbolic to me. It's not just the physical doors are now locked and the walls are now...it feels like that's symbolic of the way things are going,” she said. BCCS described the culture as being “country people.” She described how employees go out of their way to help their fellow employees; when one employee was out on maternity leave, others volunteered to assist in making sure her responsibilities were covered in the interim. From an educational perspective, she said “here the teachers know the students...and you know people on more of a personal level.” When it was suggested that BCC sounded like a family, she replied, “It really is a lot more.”

Hurley Community College. Hurley Community College Administrator said the culture had “changed a lot.” In the early days of the institution, they did not have their own full-time faculty. Teaching was subcontracted with other institutions.

[A]s we began to hire our own faculty and grow the instructional area, there was a lot of resistance from the staff that had been here from the beginning because all the sudden now they saw their power within the institution eroding and the faculty were taking on a very traditional role. Folks didn’t understand that.

He added that while things have improved, the “old timers” on staff still harbor resentment toward the faculty. He said that HCC is changing as these employees reach retirement age. He further described the institution as culturally being focused on “student success” and caring about the students. Institutionally, he said “[W]e do a lot of things to maintain high touch with our students in spite of the technological enhancements that we have.” HCCF said one of HCC’s biggest challenges as an institution is “I don’t think we know what makes the school what it is.” He described efforts by the institution to develop mission statements and learning outcomes for the school; however, buy-in was minimal. He asserts that lack of follow-up is a major reason that these efforts fail at HCC. He then shared the following thoughts about the culture at the institution, although he thinks this is typical of all community colleges.

[F]aculty, staff, and administration all care about the students. Faculty, staff, and administration all want the students to have a successful life. Faculty, staff, and administration all want the students to be successful whether they get a two-year degree and go work or they get a transfer degree and go on.

He then went back to his original premise: “What makes us stand out from anybody else? What makes us uniquely [HCC]? I don’t know that we have that. I really don’t.” HCCS described the organizational culture as having a “friendly atmosphere” and repeated the

word “friendly” several times. He said, “I think we all feel we’re working together for the common good of the college.”

Watt Community College. Watt Community College Administrator, who has been at the college for 20 years, says WCC has a “sense of family” yet “the organizational culture is still one of professionalism, but we understand that people have lives and we account for that in the decisions we make.” WCCA added he believed that the last president was “an odd egg” and did not understand the culture of the institution, which likely contributed to his departure. The current president understands the culture of the institution because he has lived it for over 25 years.

Watt Community College Faculty described the culture as “mixed.” He clarified by saying that she viewed each stakeholder group as having its own culture and calling it “a real rainbow of different cultures.” While he has not visited many community colleges, he has visited some and offered this observation in comparing his school to larger institutions: “I would liken it to the difference between a big city high school and a small rural high school and the kind of cultural differences that you run into there.”

According to WCCS, the “student population,” “campus,” and the “people who work here” are what make WCC. Her opinion is that “everybody that I know, they really love working here.” She amended her comment to include “even the ones that complain.” She said the smallness of the institution is important to the culture because “everything is right there.” She said that “valuing people” is the “standard” at WCC.

Impact on transition. “How has the transition been shaped by the culture of your institution specifically in the realm of symbolism (ceremony, ritual)?” was asked of

research participants. Responses from each participant appear below. These responses provide insight into stakeholder perceptions during a presidential transition and how the organizational culture may be impacted by the transition.

Boon Community College. Boon Community College Administrator commented that part of the culture of BCC includes departmental celebrations for various events. For example, when the school received its Cisco certification in the information technology department, a pizza party was held to celebrate. He said that the president “definitely supports” activities like these but expects these activities be conducted in a way that does not impact the students at the college. BCCA added that some of the college’s satellite centers would close for lunch as part of their rituals. The president stopped this procedure because it did not serve the community. BCCP required those campuses to “stagger” their lunches to keep the site open for business during lunch time. Lastly, BCCA commented on a specific cultural issue that occurred at the college. He said this particular issue caused “an uproar” with “e-mail flying out” around the campus. While he did not emphatically state that this issue impacted the transition, it was implied.

Graduation was immediately seized upon by BCCF when contemplating the question. She said it was “the president’s call” several years ago to hold graduation off site. “Symbolically, I think what that says to me is that we don’t think we even have that much to show off to our tax-paying public. And that has made me sad. I’m not the only one.” she said. BCCF predated this president, but she is endorsed by him. BCCF commented on the college’s core values. She said, “I sometimes wonder whether the symbolism is an attempt to mask the lack of substance” and added that “a number of us

have felt that caring and respect, which are two of our core values, maybe are not as honored in the observance as they are in the breach.”

Boon Community College Staff observed that when this president was hired, there was never “any big come meet the president party”. He said that the president “was walked around” and “introduced to people,” which is common with any new employee (although sometimes does not happen). Thinking about the college’s graduation, he said that it has not changed, which contradicts BCCF (although she admitted that she rarely attends the event). Lastly, BCCF commented on retirements. She stated “We’ve had a batch of faculty retire under ugly circumstances. Things aren’t always pretty. There are many personalities and classes. Programs get cancelled and things like that. There’s a lot of hard feelings.” His reference was to faculty who had their programs closed and were effectively forced to retire. It created “hard feelings” between the faculty and the administration although he seemed to suggest this had little impact on the president as he was busy “doing president guy stuff.”

Hurley Community College. HCCA does not believe that the transition has been shaped by the organization’s culture. She did say that unlike his predecessor, HCCP “was inaugurated at last year’s graduation.” In previous questions, HCCA commented on the president’s focus on ceremony and ritual in conducting himself.

The HCCF commented about the president’s “installation ceremony” and suggested that it was not well-received overall in the college community; “it made graduation longer,” and “it was done without any input...because that’s the way he

wanted it done.” HCCF made the following observation about moving the college forward during the transitions:

[The] transition...has really been hampered because of the lack of...I don't want to say “identity” again, but just a lack of how are we going to do what we all want to do?...I'm absolutely convinced that everybody here wants to do the same thing.....We don't really get on the same page on how we want to do the same thing.

HCCS said that they are told that they are “here for the student.” To that end, the president “wants graduation to be a big thing,” and “he wants the community to feel that...HCC has played an important role in these young people's lives.” She did not suggest that the cultural symbolism affected the transition in any way.

Watt Community College. Watt Community College Administrator stated that while the college had supported a leadership institute in the community, WCCP brought it in-house to offer it to all employees. He noted “symbolism in that sense that you can all be leaders as opposed to just sit over there and do what I tell you was probably the biggest thing.” Also related to the leadership institute was an understanding that the college needed to “celebrate once in a while.” In the past, faculty received a “notice from the board” informing them of their tenure. Now, the accomplishment is celebrated; vice presidents and the president attend the celebration. He implied that WCCP's understanding of the college culture informs his implementation of celebrations by saying “he's sensitive of not going too big because then that will feel that somebody else is left out.”

Watt Community College Faculty commented that most ceremonial activities of the college have remained untouched by this president. She noted that some activities,

such as those for new faculty members, have been cut due to budgetary concerns; however, there is a return to the format for the week prior to classes starting. In the past guest speakers came in that week but this has been eliminated.

Watt Community College Staff stated emphatically: “I think he’s very respectful of [WCC]. When he took over, he was trying to get that feeling of that community culture back....He’s trying to get that culture back to we’re a family rather than...I work in [one building] and he works in the next building kind of thing.”

Impact on board’s agenda. Stakeholders were asked, “Does the college’s organizational culture impede the board’s agenda? If so, in what ways?” Their answers appear below grouped by institution. These responses provide insight into stakeholder perceptions during a presidential transition and how the organizational culture may impede the board’s agenda.

Boon Community College. Boon Community College Administrator does not “think there is a direct relationship” between the organization’s culture and the board’s agenda; instead, the president must “find a way” to make it happen. BCCF agreed with BCCA; however, his rationale is different.

It seems that the...the board has no interest in working with anybody but the president. And again, this is something that pre-dates this president. But faculty used to have a regular spot on the board agenda...and several years ago, that was done away with. That, to me, is emblematic or symbolic of the regard that the board has for the faculty. And I don’t know how much...how much influence a president can have on matters like that related to the board’s meeting agenda.

Boon Community College Staff countered her colleagues' view that the organizational culture impedes the board's agenda; however, she believed that it would be impeded only "slightly."

Hurley Community College. Hurley Community College Administrator does not believe the school's culture impedes the board's agenda. HCCF provided a contrasting view by stating that he perceives it to have "a tremendous negative impact" on the board's agenda. He went on to say, "I don't think they understand there's that lack of culture and that lack of culture is what is really impeding their best-laid plans of mice and men." HCCS believed the board will move forward regardless of the culture of the institution.

