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A Multiple Case Study of Effective Subculture: Analysis of the Perceptions of Academic
Leaders within Three Departments on a Community College Campus

by

Jonathan Lord

A dissertation

submitted in partial fulfillment

of the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Education in the Department of School Psychology and Educational Leadership

Idaho State University

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Committee Approval

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The members of the committee appointed to examine the dissertation of Jonathan P. Lord, find it satisfactory and recommend that it be accepted.

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Sincerely,

Ralph Baergen, PhD, MPH, CIP
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A Multiple Case Study of Effective Subculture: Analysis of the Perceptions of Academic Leaders within Three Departments on a Community College Campus

Dissertation Abstract--Idaho State University (2018)

The purpose of this qualitative multi-case research study was to analyze the perceptions of academic leaders (faculty & department heads) within subcultures (academic units) on a community college campus. A subculture is a subdivision of a macro-culture that formed through differentiation. Differentiation, led to the development of subgroups within the college culture. Differentiation provides a means for systemic effects, occurring within a culture, to deliver new and unique opportunities for change.

Results revealed similar and dissimilar outcomes related to cultural effectiveness, and the perceptions of the academic leaders. Using an exploratory qualitative research design, this study examined both organizational culture and academic leader perceptions to build upon research in the field. The use of Schein and Schein's (2017) work, *Organizational Culture and Leadership*, provided a conceptual framework to examine the effectiveness of subcultures.

To date, research in higher education dealt with perceptions of effectiveness, leader/follower relationships, context, change, culture, isomorphism, metaphors, internal integration, external adaptation, and community college faculty. What research had not explored were the perceptions of academic leaders through the analysis of their social and affective factors. This work intended to further current research on perception and effective subcultures, including the ten dimensions of learner-oriented organizational culture, on the academic leader. Findings promote future study of academic units and their impact on the culture of an institution.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

While it is not randomly produced in any group, culture is developed as a group shares tasks, through consistent membership, and a shared history of learning together (Schein & Schein, 2017). The impact of individual perceptions on the culture of an academic unit is an area within higher education research that has not been developed fully. In academic units on college campuses across the nation, leader's perceptions influence change. Academic faculty and department heads need support to develop awareness of the varied dimensions that comprise the cultures on their campuses. Without support, academic leaders will struggle to sustain or develop learner-oriented organizational cultures.

Schein and Schein (2017) defined culture as the collection of learning a group shares as it explains its external adaptation and internal integration problems; validated by the group and used to train new members to “perceive, think, feel, and behave in relation to those problems” (p. 6). The researcher in this study hypothesized that the manifestation of a culture at the departmental level can be either positive or negative on the overall learning effectiveness of the academic unit. This hypothesis suggested that development of a learner-oriented culture in each department on a community college campus could be visible through an analysis of perceptions at three distinct levels of organizational culture (Schein, 2010). Finally, it is assumed that cultural development in this context will be influenced by the presence of learner-oriented dimensions. Little is known of the attributes that lead to the formation of an effective learner-oriented organizational culture on college campuses. The purpose of this study was to analyze the

perceptions of academic faculty and department heads regarding effective organizational culture.

Three unique academic units within one institution provide a rich source of data to analyze and understand the complex factors within the formation of learner-oriented organizational culture. Schein (2010) defined three levels of culture. First, were artifacts, visible and tangible structures and processes, as well as observed behaviors. Next were espoused beliefs and values; which represent the ideals, goals, values, and aspirations, ideologies and rationalizations, individuals within an organization hold. The third level included basic underlying assumptions organizational members make; unconscious, taken-for-granted beliefs and values that determine behavior, perception, thought, and feeling. This study examined the basic underlying assumptions of three academic units through the lens of faculty and department head's perceptions.

This study built on research that reinforced learner-oriented dimensions in academic leadership which included leadership development (Wolverton, Ackerman, & Holt, 2005), leader follower relationships (Horne, du Plessis, & Nkomo, 2016; Krause, 2014; Skorobohacz, Billot, Murray, & Khong, 2016), collegiality (Kligyte & Barrie, 2014), context (Baldwin, DeZure, Shaw, & Moretto, 2008; Davison & Burge, 2010; Inman, 2011; Raines & Alberg, 2003; Skorobohacz et al., 2016; Smothers, Bing, White, Trocchia, & Absher, 2011), perception (Bateh & Heyliger, 2014; DeZure, Shaw, & Rojewski, 2014; Horne, du Plessis, & Nkomo, 2016; Raines & Alberg, 2003; Skorobohacz et al., 2016; Smothers et al., 2011; Underwood, Mohr, & Ross, 2016), and effective leadership (Blackmore & Blackwell, 2006; Sathye, 2004; Schein, 2010; Spendlove, 2007; Underwood, Mohr, & Ross, 2016; Yelder & Codling, 2004) to

determine which factors were present in each academic unit, which factors promoted effectiveness, and whether or not the factors aligned with the ten dimensions of a learner-oriented culture.

Additionally, this study built upon research within organizational culture, to understand whether an academic unit within a higher education institution should orient toward learning as Schein and Schein (2017) suggested. Social and affective factors included culture (Morgan, 1997; Ogbonna & Harris, 2000; Pettigrew, 1979; Schein, 2010; Schein & Schein, 2017; Smircich, 1983; Swidler, 1986; Tierney, 1988), internal integration and external adaptation (Denison & Mishra, 1995; Schein, 2010), climate (Schulte, Ostroff, Shmulyian & Kinicki, 2009; Schneider, Ehrhart & Macey, 2013), perception (Czarniawska, 1991; Møthe, Ballangrud & Stensaker, 2015; Schein, 2010; Smart, 2003; Xenikou & Furnham, 1996), adaptation and change (Cameron, 1984; Denison & Mishra, 1995; Hrabowski, Suess, & Fritz, 2011; Piderit, 2000; Hrabowski, Suess, & Fritz, 2011; Schein, 2010; Schneider et al., 2013; Simsek & Louis, 1994; Weick & Quinn, 1999), and organization leader/follower relationships (Ogbonna & Harris, 2000).

I believed, when interviewing participants, I would discover varied perceptions of effectiveness departmentally, and across campus. I also believed internal integration and external adaptation processes would vary among departments. I expected various dimensions of a learner-oriented organizational culture would be present in each academic unit, and that unique factors unassociated with the ten dimensions may be discovered.

General Research Question

How do academic leader's perceptions, within three separate departments at a rural intermountain-west community college, effect learner-oriented culture? This was the central question I was seeking to understand in this study. To answer the question, I analyzed three cases analyzing academic leader's abilities to shape the culture of their academic unit. I also analyzed the presence of social and affective factors used by academic leaders, and the presences of dimensions of a learner-oriented organizational culture.

Through careful examination of the perceptions of academic faculty and department heads, this study sought to understand how perceptions affected the formation of learner-oriented organizational cultures. The study sought to discover ways in which faculty and department heads were involved in culture formation and which factors were most prevalent. Academic units are referred to in this study as subcultures on college campuses. They are defined here as subgroups of the larger college campus culture that developed through differentiation. For the purposes of this study, subcultures are further defined as complex groupings of unique individuals working and learning together within their academic units.