Watt Community College. Watt Community College Administrator provided the following insight regarding the organizational culture's impeding of the board's agenda: "...most of the culture probably doesn't know what the board agenda is." He claimed the opposite is true when he said, "...I think the culture does promote...does not impede the overall goals". Watt Community College Faculty and Watt Community College Staff concur with WCCA's assessment. WCCS further stated that she believes the culture "propels" the board's agenda.

Findings Related to *A Priori* and Emergent Themes

***A Priori* Themes**

A priori themes found in this research included (a) Bolman and Deal's (2008) theory that leaders view organizations in frames, (b) Vaughn's (1989) declaration that new presidents must communicate the institution's mission, and (c) Martin's (1996)

charge that new presidents must establish relationships with key constituents. Findings related to the *a priori* themes will be presented by participating institution.

Leaders View Organizations in Frames. Many books focus on a single frame; Bolman and Deal strive to bring these four frames together to provide a new mental model for viewing organizations. No assumption is made that the presidents at the institutions in this study have any knowledge of Bolman and Deal's reframing model. The findings related to this theory only confirm that a president has taken or not taken action relative to a frame as perceived by those interviewed. The four frames presented by Bolman and Deal (2008) are structural, human resources, political, and symbolic. Each frame offers a different view of the organization and suggest that leaders tend to focus on a single frame instead of all of them to paint a new mental model.

Boon Community College (BCC) was nearing the end of its presidential transition when the stakeholder interviews occurred. Its president has an academic background and was recruited from outside the geographic area to lead the institution.

Of the four frames presented by Bolman and Deal, the structural frame was most clearly identified as the one focused on by this president. While BCCA stated that the organization had been "streamlined" as a result of the president's actions, both BCCF and BCCS believed the organization had become more "top heavy" as BCCF first observed. Since BCCP has arrived at the institution, full-time faculty had been reduced while the number of administrators and staff had been increased according to BCCF. BCCS also noted that structurally this president has made numerous changes to policies regarding the day-to-day operation of the institution. However, he added that none of the changes "has

been drastic” and that he believed these changes to be “a natural evolution of the college.”

Boon Community College Administrator cited supervisor training as a major change to the institution that could be viewed through the human resources lens in that it focuses on growing employees. This training sought to help new and existing supervisors by holding training sessions quarterly. BCCF focused on the previously mentioned faculty cuts when discussing the human resources issues at her institution.

[W]e now have a request from the administration to accept a salary freeze. In other words, we’re contractually in line for a certain increase for the next academic year. We’re being asked to forgo that...it’s one of those things where you understand it [given the economic climate].

He said the issue that faculty were having with this request is that as the older faculty retire, they are being replaced by faculty commanding much lower salaries. At the same time, the number of administrators and staff has increased.

Through the human resources frame, the president has increased the size of the actual department. While part of this change is structural, the growth in the department was also designed to expand on “health initiatives,” as BCCS observed. BCCS seemed to suggest that although the goal of these initiatives was ultimately to help lower insurance costs for the institution, some view them as “cater[ing] to the clique.” The “clique,” as he used the term, was directed at a select group of administrators at the institution that appears to get preferential treatment. He also confessed to belong to a clique as well; he referred to this clique as the “cool clique.” As an example of the inequity, he noted that massages had been offered at the school. However, employees had to pay for these massages. For members of the “cool clique,” it was not financially viable. However,

higher-level employees could afford these massage treatments; their ability to participate reinforced the perception that they receive preferential treatment.

Organizations may be viewed through a political lens; such a lens can make the institution appear to be a jungle (Bolman & Deal, 2008). According to Boon Community College Administrator, the Boon Community College President has had to deal with several “political nightmares” since arriving at the college. One issue involved an incident that affected the community as well as students and the board. (Details have been omitted to protect the institution’s privacy.) A resolution was reached in this instance; BCCA observed that “he’s handled it very well.” BCCF first met the president at a meet-and-greet at a candidate’s forum. While listening to the president answering the posited questions, she thought that the president “didn’t seem to be a political beast.” Because she worked with the president on occasion, she added that she did not think that he was “the most politically astute administrator” that she has worked with over the years.

On the political front, BCCS noted that this president prefers to chastise a group instead of hold the individual that breaks the institutional policies accountable. “Sometimes he yells at us if it’s something he feels like he needs to yell at...wants to yell at us about” she said. Then she added, “[I]f somebody is not following the rules, you address it with that person. Don’t yell at everybody for it.” Additionally she noted that it is her perception that the vice presidents run BCC, not the president.

The Boon Community College Administrator acknowledged the symbolic frame when he noted that BCCP is “aware” and “supports” some of the symbolic domains at the

institution such as departmental parties, college graduation, and the employee dress code.

He was contradicted by BCCF when she lamented about graduation.

We used to have graduation ceremonies on the grass right out here in front, weather permitting ...One of the biggest opportunities to bring people to campus was always graduation ceremony...Now we have apparently permanently made the decision to hold graduation off campus.

She confirmed that this decision was “the president’s call.” Boon Community College Staff suggested that the president had essentially been “hands-off” with graduation; his role was limited to showing up and speaking.

Hurley Community College (HCC) was at the beginning of its presidential transition when the stakeholder interviews occurred. Its president came to HCC from an area outside of academia and was recruited from outside the geographic area to lead the institution although he is originally from the area.

According to HCCA, the structure of HCC has changed minimally—if at all. He noted that reorganizing the college has not appeared to be a priority for HCCP. The perception of HCCF was very different than HCCA. As he stated, “...he has made some structural changes. Not as far as personnel goes, so to speak. He’s had some handpicked people in certain positions. The biggest structural change is that he’s doing a chain of command type of structure.” While HCCA said that he routinely bypassed the chain of command, he knew that some people “feel a little frustrated because they feel like they don’t really have an avenue of reproach” when following this new organizational scheme. BCCS added to the structural view that this president has spent money to professionalize the image of the college; he added that “this guy maybe has spent a little too much, but it

has been all in good taste.” She echoed HCCA’s assessment that HCCP has made minimal structural changes overall at the institution.

In the human resources paradigm, HCCA also stated that HCCP has made minimal changes. The changes, he contends, were “minor things that probably would have happened” regardless of “whoever was up there.” Like HCCS, he noted that this president has spent money “to jazz the place up a little bit” although he viewed this as belonging in the human resources (family) area. HCCF’s observations regarding this area was that HCCP allowed the human resources department at the college to “solidify power,” which could easily be viewed in the political realm. HCCS commented on changes to the hiring practices at the college that were tangentially observed by HCCF. He stated that prior to this president, new hires (including candidates for vice president positions) did not meet the president during the hiring process. He said “it never hit the president’s office. But it does now.”

Politically, this president had excelled at external politics and “stumbled a little bit” internally according to HCCA. He suggested that because HCCP “listens and evaluates” the president will ultimately excel in this area as he learns to how to navigate this institution. HCCF mimicked HCCA’s responses by noting that “he does well with people in the community” but that internally he’s “not so sure that [HCCP] is aware of [the internal politics].” HCCS agreed with his colleagues regarding external politics; however, he added that HCCP “has helped tremendously with the politics [at the institution]” when he instituted college-wide meetings. He said these meetings have “squashed” a lot of the rumors that circulate throughout the institution.

In HCCA's comments regarding the symbolic realm, he suggested this may be the primary focus for this president. He noted that to his knowledge BCCP is the first president at the institution that "was inaugurated." He also commented on this president focusing on installing the school's seal in the courtyard as well as numerous cosmetic changes. HCCF also commented on HCCP's inauguration; he called it an "installation ceremony." He added that it "made graduation longer" and was done "because that's the way [HCCP] wanted it done." Although he did not address HCCP's inauguration, HCCS did say that the president "wants graduation to be a big thing" and used it to promote the college and instill the idea that "[HCC] has played an important role in these young people's lives."

Watt Community College (WCC) was in the middle of its presidential transition when the stakeholder interviews occurred. Its president was an internal candidate for the position and was brought in to replace a seemingly unpopular external president.

Watt Community College Administrator stated that the organizational structure had not changed "much at all." She acknowledged some "shifting of duties as some folks have retired" but nothing significant. WCCF echoed WCCA's observations regarding organizational realignment noting it was likely due to "retirements." He did say that the reorganization (albeit minor) may have "caused some stress" for some of those involved; they were required to relocate within the institution and also be cross-trained to handle more job responsibilities. WCCS also noted changes to the organizational chart and claimed it affected her in her position at the college. She did seem to question some of

the newly created positions and suggested “they were created specifically for someone.” Individuals that were qualified for the new position were not allowed to apply.

Regarding human resources, WCCA viewed the newly implemented supervisor training as relative to this area and one that he personally gained from as a new administrator/supervisor at the college. WCCF focused on the softer side of human resources by noting that this president was very different than the last president. He noted that the last president was “very autocratic.” This president tries “to accommodate people” too much; however, she suggested it is a welcomed change at the institution. WCCS added that the compensation review initiated by the president was a human resources issue that was addressed by the president.

Watt Community College Administrator noted that politically, WCCP seemed to be “afraid to upset some people” at the institution, which led to indecisiveness in moving the college forward. WCCF confirmed WCCA’s observation by saying he had “heard it’s hard to get [WCCP] nailed down on things.” WCCS commented on the president’s goal of open communications on campus and suggested he practices what he preaches. An incident occurred on campus whereby a stakeholder went on a tirade via e-mail. Instead of shutting down the communications, he had the information technology department create an online area for the dialogue to continue—but only with people that wanted to participate.

All three stakeholders acknowledged that WCCP understood the importance of symbols within the institution. WCCS noted that since he had taken over the role of president, WCCP has been “trying to get that feeling of that community culture back.”

WCCA added that the president supports internal parties and celebrations at the college.

All noted that the president holds graduation in high esteem.

Communication of college's goals. Understanding the college's goals is fundamental to understanding stakeholders' perceptions of a presidential transition and their roles and responsibilities during the transition. When asked what goals the board had set for the new president, uncertainty permeated each respondent's answers. Several stakeholders had no idea; other participants hazarded a guess. Relevant comments appear in Table 7.

Table 7

Stakeholder Assessment of Presidential Communication

| Participant | Participant's Observations |
|-------------|--|
| BCCA | He does a lot of communication to the college. |
| BCCF | I think that he's worked hard to communicate in formal ways...I really think that communication has been, in general terms, a success. |
| BCCS | But him talking to us as groups, I think, has been a good thing because he's opened an extra line of communication that we didn't have before. |
| HCCA | I think he prides himself in having this transparent open communication and open administration. |
| HCCS | We have an all-college meeting... And you have the chance to write a question down on a piece of paper and then he [answers it in front of all attendees]. |
| WCCA | This president is much better as far as collaborating, constant communication, keeping everybody in the loop. |

Note. HCCF, WCCF, and WCCS provided no specific comments relative to this question.

Of the nine interviews completed for this study, six respondents did not articulate clearly any of their institution's goals. Only three stakeholders provided substantive answers; these three stakeholders included two administrators and one staff person. The latter worked directly for one of the college's vice presidents and thus had intimate knowledge of the institutional goals as outlined by his job description, which requires him to "prepare reports (institutional and state) and correspondence as assigned by the vice president of [area omitted to protect stakeholder]." Many participants commented on their president's effective communication skills.

Stakeholder relationship development. The literature suggests that for new presidents to succeed, they must establish relationships with key constituents including the board, faculty, and administration (Martin, 1996). While participants were not specifically asked if their president had made these efforts, the findings as summarized below suggest that presidents sought to reach out to the community to create these bonds.

Of the three participating institutions, the least amount of evidence of relationship building involved BCC's president. During his interview, BCCA did not indicate that the president was working to build relationships with stakeholders. BCCF, a senior faculty member, worked closely with the president when he first arrived on the campus as a leader on the college senate. He said that the president "wanted to learn some things about how things are working" at the institution and that as a leader at the institution he was in a unique situation that allowed him "to work with [BCCP] in ways that maybe a lot of folks didn't that first year he was here." Whether this was a premeditated pairing on the president's part is unknown. BCCS noted that this president reached out to

administrative and support staff by holding bi-monthly meetings with senior members from each employee group to address concerns that they may have.

At HCC, HCCA initiated quarterly college-wide meetings aimed creating a “transparent administration.” Hurley Community College claimed that the Hurley Community College President was “very cautious” in dealing with faculty. He indicated that this president understood that he needed to connect with the community outside of the college walls and said the HCCP has “done an incredible job” to the point of working so hard that he’s “killing himself.” One of the important issues to the board was rural engagement. Several of the board members are from the smaller communities in the district. HCCP has reached out to those board members to address this issue; thus, he “has a good relationship with the board.”

Hurley Community College Faculty said that the president has reached out to the external community and “has done well” in this regard. Internally, his answers did not provide a clear view of the president reaching out to key constituents in the institution. HCCS acknowledged that the president is strong in reaching out to the external community to gain support for HCC. She said that he partners with the larger county seat as well as the outlying smaller communities. She also noted the quarterly meeting that the president has with the internal college employees. She says he uses this avenue to “know upfront what’s going on” at the institution.

Watt Community College President was an internal candidate at WCC and thus knew most stakeholders for many years. WCCA stated, “[WCCP] understands the culture. He’s been hearing these same comments for a while” regarding communication

and sought to reach out to the community and change the institution. WCCA said that WCCP has been “effective” at doing this and that it has been a “significant” change at WCC. He also pointed out the WCCP is well-known and well-liked in the community.

Watt Community College Faculty stated this president was aware of the old culture of the college because he worked for the previous president. He said that WCCP has done a good job “bring peace back to this place” and has been able to do that by “listen[ing] to people.” WCCS also noted that WCCP was trying to return WCC to its old culture of “family” and has been effective at doing so.

Emergent Theme

Emergent themes are those themes that are not expected based on a review of the literature. While no specific list of responsibilities and obligations manifested themselves as a result of the nine interviews conducted with administrators, faculty, and staff at three Midwestern community colleges, all agreed that they do assist the new president to implement his or her goals. The actual goals were not clear to most participants, and it was unexpected that a perceived bias for success exists among stakeholders toward their new presidents. The stakeholders, despite their perceived differences with the president, want the new president to succeed.

Positive bias towards the new president. Whether the president is an internal (WCCP) or external candidate (BCCP and HCCP), stakeholders wanted the new president to succeed because it meant the college, and thus their constituents, succeed. At Boon Community College, BCCA supported the president’s agenda and appeared to be aware of his goals. He listed several of these goals, including an enrollment increase

of 3% for the institution and creating an efficiency task force. Throughout the interview, BCCF expressed disagreements with the president relative to the way BCCP handled situations (e.g., the closing of one or more programs at the institution and his perceived lack of political astuteness). Regardless of these differences and his observation that the president is a “bit quirky,” BCCF supports the president and tries to stay updated on the college’s strategic plan. BCCS expressed his support of the new president and his agenda by saying, “I would say that my responsibility would be to help him” when asked to assist and “not badmouth things terribly.” Although he has been frustrated with the president at times, “[T]here have been different instances where I’ve thought, ‘You’re the president. Make him stop that.’ Or, you know, why do you let him run the show? You’re the president.” However, he added, “I really like him” and “[I]t’s a nice change to have someone that you can respect that you work for.”

Hurley Community College’s (HCC) Administrator commented that HCCP has “done an incredible job” at leading and promoting the college; however, he admits that HCCP has had trouble navigating the institution’s culture. HCCA said that HCCP is improving at this task and suggested that this difficulty may be due to his short tenure at the institution. Although HCCF does not agree with HCCP’s almost militaristic style of leadership that was forced on the community almost immediately, he acknowledges that HCCP has been effective overall as president. HCCS observed that HCCP does not let the complex relationships between constituent groups “get the best of him” while he moves the agenda forward at the institution. She noted that he “wants to work with them

and get...things solved". She said, "We have a good relationship. I don't have anything against him."

Watt Community College's (WCC) participating administrator hoped that the president would act more decisively as president; however, he respects him and wants him to do well. He said that WCCP had "brought about significant change" and that this change was welcomed. WCCF views the president and his relationship with the president as "positive." He has known the president for many years, has worked directly for the president when the president was the dean of his division, and wants the president to succeed. WCCS stated that she felt very comfortable working for WCCP because he is less formal than his predecessor and thinks "he's really good as bosses go." She used his first name repeatedly.

Helping the institution by helping the president is important to those who were interviewed. They want their president to be successful because they view the president's success as the college's success. When asked to define the president's goals for the college, the response was clear: there is no clarity and consistency regarding those goals.

Chapter Summary

Nine stakeholders made up of administrators, faculty, and staff at three Midwestern community colleges were interviewed to determine their perceptions of their president's performance during his transition. The data was presented by guiding questions, by *a priori* themes, and by emergent themes.

The first guiding question for this study focused on the perceived transition responsibilities and obligations of various stakeholders toward a new community college

president. The findings indicate that all participating stakeholders believe that it is their responsibility to assist the new president; however, the nature of those roles and responsibilities remain unclear.