The social and affective factors present within a subculture, as well as what makes the subculture effective, are an area within current research that are relatively unknown. The presence of certain social and affective factors directly correlated with an academic unit's ability to effectively develop a learner-oriented culture. Development of effective academic leaders and organizational culture on a college campus has become a subject of great importance in the areas of leadership, change theory, and culture (Schein & Schein,

2017).

Background of the Study

This study examined operational effectiveness within each academic unit and the organization. This study also examined influences on the organization to determine where or not gaps exist in the available research regarding accumulate shared learning within academic units. Further, the study intended to identify any gaps that may exist in understanding the impact of individual perceptions on the culture of an academic unit. Analysis of data collected in this study will shed light on the ways faculty and department heads perceived their subcultures. Additional analysis will shed light on those factors that promoted a learner-orientation within their academic unit. The results of this study provide insight into accumulated learning behaviors within academic units.

Academic leader. I chose to include Department Heads as academic leaders in this study. A Department Head is required to wear both faculty and administrative hats. Including Department Heads, allowed me to uncover leader and follower perception from multiple points of view, including those of faculty, department head, an academic unit's culture, and the institutional culture. In this study, all full-time faculty who taught at the institution were also considered academic leaders. Participants were responsible for leading and teaching in their discipline.

Statement of the problem

Leaders in higher education organizations must recognize effective cultural formation and promote it within their institutions. Leaders that promote learner-orientation in their academic faculty and department heads promote healthy cultures within academic units. Literature suggests that academic leadership and organizational

culture directly influence organizational effectiveness (Schein & Schein, 2017).

Academic leaders shape the culture of the college (Blackmore & Blackwell, 2006; Sathye, 2004; Schein, 2010). The influence of an academic leader on his/her subculture (academic unit) affects the overall efficacy of an institution (Spendlove, 2007; Underwood, Mohr, & Ross, 2016; Yelder & Codling, 2004). A subculture that protects and defines the makeup of its leadership, and the varied cultures present within it, can more effectively lead (Underwood, Mohr, & Ross, 2016), and adapt to change (Hrabowski et al., 2011; Schein, 2010).

Academic faculty and department heads need training to develop, enhance, and balance the subcultures in which they work (Wolverton, Ackerman, & Holt, 2005).

Academic faculty and department heads are influenced through the professional development opportunities they receive, their supervisor's leadership style, the overall college campus culture, and their individual role in the subculture (Bateh & Heyliger, 2014; Harris, Leithwood, Day, Sammons, & Hopkins, 2007; Ogbonna & Harris, 2000; Sathye, 2004; Schein & Schein, 2017; Underwood, Mohr, & Ross, 2016). Through exploration of the perceptions of three subcultures, this study contributes to the body of research regarding leaders' understanding of organizational culture and member behaviors.

Significance of the Study

Academic leaders' perceptions provided a window into the study of effective culture. A study of the effectiveness of an organization's academic units, defined here as learner-oriented cultures (Schein & Schein, 2017), is important for several reasons. First, understanding subculture effectiveness helps reveal the logic behind subculture

formation. This study points to social and affective factors present within the subculture. Second, effective subcultures positively influence the ways in which members within the culture operate (Mørthe, Ballangrud & Stensaker, 2015; Smart, 2003). Effective leaders recognize the abilities of faculty and department heads (Skorobohacz et al., 2016) and strive to develop learner-oriented cultures on their campuses (Schein & Schein, 2017). Third, very little research exists that examines the impact of effective subcultures on college campuses, particularly on community college campuses.

Knowledge of the factors that most influence effective subcultures provide leaders on college campuses a future-oriented change model to implement. Investigation into literature suggests that academic leaders require continued training in leadership and management (Spendlove, 2007; Wolverton, Ackerman, & Holt, 2005). Research supports the need to assist each department in understanding its culture (Schein, 2010), its effectiveness (Underwood, Mohr, & Ross, 2016), and the role of each member as both academic leader and follower (Horne, du Plessis, & Nkomo, 2016; Krause, 2014; Skorobohacz et al., 2016).

Ten dimensions. Schein and Schein (2017) believe that the establishment of a learner-oriented organizational culture is achievable through the application to one degree or another, of ten learner-oriented dimensions. Those dimensions are: proactivity, commitment to learning to learn, positive assumptions about human nature, belief that the environment can be managed, commitment to truth through inquiry and dialogue, positive orientation toward the future, commitment to full and open task-relevant communication, commitment to cultural diversity, commitment to systemic thinking, and belief in the value of internal cultural analysis. This study examined the perceptions of

academic faculty and department heads' understandings of organizational leadership, culture, and change.

Abbreviated Methodology

The conceptual framework for this study utilized Edgar Schein's (2010) work on culture, leadership, and change, to explore each subculture's shared artifacts, espoused beliefs and values, and basic underlying assumptions. The framework assessed the perceptions of academic leaders for the presences of learner-oriented culture dimensions. The study utilized an inductive, qualitative, exploratory analysis, to compare three academic units on a college campus. Purposive sampling of three units on the campus provided the participants for this study (Miles, Huberman, & Saldaña, 2014). Specific questions regarding perceptions related to participant's subculture shaped their narrative (Schein & Schein, 2017). Further questions regarding the campus culture and its impact on their department and their department's impact on the institution were explored (Morgan, 1997; Ogbonna & Harris, 2000; Schein, 2010; Schein & Schein, 2017). I utilized a qualitative comparative analysis of all data (Miles, Huberman, & Saldaña, 2014; Vogt, Vogt, Gardner, & Haeffele 2014). Additional discussion relative to the research approach and methodology of this study is provided in Chapter III.

Limitations

This study was limited by the following factors:

- The list of potential faculty and chairs who participated in the entire process.
- Variance in faculty responses to interview questions.
- The ability of academic leaders to reconstruct their experiences.

- As a Department Head and faculty member at the college, I may hold biases related to perceptions of subculture and the factors that influence effective subcultures.
- Plausible alternative interpretations and validity threats included subcultures that were unique on campus that may be balanced by other subcultures and the loosely coupled nature of the institution.

Delimitations

This study was delimited by the following factors:

- The use of three separate departments at one community college.
- The use of full-time department heads and faculty who taught at the institution and who were willing to participate in the study.
- A separate interview with as many participants as were available/willing from each department.

Member checking and cross-case analysis, coupled with artifact data collection provided the results. Results and conclusions generated from this study ran the risk of being inaccurate if I influenced the respondents. Participants may have influenced one another by informing one another of the questions asked (Creswell, 2014; Yin, 2014). In addition, proximity to each participant and the recording of his or her responses may have affected the interviewee's willingness to be honest or transparent in the process. Results are validated because they are reflective of the true responses of persons interviewed. Results regarding the context and phenomenon participants experienced at the very moment they were interviewed revealed their perceptions as related to organizational culture and leadership (Seidman, 2013; Yin, 2014).

Definitions

The following definitions were provided to ensure uniformity and understanding of these terms used throughout the study. Following a detailed literature review, I developed all definitions not accompanied by a citation. These definitions are consistent with the definitions proposed in related studies on academic leadership and organizational culture.