The second guiding question sought to understand how stakeholder relationships—with each other and with the new president—are affected during a presidential transition. The findings indicate that stakeholder relationships are unaffected during a transition because the collective focus is placed on assisting the president to move forward the board's agenda.

The third guiding question focused on how the organizational culture of the participating institutions was affected during a presidential transition. The findings suggest that the culture remains unchanged during a presidential transition.

The next chapter, Chapter 5, will discuss the findings and present the study's conclusions. Furthermore, it will highlight implications to the field and provide recommendations based on the findings.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION, CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to identify stakeholder perceptions during a community college presidential transition and strategies for assisting in a smooth transition. This chapter discusses the findings from a qualitative case study of select administrators, faculty, and staff at three medium-sized Midwestern community colleges that were engaged in a presidential transition at their respective institutions. Four themes evolved from the research: (a) leaders view organizations in frames as evidenced by their actions, (b) clear communication of the college's goals by the president to stakeholders is important during a transition, (c) developing relationships with stakeholders helps to facilitate a smooth transition, and (d) there appears to be a positive bias towards the new president by stakeholders during a transition.

The senior leadership ranks, including the presidency, are at a critical juncture. Community college presidents and other senior leaders are retiring more quickly than anticipated (Duree, Ebbers, Santos-Laanan, Curtis, & Ferlazzo, 2008). Weisman and Vaughan (2006) have forecast that 84% of current community college leaders will retire by 2016. The void created by this mass exodus must be filled with qualified candidates. A new president's ability to be effective from day one is crucial to the long-term success of the institutions they lead. The constituencies at these community colleges deserve effective leaders. Understanding stakeholder perceptions in order to make more informed leadership decisions may assist the new president immediately.

Discussion

Community college presidential transitions will become more frequent because presidential tenure has decreased (Stanley & Betts, 2004); moreover, retirements of presidents and other senior leaders have increased (Duree, Ebbers, Santos-Laanan, Curtis & Ferlazzo, 2008). Presidential transitions must be as smooth as possible to minimize disruptions to the institution. New presidents must be effective from their first day on the job so that the board's agenda can be implemented. Understanding stakeholder perceptions of the transition process will provide insights to the new president and may assist the new president's perceived job performance. Four themes arose from this study. Three were *a priori* themes; one was an emergent theme. In the following sections, each theme will be discussed relative to the purpose of this study.

Leaders View Organizations in Frames

Bolman and Deal (2008) state that "learning multiple perspectives, or frames, is a defense against thrashing around without a clue about what you are doing or why" (p. 21). This is important as presidents take the helm of their new institutions. Reframing offers a tool for leaders to view and review their institutions continually. This is akin to a maintenance technician understanding the equipment he is working on from multiple vantage points: operational, mechanical, and electrical. Knowing one is not enough to isolate the multiple symptoms effectively that may be inherent in the equipment's malfunction. Reframing offers a holistic view of an organization and provides a more complete, robust view of its functionality and embedded culture.

Perspectives of administrators, faculty, and staff on their president's handling of structural, human resources, political, and symbolic frames were identified by this research. Each stakeholder was able to identify instances whereby the president addressed each of the four frames in Bolman and Deal's reframing model. Each president exhibited a tendency to focus on one or two frames, although they may have made changes reflecting an understanding of all four. Since the presidents were not interviewed for this study, it is unclear if they were familiar with the reframing model.

Communication of College's Goals

In this study, respondents overwhelmingly responded that while their presidents openly and effectively communicated, very few of the college personnel could identify their college's goals. Sanaghan, Goldstein, and Gaval (2008) stated that presidents must clearly state the board's expectations for them as new presidents.

Stakeholders should know what his agenda is so they can support it. The president should let people know what the board expects from him. Every president is hired to do certain things. The president should communicate these things so people clearly understand them. (p. 26)

The presidents in this study, contrary to their stakeholders' perceptions, did not effectively communicate the board's goals for the president. Yates (2006) reminds us that listening is part of communication and "the truly skilled have even learned to listen while talking" (p. 114). He further asserts that good communication skills, including listening, lead to shared trust. This shared trust will enable the agenda to move forward.

Stakeholder Relationship Development

Martin (1996) states that in order for new presidents to be successful, they must forge positive relationships with key constituencies at the college. Among these constituencies are the board, administrators, faculty, staff students, and community members.

Participating stakeholders at each institution observed that their respective presidents were challenged in some aspect of relationship development. These difficulties included interacting with stakeholders, understanding the culture, getting to know internal constituents, getting out and meeting employees, and boosting morale. Boon Community College Administrator (BCCA) observed that the president was challenged by senior employees on his every move and noted that he had trouble understanding the different personalities of these stakeholders. Hurley Community College Administrator (HCCA) said the new president had trouble learning to navigate the different cultures at the college. The president asked HCCA to alert him if he was “step[ping] off a cliff” when dealing with a constituent group. Watt Community College Staff felt that her president was challenged with boosting morale because the actions of the previous president had reduced institutional morale during his tenure.

Positive Bias Toward the New President

The concept of “positive bias toward the new president” suggests stakeholders will support a new president (even if they disagree with his or her positions on key issues) because they believe in the mission and vision of the institution and want to see that mission and vision fulfilled. The literature does not appear to address this

phenomenon, although it could be indirectly linked to the notion of “goodwill coins” as mentioned by Sanaghan, Goldstein, and Gaval (2008). The concept of the goodwill coin is that a new president is given a bucketful of coins upon his or her arrival at the college. Each action that illicit negative responses from one or more constituent groups costs the president a coin. Once the bucket is empty, it is time for the president to leave the institution.

The positive bias extended toward the new presidents by the seasoned stakeholders was not expected. The new president can take cautious comfort in knowing that the administrators, faculty, and staff (as a whole) want to see him or her succeed. However, the supportive bias identified by this research did not suggest that the new president was being given *carte blanche* to run the institution without considering the stakeholders’ concerns and the institutional culture. For example, the Boon Community College faculty (BCCF) participant in this study stressed that while he was not pleased with the way that the president had handled some situations at Boon Community College, the faculty member still supported the president’s efforts and tries to stay abreast of the goals as laid out in the strategic plan.

While these institutions shared some similarities such as Carnegie classification and rural location, the characteristics of their presidents varied. One president was an internal candidate with a long history at the college and within the community. The remaining presidents came from outside of the community; however, each had differing backgrounds. One president possessed a traditional academic leadership background

while the other came from a non-academic background. Regardless, this research suggests they were each accorded firm support from their stakeholders.

Conclusions

This research was conducted to identify stakeholder perceptions during a community college presidential transition and strategies for assisting in a smooth transition. Three questions guided this research. These questions sought to explore stakeholder perceptions, the relationships of stakeholders, and the impact of organizational culture during the presidential transition process. The guiding questions for this study were as follows:

1. What are the perceived transition responsibilities and obligations of various stakeholders towards a new community college president?
2. How are relationships of stakeholders, with each other and with the new president, affected during a presidential transition?
3. How and in what ways is the organizational culture affected during a presidential transition?

The following sections discuss the conclusions drawn from each of the guiding questions posed by this study.

Perceived Transition Responsibilities

The first guiding question sought to ascertain the perceived transition responsibilities and obligations of various stakeholders towards a new community college president. Stakeholders were asked to explain how the president had handled his responsibilities relative to the structural, human resources, and political arenas of the

college. Identification of presidential successes and challenges from the stakeholder's point of view was obtained. The stakeholders were asked to list the goals that the board had set for the new president and what their role or roles were, if any, in assisting the new president achieve those goals.

The research indicated that the new presidents can expect to receive assistance from administrative, faculty, and staff constituencies at their institutions. None of the reviewed job descriptions used in this study provided specific language regarding assisting a president in achieving the board's goals for the president. Only Hurley Community College Administrator's (HCCA) job description contained language that could be used to infer this. The HCCA job description states that this position will serve as a "consultant to the President" and that the HCCA is to "perform duties as assigned by the President."

Nine semi-structured interviews with three stakeholder groups (administration, faculty, and staff) at three medium-sized Midwestern community colleges suggested that the new presidents were ineffective at communicating the board's (and thus the college's) agenda for the president (and thus the institution). Of the three stakeholders providing answers, two provided single answers whereas one provided an answer with two elements. Overwhelmingly the participants at each college in this study commented on their president's communication ability. The results suggest, in the area of communicating college goals, the new presidents were not successful. Furthermore, the research findings suggest that stakeholders do not understand that the president is given goals by the board that become the institutional goals.

Stakeholders identified their perceptions of the president's job performance in the structural, human resource, and political domains at their institutions as specified by Bolman and Deal (2008). Their responses do not indicate that the presidents engage in "reframing" (Bolman & Deal, p. 12). To the contrary, the presidents' actions appear to be matter-of-fact and compartmentalized: realigning the organization, implementing supervisor training, modifying hiring practices, and taking political actions such as elimination of programs. Their perceived actions by stakeholders indicated that the presidents lacked an understanding of the interconnectedness of their actions.

In terms of transition responsibilities, the results of this study included recommendations for new presidents and for the community colleges they lead. Community colleges should consider (a) conveying the relationship between the president and the board of trustees, (b) promulgating the board's agenda to the college community, and (c) including language in stakeholder job descriptions regarding the board's agenda.

Convey the relationship between the president and the board of trustees. The community college senior leadership, including the president and the board of trustees, should clearly communicate the president's relationship with the board of trustees and that presidents are hired to implement the board's goals (Sanaghan, Goldstein, & Gaval, 2008)—not solely their own. A president agrees to the board's agenda when he or she accepts the position. From a position of transparency, this relationship must be explained college-wide so that it is understood across all constituency groups. This action may

grant the president a few more goodwill coins (Sanaghan, Goldstein, & Gaval, 2008) and help to smooth the president's transition.

Promulgate the board's agenda to the college community. Administrators, faculty, and staff are not familiar with the board's goals for the president. The Board of Trustee's goals are the president's goals, and presidents are hired to implement their agenda (Sanaghan, Goldstein, & Gaval, 2008). The senior leadership team, in consultation with the president, should consider sharing the board's goals for the president with the college community.

Include language in stakeholder job descriptions regarding board's agenda. Marten and Samels (2004b) state that presidential transitions should be considered an important strategic moment. The board's goals that accompany this phenomenon are also important to the new president and the institution. Stakeholders should understand that it is their responsibility to assist the new president in implementing the board's goals. Institutionalizing this understanding in employee job descriptions and collective bargaining agreements serves notice to the college community that the transition is an important event at the college. It further ingrains the importance of the board's goals as instrumental for the strategic success of the college and the president.

Relationships during Transition

The second guiding question focused on stakeholder relationships during a presidential transition and if and how the transition affected these relationships. Stakeholders were asked to describe their relationships with each constituent group and any observations they may have on the direct relationships between the groups in which

they do not belong. For instance, faculty commented on their direct relationships with administrators and staff and provided their perception of the direct relationship between administrators and staff. They were also asked to describe how these relationships impacted the president in moving the board's agenda forward.

It appears that adequate working relationships exist between all groups: faculty and staff, staff and administrators, as well as administrators and faculty. However, cause for concern may arise from the perception of unequal treatment. This observation was made across groups but especially between faculty and staff and staff and administrators.

Overwhelmingly, stakeholders believed that their relationships with each other impacted the transition process at their colleges. This meshes with how stakeholders view their relationships with each other. If presidents are required to deal with relationship issues at their institutions, then they cannot fully focus on what they were hired to do. The minority view is that their presidents do not allow themselves to be distracted from the task at hand and that no amount of infighting by stakeholders would impact the board's agenda from moving forward.

Without exception, stakeholders perceive their relationships with their presidents as positive. This is primarily attributed to the openness by which these presidents run their institutions. Even when a stakeholder has philosophical differences with his/her president, such disagreements frequently are not personal; instead, all participants are working for the betterment of the college.

The results of this study related to the second guiding question focus on the improvement of interrelationships. Community colleges should consider introducing

such activities as team-building activities into their institutions that cross job classification boundaries.

Introducing team-building activities. Perceptions exist that employee groups are not equal at community colleges. Team-building activities designed to cross job classification boundaries that promote the strengths of all participants may help ease the friction that exists between stakeholder groups. If successful, an understanding of the intrinsic worth of all employee groups will be manifested and hopefully lead to better relationships and ease friction between and among stakeholders.

Organizational Culture and Transition

The third guiding question focused on organizational culture and how it affects a presidential transition at a community college. Stakeholders were asked to describe the organizational culture at their institutions and if it was an impediment to realizing the board's agenda. The effect of institutional culture, especially in the realm of symbolism, on the transition was also targeted.

At two of the institutions, Boon Community College and Hurley Community College, disparate views of the institution's culture emerged. The culture was described as being resistant to change and compartmentalized by the administrator and faculty at Boon Community College; however, the staff viewed it as being familial. Hurley Community College Administrator and Staff viewed the culture similarly. They thought the culture was mission-focused. The administrator said it was "student success" driven; the staff stated that it was focused on "the common good of the college." Hurley Community College Faculty did concur that he believed that the culture focused on

students and their success; however, he thought that the college lacked an identity. He added that this lack of identity associated with Hurley Community College was one of the institution's biggest challenges. Watt Community College stakeholders seemed to share a converging view of the culture at their institution. They observed that their culture values the students and the employees at the institution and that the institution maintains a small-town feel. It was concluded that that a lack of shared institutional identity existed at these colleges.

Symbolism, one of Bolman and Deal's four frames, was addressed by this guiding question. At the community colleges that had external presidents (i.e., Boon and Hurley), some stakeholders viewed that the new president came in and made changes that affected the institutions' traditions without first understanding the stakeholders' concerns. At Boon Community College, the graduation ceremony was moved off campus; this action upset many in the college community. Boon Community College Faculty was concerned that having graduation off-campus would create one less reason for external community constituents to visit the campus. He felt it was important to showcase the campus to the taxpayers. Boon Community College Administrator added that the president changed the operating procedures at the satellite campuses to better serve the community; however, his lack of understanding of the tradition of closing the satellite campuses for lunch met with resentment.

At Hurley Community College, the administrator and staff thought that the transition had not been impacted by symbolism. Hurley Community College Faculty countered this by suggesting that this president created cultural problems at the institution

by having an inauguration for himself. This break in tradition upset some on campus because it made the graduation ceremony longer and was enacted without any input from stakeholders.

It was concluded that the organizational culture's ability to impede the board's agenda is mixed. Four stakeholders felt that the culture would not encumber the board's agenda. They concurred that the president would move the agenda forward regardless of the culture at the institution. Two stakeholders believed that the culture would have a negative impact on the president's agenda being forwarded. Interestingly, three stakeholders (all from Watt Community College) thought that the culture at their institution would actually assist the agenda. As Watt Community College Staff phrased it, she believes the culture "propels" it.

Community colleges should consider the need to develop a sense of what makes them who they are as a community college. New presidents must understand the history of their colleges (Zimpher, 2004) and the impact that symbolism plays in the perceptions of stakeholders.

Developing a shared institutional identity. At the participating institutions, a deep, reflective understanding of the college's culture was missing. Stakeholders had trouble articulating a common view of the institutional culture. Leaders possess core values (Bolman & Deal, 2008). Institutions may need these same collective shared values to provide a framework for the identification of its culture (i.e., what makes them who they are).

Understanding of institutional history and culture. To minimize the impact on the transition, new presidents may need to understand the history and culture of their institutions. They may need to refrain from taking steps to alter ceremonies and rituals at their colleges until they fully understand how these changes will impact the culture of the institution.

Implications

The results of this study manifested several implications for practice. Among these are the need of presidents to view their organizations conscientiously through multiple frames, to communicate the board's goals clearly and effectively, to foster relationships with key constituent groups, and to understand the institution's cultures and subcultures. To illustrate the interrelationships between the institution's organizational culture, Bolman and Deal's (2008) four frames, as well as stakeholder relationships with each other and with the president, the Bradford Transition Model for Community College Presidential Models was developed. The Bradford Transition Model for Community College Presidential Transitions is phenomenon-specific and evolved from Bolman and Deal's (2008) reframing (four-frame) model. It seeks to provide clarity to the phenomenon of transitions by visualizing the relationships between organizational culture, the four frames, and the inclusive stakeholder relationships.

Organizational culture is somewhat nebulous and takes the shape of an all-encompassing cloud in this model. Situated atop this cloud are Bolman and Deal's four frames: structural, human resources, political, and symbolic. These four frames are a metaphor for the traditional four sides of a structure; however, unlike a home, these walls

are meant to be built and torn down (reframing) continually. In the center of this structure are the stakeholders in this model: administration, faculty, staff, and the president. The arrows illustrate all possible combinations of interaction between these groups. The stakeholders and the relationships are self-contained in a 12-point star which suggests these relationships radiate outward towards the four frames and into the organizational culture cloud. Since a community college presidential transition involves other stakeholders not included in this study (e.g., boards of trustees, students, and the community-at-large), this model provides a select view of community college presidential transitions. The model is illustrated in Figure 2.