- **Academic Leader** – a teaching faculty member, who holds a full-time position, and who participates in the minimum requirements of the institution to meet their current rank. At the community college where this study was conducted, the minimum rank of instructor required membership in a collegiate council, a teaching load of 15-16 credits, and participation in monthly departmental meetings. An academic leader included a Department Head supervising a given department.
- **Culture** – The culture of a group can be defined as the accumulated shared learning of that group as it solves its problems of external adaptation and internal integration; which has worked well enough to be considered valid and, therefore, to be taught to new members as the correct way to perceive, think, feel, and behave in relation to those problems. This accumulated learning is a pattern or system of beliefs, values, and behavioral norms that come to be taken for granted as basic assumptions and eventually drop out of awareness. (Schein & Schein, 2017, p. 6)
- **Differentiation** – a process of culture formation in which smaller units develop. Noted as a division of labor, functionalization, divisionalization and diversification, the components of differentiation were discussed as part of one of five major bases: a) Functional/occupational differentiation, b) Geographical decentralization, c)

Differentiation by product, market, or technology, d) Divisionalization, and e)

Differentiation by hierarchical level. “The leader’s task is to find ways of coordinating, aligning, and/or integrating the different subcultures” (Schein, 2010, p. 271).

Differentiation leads to the formation of subcultures.

- **External Adaptation** – the ability of an organization to respond to the external world in a manner that allowed for creativity, ingenuity, and exploration.
- **Internal Integration** – the ability of an organization to learn and integrate within its own systems and structures new ideas and concepts.
- **Perception** – the ability to see, hear, or become aware of something through the senses.
How faculty perceive themselves and the world around them is a major factor in understanding the affective and social factors behind their decision-making.
- **Subculture** – Organizations undergo a process of differentiation as they age and grow.
This is variously called division of labor, functionalization, divisionalization, or diversification. The common element, however, is that as the number of people, customers, goods, and services increases, it becomes less and less efficient for the founder to coordinate everything. If the organization is successful, it inevitably creates smaller units that begin the process of culture formation on their own with their own leaders. (Schein & Schein, 2017, p. 211)

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

In case study research, two parts exist; an empirical inquiry and the study of that inquiry (Yin, 2014). Within this case study, the empirical investigation examined the phenomenon of three distinct subcultures on a college campus. Academic leaders within subcultures described their lived experiences as they related to their perceptions of their culture and the leadership demonstrated within their culture. This literature review, coupled with artifact data and interview results, framed the inquiry.

In this study, effectiveness is defined as an organizational culture that is learner-oriented (Schein & Schein, 2017). I utilized Edgar Schein's (2010) three levels of culture as a conceptual framework. The levels include shared artifacts, espoused beliefs and values, and basic underlying assumptions. This literature review integrated the research topics of academic leadership, culture, change, effectiveness, context, and perception that correlate with a learner-oriented organizational culture. Throughout this review, I linked relevant literature to the development of subcultures. I used relevant literature to define and give context to each topic and supported each topic with conclusions. Three main sections make up this chapter, including culture, change, and leadership.

Culture

Culture definition. Schein and Schein (2017) provided a definition of culture that guided this work:

The culture of a group can be defined as the accumulated shared learning of that group as it solves its problems of external adaptation and internal integration; which has worked well enough to be considered valid and, therefore, to be taught to new members as the

correct way to perceive, think, feel, and behave in relation to those problems. This accumulated learning is a pattern or system of beliefs, values, and behavioral norms that come to be taken for granted as basic assumptions and eventually drop out of awareness. (p. 6)

Through their use of symbol, language, ideology, belief, ritual, and mythical practices, groups of people shape culture (Morgan, 1997; Ogbonna & Harris, 2000; Pettigrew, 1979; Schein, 2010; Schein & Schein, 2017; Smircich, 1983; Swidler, 1986; Tierney, 1988). Pettigrew (1979) established the concept of organizational culture by stating, “Culture is the source of a family of concepts ... symbol, language, ideology, belief, ritual, and myth” (p. 574). Convergence, Pettigrew (1979) suggested, occurs in the relationship of functional problems in a culture. “These concepts direct attention toward mobilization of consciousness and purpose, the codification of meaning, the emergence of normative patterns, the rise and fall of systems of leadership and strategies of legitimization” (Pettigrew, 1979, p. 576).

Symbol, language, ideology, belief, ritual, and myth allowed man to explore the creation of culture, according to Pettigrew (1979). Pettigrew (1979) aimed to integrate into the theoretical language of organizational behavior the concepts used in sociology and anthropology:

In pursuit of our everyday tasks and objectives, it is all too easy to forget the less rational and instrumental, the more expressive social tissue around us that gives those tasks meaning. Yet for people to function within any given setting, they must have a continuing sense of what that reality is. (p. 2)

Academic leadership and leadership development were integrated into definitions

of culture to expound upon the nature of leading and change within an institution of higher education by both Swidler (1986) and Schein (2010). Swidler (1986) stated, “Usually, we invoke culture to explain continuities in action in the face of structural changes” (p. 277). “Culture provides the materials from which individuals and groups construct strategies of action” (Swidler, 1986, p. 280). Swidler (1986) believed “culture has enduring effects on those who hold it ... by providing the characteristic repertoire from which they build lines of action” (p. 284). In this case study, culture was explored in the context of the day-to-day application within higher education institutions. The design of this study allowed the participants to reflect on, and to discover how, their subculture took shape.

Symbolic. “At the base of any strategic change process there must be a clear conception of what the organization is in relation to its wider context (mission) and what it was aiming at (vision)” (Berg, 1985, p. 299). Berg (1985) discussed the need to manage symbolic resources, not people or capital. The targets of change in an organization he believed were the mental imagery and the context in which it existed, not the political, economic or social structures that existed (Berg, 1985).

According to Berg (1985), there are four changes in strategic thinking surrounding corporate cultures that would allow organizations to be viewed as symbolic fields. Those changes included enlarging the environmental concept to include context, inclusion of business concepts, introduction of identity, profile, and image as supports in the change process, and finally a rite of renewal such that organizations questioned the basis for their existence.

Symbolic resource management, in this case study, was examined through the

narrative description of participants' lived experiences. Those experiences provided insight into symbolic practices that participants held. The notion of a rite of renewal resonates with Schein and Schein's (2017) tenth dimension of a learner-oriented organizational culture which is the "belief in the value of internal cultural analysis" (p. 349). Members of an academic unit that reflected on their culture were more likely to be learner oriented and was able to function as a group to complete tasks. The same academic unit was also more likely to share basic underlying assumptions that promoted the value of the creation and evolution of culture which fed back into internal analysis.

Organizational culture. Faculty who perceived the ostensive and performative aspects of culture found satisfaction in the culture in which they worked (Czarniawska, 1991; Møthe, Ballangrud, & Stensaker, 2015; Schein, 2010; Smart, 2003; Xenikou & Furnham, 1996). Czarniawska (1991) called for a definition of organizational culture in both an ostensive and performative sense. An ostensive definition was one in which attempts were made to explain principles. A performative definition was one in which there was room to explore practices (Czarniawska, 1991). Three interwoven dimensions provide a definition of culture as having symbolic, practical, and political aspects. A fourth dimension was discussed that promoted culture as a thought world.

"Unproblematic acculturation prevents true perceptiveness" (Czarniawska, 1991, p. 296), therefore, one cannot experience a culture without becoming part of it. Examination of the narratives of twenty-five participants from three departments within one institution provided a lens into the effectiveness of subcultures and perceptions of academic leaders. Czarniawska (1991) set out to answer the question, "How does one define organizational culture?" (p. 296). Czarniawska (1991) concluded that

organizations both produce and stand as the products of, culture. Culture holds a definition that is both ostensive and performative. Research into departmental subculture should provide pathways to circumvent the problems of acculturation and allow for deeper perceptiveness.

Organizations that implemented effective professional development, involvement, and socialization practices, along with clear communication, produced strong sought-after cultures. According to Tsui, Zhang, Wang, Xin, and Wu, (2006) no clear understanding existed for why leadership behaviors were unrelated or decoupled from perceptions or cultural values prevalent in an organization. Tsui et al., (2006) discovered that decoupling occurred within CEO leadership behavior and organizational cultural values, and that contingency perspective discussed the potential limits of a leader's ability to influence change or shape a culture within an organization. According to Tsui et al., (2006):

Organizational culture, defined and measured in a variety of methods, including culture strength, culture traits, culture congruence, culture types, or shared values, has been found to be related to both performance at the firm level and commitment at the individual level. (pp. 113-114)

Tsui et al., (2006) discussed the functionalist perspective utilizing Schein (1985), Leaders not only have a high level of self-confidence and determination, but they typically have strong assumptions about the nature of the world, the role that organizations play in that world, the nature of human nature and relationships, how trust is arrived at, and how to manage time and space (Schein, 1985, p. 210). A functionalist perspective would result in a tight coupling between CEO's leadership behavior and the

creation of shared cultural values, in other words, a strong culture. Leaders, through their actions and behaviors, contribute to the substance of an organization's culture. (p. 116)

“According to Pfeffer (1981, as cited in Tsui et al., 2006), the task of leadership in organizations was to make activity meaningful and sensible, which produced positive sentiments, attitudes, and feelings among organizational members Leaders performed a symbolic role to justify organizational decisions and outcomes” (p. 115).

Strong culture firms share some common attributes--cultural patterns are shaped and reinforced through a set of rules, systems and norms. Cultural values are developed over time through member interactions, through various institutional processes, through the osmosis of values and norms from institutions external to the firm, or even created over a short period through the deliberate actions of leaders. (Tsui et al., 2006, p. 130)

The processes that shaped or guided behavior in companies with strong cultures were extensive communication, socialization of employees, and involvement of employees in culture development processes. Tsui et al., (2006) defined organizational culture as shared social knowledge with an understanding of “prevalent rules, norms, or values that shape the preferences or actions of participants” (p. 130). According to Tsui et al., (2006) systems and processes that reinforced and sustained culture included human resource systems such as selection, evaluation, rewards and sanctions, and training, with an emphasis on criteria that reinforced cultural values.

Organizations that recognized performance dimensions and explored ways to advance based on their strengths and weaknesses in each dimension were more likely to grow. According to Schulte et al. (2009) organizational culture was broader and more integrated than its individual types. Organizational culture is a holistic, social normative

phenomenon “whose primary theoretical utility is in drawing attention to the holistic aspect of the group or organizational phenomenon” (Schulte et al., 2009, p. 618). Culture was defined as a unified pattern of assumptions, beliefs, values, norms, and behaviors (Schein & Schein, 2017) not a sum of its constituent types. Rather than testing and evaluating culture types - independent association with effectiveness criteria, future research should pursue a configured approach by ascertaining an organization’s culture profile, or pattern of organizational values and behaviors (Cameron, 1984; Denison & Spreitzer, 1991). Approaching organizational culture as a collection of beliefs, values, norms, and behaviors is consistent with its theoretical bandwidth and sheds additional insight into this complex social phenomenon. Accordingly, configuration theory may be a fruitful alternative theoretical perspective to ground future organizational culture research (Schulte et al., 2009).

Climate in an organization was defined by Schulte et al. (2009) as multifaceted, where each facet contained mutual influences that reinforced one another. The entire multifaceted system required consideration in context to allow for successful change. “Organizations operated in multiple performance dimensions and were rarely able to be effective in all of them” (p. 632). Schulte et al. (2009) measured organizational effectiveness through climate as a variable that was discrete within the social context. Schulte et al. (2009) studied the climate dimensions of elevation, shape, and variability as they related to outcomes in an organization. “Different outcomes may require different climate formations” (p. 632). Schulte et al. (2009) stated that “Single-climate facets could rarely be changed or optimized in isolation” (p. 632) as many operate together.

To describe cultural configurations across organizations, researchers need the

development of a more robust set of culture types. Hartnell, Yi Ou, and Kinicki (2011) agreed that organizational culture was “The set of shared, taken-for-granted implicit assumptions that a group holds and that determines how it perceives, thinks about and reacts to its various environments” (Hartnell et al., 2011, p. 677 as cited in Schein, 1996, p. 236). “A collective's values and beliefs are the social and normative expectations that inform members how they ought to behave. Behaviors subsequently affect employees’ attitudes and tangible work output” (Hartnell et al., 2011, p. 679). The collection of 25 academic leaders’ perceptions regarding their culture will provide insight into behavior, assumptions and the nature of collected artifacts.

Climate research made a shift in recent years from an individual to a strategic outcome and process-based research focus. This type of shift was extremely beneficial as it allowed researchers to draw meaningful conclusions from contextual process variables. Culture research, on the other hand, did not deal with the same historical need for a shift. Culture was derived from an anthropological background and widely used by psychologists to discuss organizations and people groups. Schneider et al. (2013) stated that culture had no agreed upon definition nor plan for study. Schneider et al. (2013) addressed numerous models, levels, and perspectives of organizational culture and explored leadership performance to provide a fuller understanding of how to conduct organizational culture research.

“Climate offers an approach to the tangibles on which managers can focus to generate the behaviors they require for effectiveness, and culture offers the intangibles that likely accrue to produce the deeper psychology of people in a setting” (Schneider et al., 2013, p. 381). Further research into the possible additive, as well as interactive effects

of multiple climates would benefit the field. Schneider et al., (2013) recommended that through the implementation of a climate lens, the research completed could provide insight into contextual process variables that were correlates or antecedents to their results.

Climate and culture-centered organizations experienced more meaningful change. Schneider et al. (2013) suggested that organizational climate emerged in organizations through a social information process. Such a process was concerned with the meaning employees attached to the behaviors and actions they saw present within an organization. Schneider et al. (2013) also stated that the use of relevant outcomes in climate research, linked to a process, produced deeper understanding for an organization. The results of climate research suggested that stronger climates formed when climate ideals aggregated. Schneider et al. (2013) observed organizational culture as being concerned with intrinsic beliefs, values, and assumptions. “In sum, when work units interact more, communicate more, and are more interdependent, and when leaders communicate more and share a clear strategic vision for the work, then the climate in those units was stronger” (Schneider et al., 2013, p. 368).

“Culture is deep, pervasive, complex, patterned, and morally neutral” (Schein, 2010, p. 53). Primary embedding mechanisms were the major tools that allowed a leader to “perceive, think, feel, and behave” (p. 53) within a given culture. Secondary articulation and reinforcement mechanisms were cultural artifacts, described as highly visible and difficult to interpret. The secondary mechanisms, when used by a leader to enhance and further the primary mechanisms, were beneficial. Secondary mechanisms held negative effects if assumptions perpetuated within a mature organization that new

leadership aimed to change. “Culture cannot really be understood without looking at core technologies, the occupations of organization members, and the macrocultural context in which the organization exists” (Schein, 2010, p. 54).