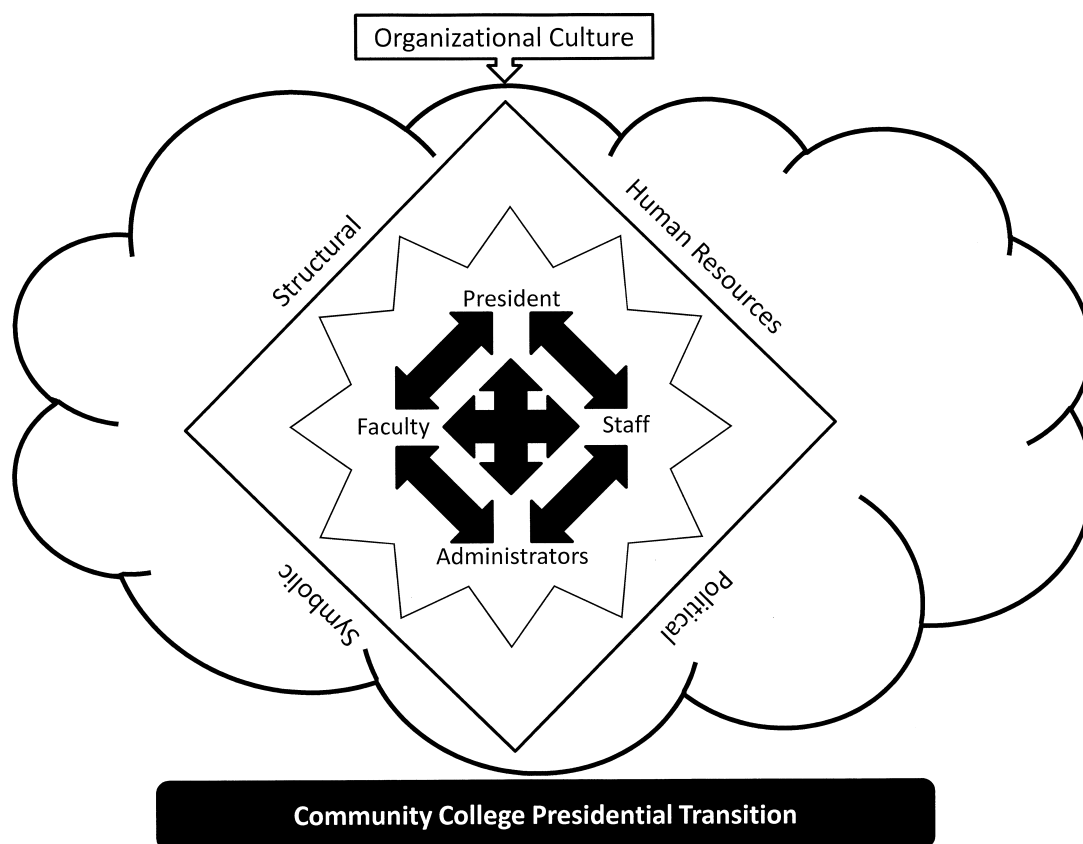


Figure 2. Bradford Transition Model for Community College Presidential Transitions

New presidents may consult this model when considering implementing changes at their institutions. Stakeholders, including those excluded from this study, may view this model to better understand the complexities faced by presidents in organizational change initiatives during community college presidential transitions. Potential prescriptive use of this model is described below:

1. Organizational change starts at the center of this model and progresses outward.
2. Change begins with an understanding that the president, administrators, faculty and staff share dependent and independent relationships with each other. Changes in one relationship may have an impact on other relationships.
3. Once the stakeholder relationships are understood, one may move away from the center and toward the four frames (structural, human resources, political and symbolic). These frames form boundaries to provide structure to the organizational relationships and provide mental models for institutional change. An acknowledgement and understanding of these frames (both independently and interdependently) could lead to more effective organizational change.
4. Organizational culture provides a fluid foundation and/or context for the change process. Change initiatives should be congruent with the organization's mutually accepted norms and values (organizational culture) as evidenced by the interconnectedness of stakeholder relationships.

The implications from this model include the importance of all stakeholders being aware of the interconnectedness of their relationships to each other and to the president, how those relationships fit inside of the four frames, and the role that organizational

culture plays in this relationship. Presidents can gain by acknowledging these relationships exist and to consider each when making decisions that affect one or more groups. Stakeholders can better understand their place in the transition and determine appropriate ways to assist the president that may not be normally considered. This understanding is also applicable to the new president.

For example, the movement of graduation to an off-campus location was a concern for some stakeholders at Boon Community College. With a deep understanding of the complex relationships amongst stakeholders; consideration of the structural, human resource, political, and symbolic frames, and coupled with a sufficiently developed, mutually accepted, and understood culture, the president could shatter the mental models that exist and devise a solution that was not apparent before understanding the concept of this model.

Implications Related to Perceived Transition Responsibilities

The first guiding question focused on the perceived transition responsibilities and obligations of various stakeholders towards a new community college president. It explored stakeholder perceptions of new presidents' job performance and asked them to identify his successes and challenges. Participants were also asked to identify the board's goals for the new president.

Stakeholders uniformly support their new presidents. Specific roles were not identified and are deemed unnecessary. It is important that this support be institutionalized. Failure to do obtain this support could lead to challenges in the future.

Assisting the president is an implicit aspect of one's job responsibilities; it should be explicit to maintain clarity of function.

Zand and Sorenson (1975) observe that clear communication is paramount for effective organizational change. Stakeholders considered their president's communication style and technique effective. The board's goals were promulgated by the president at each institution according to interviews conducted with stakeholders; however, participants were unable to articulate these goals in any cohesive manner. If the goals are unknown, it will be a challenge to meet them. Presidents should consider seeking or establishing dialogue with stakeholders as a means to determine if the message has been received. According to Yates (2006) listening is an important part of communication. Stakeholders can assist this process by listening to the president when he makes oral statements and seek clarification when necessary. It is important that all college personnel understand the goals for the institution as well as their specific roles and responsibilities. One strategy to improve this understanding could be incorporating language into job descriptions and collective bargaining agreements to stress the importance of supporting the new president.

Understanding stakeholder perceptions of their job performance could be enlightening for new presidents. While presidents work for the board of trustees, they might consider that they also work for all stakeholders (not just the employee stakeholders in this study). This fiduciary relationship should be acknowledged and nurtured. Presidents might consider having stakeholders rate their job performance. As in this research, stakeholders could be asked what they perceive to be the president's

successes and challenges. The results could be juxtaposed with a self-assessment to provide a global view of their job performance. If deemed appropriate, they could use the results to inform future decisions and garner more buy-in from stakeholders.

Implications Related to Relationships during Transitions

The second guiding question's focus was on stakeholder relationships during a presidential transition and if and how the transition affected these relationships. It explored the interrelationships between administration, faculty, and staff. The relationship between each participant and the president was also considered.

Relationships must be nurtured in the workplace. During the transition, poor relationships could detract from the new president focusing on the goals set for him by the board of trustees. Relations can be improved by stressing the similarities instead of the differences between groups and focusing on the strengths instead of the challenges. Infusing the workplace with respect within and among employee stakeholder groups could increase the chances of strategic success for the organization and make the presidential transition a mutually rewarding process.

Implications Related to Organizational Culture and Transition

Organizational culture and how it affects a presidential transition at a community college was the focus of the third guiding question. A common vision of organizational culture escaped most stakeholders; its impact on the board's agenda was not agreed upon.

New presidents are not exempt from understanding the culture because they are inclusive of it. The need to understand the culture (Bensimon, 1990) and subcultures (Locke & Guglielmino, 2006) that exist within a campus must be understood and

embraced if the new president hopes to succeed. Failure to understand these complex entities could present challenges (e.g., alienate constituent groups, inhibit buy-in from stakeholders, and lower morale if goals do not match the institution's values) to the president as he or she seeks to implement the board's agenda.

Recommendations

Recommendations for Improvement of Practice

The qualitative research findings and the literature review supports six recommendations for the improvement of practice. They are divided into those directed at the president specifically and to the community college as a whole. The recommendations for the president are (a) familiarization with the reframing model and the micro transition model for community college president transitions, (b) engagement in effective dialogue with all stakeholder groups, and (c) understanding of institutional history and culture, and (d) acknowledgement of the bias for presidential success. The recommendations for the community college at large that encompasses the employee stakeholders are (a) creating a formalized transition process, and (b) fostering a positive organizational culture. The six recommendations are discussed in the following section.