“The organization’s structure and design can be used to reinforce leader assumptions” when embedding an employee, but should not be thought of as entirely accurate as structure and design have been interpreted by employees in numerous ways” (Schein, 2010, p. 252). Schein (2010) defined differentiation as a process of culture formation in which smaller units develop. The development of smaller units Schein (2010) saw as a division of labor in which functionalization, divisionalization, and diversification were three components.

The building of an effective organization was defined by Schein (2010) as the harmonization of subcultures through the “evolution of common goals, common language, and common procedures for solving problems” (p. 271). Schein (2010) categorized differentiation into five major bases; a) Functional/occupational differentiation, b) Geographical decentralization, c) Differentiation by product, market, or technology, d) Divisionalization, and e) Differentiation by hierarchical level. Schein (2010) believed, “The leader’s task was to find ways of coordinating, aligning, and/or integrating the different subcultures” (p. 271).

Subcultures formed through shared assumptions within functional units and often resulted in a stovepipe or silo effect. The ability to get one subculture to work well with another subculture was heavily dependent on communication, consensus, and decision implementation. Schein (2010) believed that within a given culture both a macroculture and subcultures might exist. For the purposes of this study, a macroculture is referred to

as the overarching culture of the collegiate campus.

Hierarchies, Schein (2010) noted, formed another type of subculture within an organization's macroculture. Hierarchies developed when managers found techniques that worked and then trained others in how to use them or expected those techniques to work across all units under all circumstances. Schein (2010) referred to three main categories of subcultures, which exist in every organization, to some degree or another, and of which must be managed well through leadership “to ensure that subcultures are aligned toward shared organizational goals” (p. 57).

Three subcultures along with assumptions of each subculture from a global community perspective, were discussed by Schein (2010). Subcultures included operator, engineering or design, and the executive subculture. The operator subculture depicted the notion that people ran the organization as the critical resource. People learned, innovated, and handled change, to work collaboratively, and to communicate with trust and commitment. People also relied on managers to provide the resource necessary to succeed.

Within the engineering subculture, people were the problem, whereby machines were ideal in providing precise outcomes without intervention by humans. Solutions in the engineering subculture focused on overcoming problems. Everything was oriented toward production and outcomes that were useful.

The executive subculture had both a financial and a self-image focus. Financial foci included survival and growth, with recognition of perpetual war among the competition. The self-image subculture took on the persona of the lone ranger. As a subculture, they believed that no one could be trusted, and people were viewed as an

intrinsically unvalued necessary evil. Self-image focused subcultures held that an organization was most effective when human capital was leveraged for only the few contracted skills an individual possessed.

Schein (2010) discussed one final culture type, the microculture. In common tasks and through shared histories, microcultures formed. Within most microcultures or microsystems there existed various members of macrocultures and occupational cultures.

Change

“Planned organizational change dealt with the basis of change; adaptation dealt with the conditions or sources of change” (Cameron, 1984, p. 123). Cameron (1984) discussed the differences between organizational development (OD) or planned organizational change and organizational adaptation. The purpose was to emphasize the nature of the change involved and the purposeful intent behind the change.

Colleges and universities will be required to adapt to change, Cameron (1984) noted, to remain viable in the future. “Institutions will have to be more loosely coupled in structure to cope with ... environmental complexity; they will also need to become more tightly coupled in their information exchange” (p. 134). Cameron (1984) discussed categories of approaches to organizational adaption (population ecology, life cycles, strategic choice, & symbolic action approaches). Cameron (1984) referenced Ashby (1947) regarding the “law of requisite variety,” through which an institution discovered equilibrium. Equilibrium occurred when one element equally matched in complexity with another element, such as the relationship between an organization and its environment. Cameron (1984) then predicted that there would be a necessity for intra-organizational heterogeneity if organizations hoped to remain adaptable.

The future of higher education management must embrace adaptability (Cameron, 1984; Piderit, 2000; Schein & Schein, 2017). The first section of Cameron's (1984) work examined adaptation through the lens of major conceptual approaches. The second section discussed the environment necessary for adaptation. The third section looked at characteristics of institutions and the strategies necessary for adaptive change. Cameron (1984) drew upon Janusian thinking in his definition. "Janusian thinking occurs when two contradictory thoughts are held to be true simultaneously" (Cameron, 1984, p. 134). Successful implementation of adaptive environments in higher education required the combination of loosely and tightly coupled systems coexisting in one time and space. For organizations to remain valid, they must learn to be both stable and flexible (Cameron, 1984; Schein & Schein, 2017). To achieve equilibrium organizational histories must be partially forgotten allowing improvisation to occur.

Organizations are viewed within an interpretive perspective as socially-constructed phenomenon; contextually-based systems of meaning; continuous processes of enactment; and held awareness that contexts within organizations were enacted domains (Simsek & Louis, 1994). "To what degree can major organizational changes in universities be said to be characterized by a change in a collectively understood paradigm . . . reflected in metaphors, stories, or myths that reflect underlying values and shared understandings?" (p. 671). Simsek and Louis (1994) examined the role of a paradigm shift in organizational structure that led to changes in culture on the campus. Simsek and Louis (1994) further divulged the need to utilize the interpretive perspective to analyze change in higher education research. According to Simsek and Lewis (1994) change was, "A highly decentralized yet community-based activity" (p. 690).

Change, when directed from the top, held a subjective reality from the standpoint of an elite group and did not define “an institution-wide change process unless it considered the alternative competing paradigms that typically emerged in different parts of the organization” (Simsek & Louis, 1994, p. 690). Simsek and Lewis (1994) noted, “Real organizational change requires leadership strategies that emphasize interpretation of organizational values and meaning rather than emphasize organizational restructuring and administration control” (p. 690). A leader must understand the value of the paradigms that exist (or have knowledge of the myths and metaphors of the institution) and be able to implement the support and leadership necessary to sustain others (Denison & Mishra, 1995; Hrabowski et al., 2011; Schein, 2010; Schneider et al., 2013; Simsek & Louis, 1994; Weick & Quinn, 1999).

“Involvement and adaptability described traits related to an organization's capacity to change, while consistency and mission were more likely to contribute to the organization's capacity to remain stable and predictable over time” (Denison & Mishra, 1995, p. 216). Denison and Mishra (1995) viewed culture as a system of “socially transmitted behavior patterns that served to relate human communities to their ecological settings (p. 204).

Internal integration and external adaptation were the dual problems within an organization that provided cultural development as organizations learned (Denison & Mishra, 1995). Denison and Mishra (1995) aimed to develop an integrated theory that encompassed phenomena that extended from core assumptions to visible artifacts and from social structures to individual meaning. A theory that addressed culture as a symbolic representation of past attempts at adaptation and survival and the limiting or

enabling conditions for future adaptation. Denison and Mishra (1995) concluded that if an organization hoped to change, they must grow in the areas of involvement and adaptability. Organizations had to develop an orientation that was more external along with internal integration, change, and flexibility.