Presidential recommendations. New presidents are expected to produce timely results as they implement the board's agenda. Potential pitfalls exist as they navigate their new institutions. A new leader must possess numerous skills. The recommendations below resulted from this study.

Familiarization with the reframing model and the Bradford Transition Model for Community College Presidential Transitions. Many change theory models are available to executive leadership. This study utilized Bolman and Deal's (2008) reframing theory for creating boundaries for this research. It is an effective tool for facilitating change in an organization as it takes a multi-frame approach and insists that leaders must shatter the paradigms that they create about the structural, human resource, political, and symbolic mental models they have towards organizations.

The Bradford Transition Model for Community College Presidential Transitions emanates from this study. It provides a graphical relationship between the college's organizational culture, the four frames espoused by Bolman and Deal, and the complex relationships between faculty, administrators, staff, and the president. A new president should be aided in her role as president by understanding this model. Clarity of relational context is its strength.

Engaging in effective dialogue with all stakeholder groups. Dialogue involves two-way communication: sending and receiving, speaking and listening, and writing and reading. To be successful, the new president must deliver her message but must also ensure that it is received correctly. This communication can occur verbally and in writing. The onus is on the new president to verify the correct message is received and understood.

Understanding institutional history and culture. Gregorian and Martin (2004) suggest that presidents get to know their faculty. Walking around the campus and getting to know employees is important for the new president (Zimpher, 2004). To understand

where an organization is going or can aspire to go, knowledge of the institution's history and culture is needed. This understanding of the past by the new president evokes respect for the institution and the stakeholders within. New presidents can learn much from historical documents as well as engaging in dialogue with internal and external stakeholders.

Acknowledging the positive bias toward the new president. According to Sanaghan, Goldstein, and Gaval (2008) the new president is given the benefit of the doubt in the form of "goodwill coins." When coupled with the results of this study, which concluded that stakeholders are biased toward the success of their new chief executive, the president could take advantage of this apparent free pass. Instead, it is advised that the president acknowledge that this bias may exist and continue to work on understanding stakeholder perceptions, organizational culture, and the relationships that exist between them.

College-wide recommendations. Stakeholders want to help their new president to perform his or her duties as assigned by the Board of Trustees. A formal structure that will enable them to assist in a systematic way is lacking. A shared vision for the college, in the form of a defined organizational culture, must exist. Stakeholders must strengthen their bonds with each other. The recommendations below resulted from this study.

Creating a formalized transition process. Numerous models exist for college presidential transitions (Andringa & Splete, 2005; Marten & Samels, et al., 2004; McLaughlin, 1996; Moore & Burrows, 2001; Sanaghan, Goldstein, & Gaval, 2008). It is recommended that institutions review these models and other similar models that may

exist. If one fits the organization, then it should be adopted. Since no two community colleges are exactly alike, this process will likely require creating a model that works for their institution. A transition map, such as developed by Sanaghan, Goldstein, and Gaval (2008), could be a good starting point for campus-wide discussions.

The imperative is that community colleges formalize a transition plan to assist in the transition of their new chief executive. Transitions are occurring more frequently due to the retirements of presidents (Duree, Ebbers, Santos-Laanan, Curtis, & Ferlazzo, 2008) and their shortened tenure (Stanley & Betts, 2004). The plan should be a formal, written plan so that a history exists. This documentation may aid future transitions.

Fostering a positive organizational culture. A lack of cohesiveness in stakeholders' perceptions of their college's organizational culture was evident in the findings. This indicates the lack of a shared vision and mission for the college. Community colleges must nurture the development of a shared vision and mission that could form the foundation of a culture with which all stakeholders agree.

Recommendations for Dissemination of the Research

This study provides insight into the perceptions of administrators, faculty, and staff at community colleges that were in a presidential transition at the time of their participation. As presidents and other senior leaders retire, presidential transitions will become more common in community colleges. The findings from this research provide insight to prospective presidents and to institutions seeking new executive leadership. Recommendations for the dissemination of this research include the following: (a)

development of a dissemination plan, (b) providing findings to research participants, and (c) sharing research findings with professional organizations.

This research will be shared so that it reaches a broad audience. The researcher will develop a dissemination plan to share the findings from this study. Submission for publication in ProQuest and in the Education Resource Information Center (ERIC) is the most immediate goal so that researchers will have access to this study immediately to facilitate timeliness and urgency in the research field.

Research participants were members of administration, faculty, and staff at select Midwestern community colleges. The researcher will provide the research findings to participants and information on access to the completed study.

Presentations to audiences who should be receptive to the results of this study will be sought. These audiences may include the National-Louis University Community College Leadership Annual Colloquium, the Illinois Council of Community College Administrators (ICCCA), the Association of Community College Trustees (ACCT) and the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC). Articles evolving from this research could be submitted to journals such as *New Directions for Higher Education* and *Community College Journal*.

Recommendations for Future Research

Weisman and Vaughan (2006) predict that the percentage of community college leadership retirements will reach 84% by 2016; moreover, the tenure of presidents is shrinking (Stanley & Betts, 2004). These retirements will require the leaders that replace them (specifically presidents) to be effective immediately in implementing the board's

agenda. While this study filled a gap in the research by illuminating employee stakeholder perceptions during a presidential transition, additional gaps exist.

Recommendations for future research include the following:

1. A study that ascertains the effectiveness of the president's communication of the board's goals clearly and effectively to the college community could be beneficial to the body of research.
2. Determining the skills necessary for a new president to foster relationships with key constituencies could be a research focus.
3. A study that determines effective methods for new presidents to quickly understand the organizational culture of their new institutions could assist in smoothing transitions.
4. A study similar to this one that ascertains employee stakeholder perceptions could be conducted but with the addition of the presidents at those participating institutions being interviewed to provide a more balanced view of the stakeholder perceptions.
5. Obtaining the perceptions of students, boards of trustees, and/or community members at a community college in the midst of a presidential transition with a focus on how (or if) they are impacted by a change in leadership could be studied.
6. A phenomenological study could be conducted that focuses on a single campus undergoing a presidential transition with the emphasis on how key stakeholders are affected during this phenomenon known as a *transition*.

7. A study that provides a cross-comparison of stakeholders' views of their campus relationships with other stakeholders could assist in strengthening the organizational culture by shedding light on misconceptions held by stakeholder groups and lead to a more harmonious campus.
8. A study could be conducted that identifies the perceptions of new community college presidents that are transitioning and how they are affected by the experience.

The impact of organizational culture on a presidential transition could help to demystify the results from this study that saw stakeholders almost evenly split between viewing the culture as having no impact, having a negative impact, and having a positive impact.

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Biographical Sketch

Jeffery Clay Bradford has been serving as the program coordinator, student advisor, and lead full-time faculty for the Industrial Maintenance Technology program at Joliet Junior College. At 18, Jeff joined the United States Navy as an enlisted sailor where he spent 9 years working on the boilers and auxiliary equipment and traveling the world. The last three years of his enlistment were spent at the Great Lakes Naval Base in Great Lakes, Illinois training new personnel the operation and maintenance of military marine propulsion equipment.

At age 25, he started college attending classes at Southern Illinois University at Carbondale's on the Great Lakes Naval Base as well as taking classes at the College of Lake County. He graduated with a bachelor's degree in vocational education from SIUC and followed with an MEd from Northern Illinois University in adult and continuing education. He left the Navy in 1993 to take a position at Joliet Junior College as an entry-level administrator with the workforce development arm of the college. He then returned to private industry where he refined his skills in high pressure boiler maintenance and assumed his current faculty role at Joliet Junior College in 1997.

Appendix A

Letter Sent to Solicit Participation in Study

February 1, 2010

Dear Dr. XXXXXXXX:

Within the next few weeks you will be receiving an email from Jeffery C. Bradford, a doctoral student from National-Louis University in Chicago, soliciting your institution's participation in his dissertation research. Mr. Bradford is a faculty member at Joliet Junior College and is researching community college presidential transitions, the purpose of which is to identify stakeholder perceptions during a community college presidential transition and strategies for assisting in a smooth transition.

Your institution has been identified as a possible site for his research study. His criteria for institutional selection are: (1) full-time equivalent enrollment of 2,000 – 4,999 students and (2) a new president that started her or his tenure between and inclusive of the 2004 – 2005 and 2008 – 2009 academic years. The driving questions for his study include:

- What are the perceived transition responsibilities and obligations of various stakeholders towards a new community college president?
- How are relationships of stakeholders, with each other and with the new president, affected during a presidential transition?
- In what ways is the organizational culture affected during a presidential transition?

In order to complete his research study, Mr. Bradford would like to interview one faculty member, one administrator (dean-level or above) and one nonsupervisory staff member who has been employed at your college for at least five years.