Organizations that practiced continuous change, adapted readily (Denison & Mishra, 1995; Hrabowski et al., 2011; Schein, 2010; Schneider et al., 2013; Simsek & Louis, 1994; Weick & Quinn, 1999). Weick and Quinn (1999) suggested a contrast between episodic and continuous change within an organization. “Planned change is usually triggered by the failure of people to create continuously adaptive organizations” (Weick & Quinn, 1999, p. 362). Weick and Quinn (1999) defined dialogue as the “interaction focused on thinking processes and how they are preformed ... which enables groups to create a shared set of meanings and a common thinking process” (p. 381). “The most basic mechanism of acquiring new information that leads to cognitive restructuring is to discover in a controversial process that the interpretation that someone else puts on a concept is different from one’s own” (Weick & Quinn, 1999, p. 381). Dialogue provided a window into the ways in which others processed and interpreted change, and, therefore, became a means to develop change within an individual and an organization.

Episodic change followed a pattern of unfreeze-transition-refreeze, in which changes were infrequent, discontinuous, and intentional and “occurs during periods of divergence when organizations are moving away from their equilibrium conditions” (Weick & Quinn, 1999, p. 365). Continuous change, by contrast was change that appeared to freeze-rebalance-unfreeze, never having a transition period, always evolving and incremental.

Organizational inertia, according to Weick and Quinn (1999), must be understood to understand change. Weick and Quinn (1999) concluded that change both began with failure to adapt (Cameron, 1984; Piderit, 2000; Schein, 2010) and change never truly had a start because it was a continuous process. Change as a trajectory was open ended or spiraling, not linear and it was important to note that change was never complete. As organizations shifted, their classification more accurately depicted *changing*. A global and/or local vantage point influenced the rate of change observed, the inertias discovered, and the size of accomplishments.

Effective organizations train leaders to recognize ambivalence and monitor employee beliefs. Piderit (2000) suggested five key implications for research and practice in higher education culture. Multidimensional attitudes were the focus of Piderit's (2000) framework for moving beyond a metaphor. Attention should be paid to the need for variety within ambivalence in responses from individuals as they relate to change. Piderit discussed further need for study in the cause of motivation and consequences related to change and ambivalence. Piderit (2000) desired to see top-down and bottom-up change processes become the norm.

Movement from a change model based on metaphysical principles of force, to a recognition of ambivalence in change response was a key idea Piderit (2000) shared. Piderit (2000) also had a desire to see change bubble up from the ground floor of an organization. Ambivalent ideas about change could be measured, considered, and incorporated into research. Integration of three alternative views (behavior, emotion, or belief) as responses to change provide the definition needed to understand the phenomenon of resistance in organizational change (Piderit, 2000).

A “multidimensional view of attitudes that can be used to integrate the inconsistent definitions of resistance that have been found in organizational studies” (Piderit, 2000, p. 787) was the most inclusive approach to understanding change resistance. When applied to the alternative views of an employee's behavior, emotion, or belief, in relation to their resistance to change, Piderit (2000) suggested, the results might have pointed to a level of ambivalence.

“Strong management ensured that the appropriate execution of functions and follow-through were enabled through assessment” (Hrabowski, Suess, & Fritz, 2011, p. 15). “Strong leadership could help create the vision, set the tone of the climate, emphasize the values that were most critical, and build trust among people” (Hrabowski et al., 2011, p. 15). Culture change, as Hrabowski et al. (2011), concluded, was the very engine that drove transformation.

“All planned change starts with some recognition of a problem, a recognition that something is not going as expected” (Schein & Schein, 2017, p. 321). Schein and Schein (2017) utilized three stages within a cycle of learning and change to develop a model for an organization. Stage one, creating the motivation to change or unfreezing, consists of four components: disconfirmation, survival anxiety, learning anxiety, and creation of psychological safety to overcome learning anxiety.

Stage two, learning new concepts, involves creating new meanings for old concepts, and new standards for judgement. Stage two includes the actual change and learning process, achieved through identifying and imitating role models, and/or scanning for solutions through trial and error.

Stage three, internalizing new concepts, meanings, and standards, has two

components: their incorporation into identity and into ongoing relationships. Ultimately, for change to occur, disconfirmation must take place, which naturally produces anxiety. Schein and Schein (2017) concluded that if new learning occurred, it was a result of cognitive redefinition. Narrative recreation of the phenomenon that existed within each individual subculture provides cognitive redefinition (Schein & Schein, 2017).

The conceptual framework for this study was based on Schein and Schein's (2017) three levels of culture. First, were artifacts, explained to be visible and tangible structures and processes, as well as observed behavior, which Schein (2010) noted was difficult to decipher. Next were espoused beliefs and values, or the ideals, goals, values, and aspirations, ideologies, and rationalizations individuals held. Third, the basic underlying assumptions people made, and the unconscious, taken-for-granted, beliefs and values that determine behavior, perception, thought, and feeling. "Beliefs and values tended to be elicited when someone asked about observed behavior or other artifacts that struck them as puzzling, anomalous, or inconsistent" (Schein, 2010, p. 48). This research provided a framework to examine the perceptions of individual participants for the presence of shared artifacts, espoused beliefs and values, and basic underlying assumptions.

Leaders affect change. Culture evolves through the entry into the organization of people with new assumptions and from the different experiences of people in different parts of the organization (Schein & Schein, 2017, p. 250). A leader could encourage subculture formation and enhance diversity or utilize promotion and selection to reduce diversity. The leader, therefore, could manipulate a direction that an organization developed culturally. Effective leaders must learn to recognize the needs and the

evolution within their organization's culture to provide the support and leadership necessary for change (Harris et al., 2007; Hartnell et al., 2011; Møthe, Ballangrud, & Stensaker, 2015; Smart, 2003).

Subculture formation was described by Schein and Schein (2017) as an evolution through systemic effects. Effects included: the loss of personal acquaintance and face-to-face communication, the loss of functional familiarity, change of coordination methods, change of measurement mechanisms, increased pressure for standardization, abstract and potentially irrelevant standardization methods, changes in the nature of accountability, difficulty in developing strategic focus, controversy surrounding the roles of central function and services, increases in the growth of responsibility for others, biases that arise in the decision making processes by a responsibility for others, and a loss of familial feel.

Schein and Schein (2017) discussed major bases for separation within macrocultures. Those bases included functional or occupational differentiation, geographical decentralization, and differentiation by product, market, or technology, and divisionalization and differentiation by hierarchical level. A subculture may have resulted due to a successful organization recognizing the need to differentiate. "Building an effective organization is ultimately a matter of meshing the different subcultures by encouraging the evolution of common goals, common language, and common procedures for solving problems" (Schein & Schein, 2017, p. 230).

Leadership

Development. "Leadership is the key to learning" (Schein & Schein, 2017, p. 14). Developing leaders utilize their power to establish behavior directed at a new purpose. When difficulty arises leaders impart new ideas, when success comes, culture defines

leadership expectations (Schein & Schein, 2017). When leaders model behavior that is new, they help evolve the culture and the learning mechanism of the culture is defined.

Leadership development focused on conceptual understanding, skill development, and reflective practice, provides an environment where followers feel autonomous and supported; “By its very nature, the Department Headship is a series of interruptions and interactions with many people at multiple levels of the institution” (Wolverton, Ackerman, & Holt, 2005, p. 229). Faculty, who become Department Heads, typically lack the leadership skills the position requires. Most institutions did not provide leadership training for their chairs and consequently chairs led poorly. Wolverton, Ackerman, and Holt (2005) developed and piloted a professional development program for individuals who aspired to academic leadership at the department level.

Academic leadership development that provided conceptual understanding, skill development, and reflective practice, was likely to enhance a leader’s ability to shape their subculture. Wolverton, Ackerman, and Holt (2005) found that leadership training aligned in the following three ways would maximize effectiveness and create sustainable environments where faculty would enjoy pursuing their interests. The three foci were conceptual understanding, skill development, and reflective practice.

Collegiate leaders who performed their responsibilities in a balanced and complex manner promoted higher levels of institutional performance and promoted a campus culture that was complex or Janusian in design (Smart, 2003). College and university leaders have been tasked with the great challenge of fostering a complex campus culture (Møthe, Ballangrud & Stensaker, 2015; Schein, 2010; Smart, 2003). A study of organizational culture and leadership revealed that, “An organization’s likelihood of

achieving higher levels of performance was contingent on its capacity to develop an overall organizational culture that valued and supported its efforts to achieve seemingly contradictory and paradoxical objectives” (Smart, 2003, p. 694). “Effective organizational leaders must be able to perform multiple and seemingly contradictory roles” (Smart, 2003, p. 695). Effective leaders must balance the role of motivator, vision setter, taskmaster, and analyzer within their culture, and others must perceive them as doing so (Schein & Schein, 2017).

Effectiveness of leaders at the community college level has not been evaluated based on diversity of culture and complexity of leadership skills/abilities. Smart (2003) believed that in the development of a complex campus culture, leadership and culture needed to be understood as *two sides of the same coin*. “In the end, culture change depended on the implementation of behaviors by organizational leaders that reinforced and were consistent with new cultural values” (Smart, 2003, p. 698). Effective departmental leadership was unique to the discipline within the department. “There is little hope of enduring improvement in organizational performance without a fundamental change in organizational culture” (Smart, 2003, p. 698).

This case study examined the perceptions of academic leaders’ understandings of organizational change through the lens of their subculture. A participant’s experiences and the factors they described, revealed fundamental changes that occurred in the organization and the likelihood of the culture to be effective. Møthe, Ballangrud, and Stensaker (2015) examined the ways that perspectives on leadership informed perceptions of academic leaders. The focus of their work was:

First, that changes and initiatives in higher education often emerge from departments and

faculties rather than from the institutional level. Next that these units have distinctive and cultural differences, which have important implications for how academic leadership at departmental and school level could or should work. Third, the focus of attention is on what leaders actually do” (p. 301).

Møthe et al. (2015) discovered that academic leaders struggled with traditions, cultures, current governing structures, and funding mechanisms. Møthe et al. (2015) found that the influence of the department head dictated the culture within the department. The struggles they faced limited the ability of an academic leader to instigate change. Møthe et al. (2015) noted that it was possible that leadership as a factor driving transformation of higher education was overemphasized. Møthe et al. (2015) discussed the unique roles of each discipline in developing different forms of departmental leadership that were oriented in specific manners.

Collegiality. When departments and institutions understood and valued collegiality, their cultures reflected the nature of the work environment. For the purposes of this study, collegial governance was defined as a “dominant orientation to a consensus achieved between the members of the body of experts who are theoretically equal in their levels of expertise but who are specialized by area of expertise” (Kligyte & Barrie, 2014, p. 159).

The practice of collegiality ties directly to the learner-oriented dimensions of commitment to systemic thinking and commitment to truth through inquiry and dialogue as Schein and Schein (2017) discussed. Kligyte and Barrie (2014) described various types of collegiality and the impacts on leadership in academia. Kligyte and Barrie (2014) discussed the role of academic leadership in building or nurturing collegial spirit. Kligyte

and Barrie (2014) also discussed fostering academics loyalty to their institution or academia in general and not simply to their department. “Allegiance to disciplinary communities could explain why collegiality appears to be better preserved at departmental level, sometimes resulting in narrow departmentalism at the expense of the broader institutional community” (Kligyte & Barrie, 2014, p. 161).

Effective leadership. Effective leadership in a higher education institution held components of academia and management (Blackmore & Blackwell, 2006; Sathye, 2004; Schein, 2010; Underwood, Mohr, & Ross, 2016; Yelder & Codling, 2004). Yelder and Codling (2004) discussed the need for an institution to recognize the leadership role desired, and to develop a leader with both academic and managerial skills to enhance their effectiveness. According to Yelder and Codling (2004), a move away from academic leadership to managerial leadership among institutions of higher education resulted in a loss of collegiality. Yelder and Codling’s (2004) aim was to provide a mechanism to effectively model shared leadership as both academic and managerial.

The Department Head role in many institutions was a blend between both academic leadership and management. Yelder and Codling (2004) discussed a need to develop a shared governance model for leadership that established the role of the academic leader from that of the manager (Spendlove, 2007). A “tailored leadership development model that is role-relevant” assisted in the effective development of a leader, whether they were academic or managerial in nature (Yelder & Codling, 2004, p. 327).

Strategic leaders were more effective in developing faculty who were integrated, engaged, and understood (Blackmore & Blackwell, 2006; Sathye, 2004; Schein, 2010;

Spendlove, 2007; Underwood, Mohr, & Ross, 2016; Yelder & Codling, 2004).

Blackmore and Blackwell (2006) addressed the role strategic leadership played in academic development. Blackmore and Blackwell (2006) argued strongly in favor of an integrated conception of the faculty role. “Academic work is becoming more pressured and less secure ... is tending to become more fragmented, with increasing specialization and casualization ... boundaries between academic and other staff are now more permeable” (Blackmore & Blackwell, 2006, p. 374).

When placed into a position more congruent with faculty self-perceptions, leaders in academic development succeeded more regularly. Blackmore and Blackwell (2006) concluded that an effective leader needed to support an integrated faculty role, engage with communities and individuals, enhance understanding of academic work, and support the development of evidence-based practice. Success in a leadership role included deep understanding of and connection with faculty roles, and engagement with organizational needs for continuous learning and improvement. The leader's expertise included appreciation of a varied nature of learning, including situated and tacit learning, the ability to work ethically in complex situations, and knowledge of applied research at institutional, departmental, and individual levels (Blackmore & Blackwell, 2006).

Faculty viewed academic leaders who juxtaposed both human and social capital as leaders that were more effective. Spendlove (2007) completed an exploration of the competencies (attitudes, knowledge, & behavior) necessary for leading effectively in higher education. To effectively lead and manage at a university, leadership that is uniquely geared toward higher education needs to be modeled effectively (Blackmore & Blackwell, 2006; Sathye, 2004; Schein, 2010; Spendlove, 2007; Underwood, Mohr, &

Ross, 2016; Yelder & Codling, 2004). Using competency models, leadership development should build social capital within organizations in an “attempt to capture the experience, lessons learned, and knowledge of seasoned leaders to provide a guiding framework” (Spendlove, 2007, p. 409).

Within the context of higher education institutions (HEI), “leadership has been shown to be a complex interaction between the designated leader and the social and organizational environment” (Spendlove, 2007, p. 409). Spendlove (2007) further noted, “Identity underpins self-awareness, one of the key competencies for leadership” (p. 412). For leadership to be effective, academic credibility and experience in the university way of life was paramount (Spendlove, 2007). The continued pursuit of learning, teaching, and research were considered highly valuable. While most universities had no systematic approach to identify or develop leadership skills, they touted people skills, effective communication, and negotiation skills as necessary for effective leaders. Spendlove (2007) differentiated between leadership and management, and then discussed the significance of leadership behaviors in individuals, which influenced the behavior of others.