As a colleague and a member of Mr. Bradford's dissertation committee, I encourage you to consider having your institution participate in his research. He will be contacting select schools in the Midwest and will choose the first three schools to accept his request to participate in this study. If your college is contacted and selected, your participation would be appreciated as I believe that this work will make a contribution to the study of presidential transitions.

Sincerely,

Gena Proulx, Ph.D.
President

Appendix B

E-mail to Solicit Site Participation in Study

From: Bradford, Jeffery
To: Selected Community College Presidents
Subject: Research Request from Joliet Junior College Faculty

Dr. XXXXX,

Recently, Dr. Gena Proulx, President of Joliet Junior College, sent you a letter indicating that I would be contacting you regarding my doctoral dissertation research related to the transition of new community college presidents.

I am a doctoral student at National Louis University in Chicago majoring in Community College Leadership and am asking that your institution consider participating in my research. As part of this research, I hope to interview one faculty member, one staff member and one administrator from each participating community college.

The purpose of my study is to identify (a) stakeholder perceptions regarding a recent community college presidential transition, and (b) strategies for assisting in a smooth transition.

Through the use of the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), I have identified your institution as meeting my research site criteria:

- Have a full-time equivalent enrollment of 2,000 – 4,999 students
- Have a new president that started her or his tenure between the 2004 – 2005 and 2008 – 2009 academic years.

If you would be willing to have your institution participate in my study, please return your permission to me at the email address in the header to this note. I am hoping to identify the site participants no later than February 25, 2010 and conduct in-person interviews no later than March 31, 2010.

If your permission is granted, will you also identify a member of your staff to be my contact person so that I may determine the appropriate means to distribute my demographic survey for soliciting participants at your institution?

Thank you for your consideration. I look forward to working with you and your staff at XXXXXXXX Community College.

Sincerely,

Jeff Bradford
Doctoral Candidate, National-Louis University

jeff.bradford@gmail.com
773.456.5030

Appendix C

E-mail to Solicit Individual Participation in the Study

From: Bradford, Jeffery
To: Representative Community College Faculty, Staff and Administrators
Subject: Research Request from Joliet Junior College Faculty

Recently I contacted Dr. XXXXXXXX seeking his permission to contact selected employees to participate in my research.

I am a doctoral student at National Louis University in Chicago majoring in Community College Leadership and a full-time, tenured faculty member at Joliet Junior College. The purpose of my study is to identify stakeholder perceptions during a community college presidential transition and strategies for assisting in a smooth transition. I want to interview nine stakeholders at three institutions in Illinois and its bordering states. The stakeholders for this research are faculty, staff and administration.

If you are interested in participating in my research which will involve an in-person interview that I hope to have completed on or before March 31, 2010, please complete the attached survey and return it to me by March 8, 2010.

All information provided via the survey and subsequent interview will be kept confidential. If you have any questions about the process, please do not hesitate to contact me via email or phone.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Jeff Bradford

Doctoral Candidate, National-Louis University
Professor, Joliet Junior College

jeff.bradford@gmail.com
773-456-5030

Appendix D
Participant Demographic Survey

School: Type your school's name here.

Job Classification: Please type in "Faculty", "Staff" or "Administration" here.

Number of Years at Institution: Type in number of years here.

Current Job Title: Type in current job title here.

Brief Description of Job Responsibilities: Please provide a brief description of your job responsibilities here. This field is not limited, so you may type in as little or as much information as you'd like.

Number of Years in Current Position: Type how long you've been in your current position here.

Contact Information

Phone Number: Please enter your number in the XXX-XXX-XXXX format.

Email Address: Please provide a contact email address here.

Please return electronically to jeff.bradford@gmail.com

Appendix E

Guiding and Interview Questions

| <i>Relationship Between Guiding and Interview Questions</i> | |
|--|---|
| Guiding Questions | Interview Questions |
| 1. What are the perceived transition responsibilities and obligations of various stakeholders towards a new community college president? | a. How has the president handled his/her responsibilities so far specifically as it relates to the following: structural (goals, policies, environment), human resources (basic needs, relationships), and political (power, conflict, competition)? b. What have been the successes of the new president from your vantage point? c. What have been the challenges for the new president from your vantage point? d. What goals has the Board set for the new president? And, what role or roles do you have, if any, in assisting the new president implement his/her goals? |
| 2. How are relationships of stakeholders, with each other and with the new president, affected during a presidential transition? | a. What is the working relationship like here between faculty, staff and the administration? b. In what ways does this relationship impact the new president in moving her/his agenda forward? c. What is your relationship with the president? |
| 3. How and in what ways is the organizational culture affected during a presidential transition? | a. Describe the organizational culture at your school. b. How has the transition been shaped by the culture of your institution specifically in the realm of symbolism (ceremony, ritual)? c. Does the college's organizational culture impede the Board's agenda? If so, in what ways? |

Appendix F

Informed Consent Form

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this study that will take place from October 2009 to May 2011. This form outlines the purpose of the study and provides a description of your involvement and rights as a participant.

I consent to participate in a research project conducted by Jeff Bradford, a doctoral student at National-Louis University located in Chicago, Illinois.

I understand that this study is tentatively entitled “Community College Presidential Transitions: Enhancing the Process by Understanding Stakeholder Perceptions.” The purpose of the study is to identify stakeholder perceptions during a community college presidential transition and strategies for assisting in a smooth transition.

I understand that my participation will consist of one audio-taped interviews lasting 60 – 90 minutes in length. I understand that I will receive a copy of my transcribed interview at which time I may clarify information. I understand that my participation is voluntary and can be discontinued at any time without prejudice until the completion of the dissertation.

I understand that only the researcher, Jeff Bradford, will have access to a secured file cabinet in which will be kept all transcripts, taped recordings, and field notes from the interview in which I participated.

I understand that the results of this study may be published or otherwise reported to scientific bodies, but my identity will in no way be revealed. I understand there are no anticipated risks or benefits to me, no greater than that encountered in daily life. Further, the information garnered from the study will be of benefit to new community college presidents, internal stakeholders and the larger community college constituency.

I understand that in the event I have questions or require additional information I may contact the researcher: Jeff Bradford, 1112 Rosewood Street, Shorewood, IL 60404, (773) 456-5030, Email address: jeff.bradford@gmail.com.

If you have any concerns or questions before or during participation that you feel have not been addressed by me, you may contact my Primary Advisor and Dissertation Chair: Dr. Martin Parks, National Louis University, 122 South Michigan Avenue, Chicago, Illinois, 60603, 312-261-3019; Email address: *martin.parks@nl.edu*

Participant’s Signature _____ Date _____

Researcher’s Signature _____ Date _____

Appendix G

Results of Data Collection Review Process

| Guiding Questions | Pre-Review Interview Questions | Revised Interview Questions |
|--|--|---|
| 1. What are the perceived transition responsibilities and obligations of various stakeholders towards a new community college president? | a. How has the president handled his/her responsibilities so far specifically as it relates to the following: structural (goals, policies, environment), human resources (basic needs, relationships), and political (power, conflict, competition)? b. What have been the successes of the new president from your vantage point? c. What have been the challenges for the new president from your vantage point? d. What role or roles do you have, if any, in assisting the new president implement his/her goals? | a. How has the president handled his/her responsibilities so far specifically as it relates to the following: structural (goals, policies, environment), human resources (basic needs, relationships), and political (power, conflict, competition)? b. What have been the successes of the new president from your vantage point? c. What have been the challenges for the new president from your vantage point? d. What goals has the Board set for the new president? And, what role or roles do you have, if any, in assisting the new president implement his/her goals? |
| 2. How are relationships of stakeholders, with each other and with the new president, affected during a | a. What is the working relationship like here between faculty, staff and the administration? | a. What is the working relationship like here between faculty, staff and the administration? |

| | | |
|--------------------------|---|---|
| presidential transition? | b. In what ways does this relationship impact the new president in moving her/his agenda forward? | b. In what ways does this relationship impact the new president in moving her/his agenda forward? |
| | c. What is your relationship with the president? | c. What is your relationship with the president? |

| | | |
|--|---|---|
| 3. How and in what ways is the organizational culture affected during a presidential transition? | a. Describe the organizational culture at your school. | a. Describe the organizational culture at your school. |
| | b. How has the transition been shaped by the culture of your institution specifically in the realm of symbolism (ceremony, ritual)? | b. How has the transition been shaped by the culture of your institution specifically in the realm of symbolism (ceremony, ritual)? |
| | | c. Does the college's organizational culture impede the Board's agenda? If so, in what ways? |