Effective leaders reflected regularly and relied on their life experiences for decision making in context (Schein, 2010; Spendlove, 2007; Underwood, Mohr, & Ross, 2016; Yelder & Codling, 2004). Inman (2011) discussed the differences in the development of academic leadership throughout varying stages of a leader's development and within the context of faculty and department heads. Inman's (2011) aim was to develop a model that was beneficial in understanding how the role of reflection might assist leaders in their ability to “interrelate with, and lead, other people” (p. 1).

Implications, according to Inman (2011), for developing and understanding leaders lay in knowing their life histories and exploring the ways their experiences affected their leading. Leaders hold a responsibility to “reflect, unpick, articulate and potentially reassess how they have learnt to lead” (Inman, 2011, p. 12).

Organizations with distributed leadership frameworks provided social contexts in which faculty and leaders in academia could be effective (Hartnell et al., 2011; Møthe, Ballangrud & Stensaker, 2015; Smart, 2003). Schein and Schein (2017) describe distributed leadership frameworks as the ability of a culture to hold a commitment to systemic thinking. According to Harris, Leithwood, Day, Sammons, and Hopkins (2007) successful leadership distribution required two conditions; the knowledge or expertise required to carry out the leadership tasks, and the ability to coordinate and execute the plan. Harris et al., (2007) stated that, “When role overlap occurred in a coordinated fashion, there could be mutual reinforcement of influence and less likelihood of making errors in decisions” (p. 344). Distributive leadership included leadership efforts or functions spread out among numerous capable leaders who were required to interact. “In a normative or applied sense, distributed leadership was concerned with the active distribution of leadership authority and agency” (Harris et al., 2007, p. 339).

Effective organizations have leaders who are supportive of followers and utilize them in decision-making processes (Harris et al., 2007; Hartnell, et al., 2011; Møthe, Ballangrud, & Stensaker, 2015; Smart, 2003). Ogbonna and Harris (2000) examined the relationship between performance and an organization's culture. Ogbonna and Harris' (2000) work included an examination of the relationship between three common ideas: leadership styles, organizational culture, and organizational performance. By asking

respondents to state whether their organization had an internal or external focus on culture, a researcher could gain valuable insight into the organization's cultural paradigms. Knowledge of the participant's understanding and categorization of their culture, compared to what the organization deemed its culture to be would reveal areas for organizational improvement.

“Culture would remain linked with superior performance only if the culture was able to adapt to changes in environmental conditions” (Ogbonna & Harris, 2000, p. 769). Ogbonna and Harris (2000) concluded that their “results indicated that the generation of an organizational culture, which was externally oriented, was significantly influenced by the extent to which a leader was supportive of followers and included followers in decision-making processes” (p. 783). “Value, rarity, imitability, and sustainability” (Ogbonna & Harris, 2000, p. 770) were key factors in the health and success of any organization, which included its culture, leaders, and resulting performance.

Context. Language is directly related to context. Context applies to six of the dimensions of a learner-oriented culture; including belief in the value of internal cultural analysis, commitment to full and open task-relevant communication, positive orientation toward the future, commitment to truth through inquiry and dialogue, positive assumptions about human nature, and proactivity. Schein and Schein (2017) discussed language as “not only the categories of what we see, hear, and feel but how we think about things and define meaning” (p. 86). Careful examination of the context of each phenomenon through in-depth interviews will impact this study. The context from which each academic leader shares their story should influence the way data is coded, and the factors that are extrapolated during the process. Participants should express their context

through dialogue to reconstruct their understanding of truth (Schein & Schein, 2017).

Contextual knowledge directly impacts faculty perceptions of leadership (Baldwin et al., 2008; Davison & Burge, 2010; Inman, 2011; Raines & Alberg, 2003; Skorobohacz et al., 2016; Smothers et al., 2011). “All leadership is context specific” (Raines & Alberg, 2003, p. 35; Schein, 2010). If higher education institutions are to remain viable into the future, they must maximize stakeholder values, which is a balancing act of diversity among complex leaders and followers.

To assess mid-career faculty for leadership roles, a leader must understand the context of a teaching and learning environment. Baldwin, DeZure, Shaw, and Moretto (2008) addressed a central problem of a lack of desire of mid-career faculty to take leadership roles due to diversified faculty appointments. Baldwin et al. (2008) concluded that mid-career faculty, examined in context and offered the support and opportunity necessary, would grow and remain passionate within their institutions. Otherwise, faculty felt disjointed and removed from their primary role of teaching.

Academic leaders valued the cultural contexts within their individual departments more than their organization's cultural contexts. Davison and Burge (2010) sought to discover how academic leaders functioned within “contemporary, public, postsecondary institutional contexts” (p. 113). Davison and Burge (2010) explored three sub questions: How do academic leaders experience and construe their everyday work, especially regarding how values, roles and goals influence that activity? How do academic leaders understand the contexts within which they work? What challenges, resistances and value related conflicts, if any, within these contexts of their practice do they articulate? (p. 113)

“Balancing daily dissonance, learning experientially to lead, creating learning

spaces, and seeking moments of grace” (Davison & Burge, 2010, p. 118) were four themes that emerged from the Davison and Burge (2010) study. Organizational leader’s perceptions were positively correlated with contextual understanding of leadership practices as understood by faculty in higher education institutions (Bateh & Heyliger, 2014; DeZure, Shaw, & Rojewski, 2014; Horne, du Plessis, & Nkomo, 2016; Raines & Alberg, 2003; Skorobohacz et al., 2016; Smothers et al., 2011; Underwood, Mohr, & Ross, 2016). Smothers, Bing, White, Trocchia, and Absher (2011) discussed organizational culture, the context, and the influence of perceived nature of ideal leaders.

Knowledge of follower expectations and the desires of the leader resulted in an institution with the ability to hire people with abilities to evaluate leaders. The same knowledge influenced the way a leader approached leading faculty and allowed leaders to seek professional development programs that assisted them in enhancing their abilities (Smothers et al., 2011). This work examined the traits and abilities faculty wanted in their leaders and the cognitive configurations of both trait and ability domains. Researchers paid close attention to the fact that perceptions of followers about leaders and of leaders about followers both affected one another (Smothers et al., 2011). Smothers et al. (2011) concluded that configurational logic should be applied to higher education settings to provide enhanced context to organizations and to provide leadership ideally suited for the faculty.

Perception. Faculty interested in leadership were more inclined to pursue opportunities if they had a positive perception of the leadership role (DeZure, Shaw, & Rojewski, 2014; Horne, du Plessis, & Nkomo, 2016; Raines & Alberg, 2003; Skorobohacz et al., 2016; Smothers et al., 2011; Underwood, Mohr, & Ross, 2016).

DeZure, Shaw, and Rojewski (2014) stated a need to develop and sustain future academic leaders in higher education. Many faculty felt it was important to begin to develop leadership skills among faculty as soon as possible. Equally important was the need to dispel myths. Many felt that a move toward administration was a death to research and teaching.

With many leaders in higher education retiring due to age, there is a necessity to develop new leaders (Wolverton, Ackerman, & Holt, 2005). DeZure, Shaw, and Rojewski (2014) aimed to discover the benefits of a formal leadership role and to foster the benefits within new, younger leaders to help make a difference in the way an institution would operate in the future. Most respondents agreed that nurturing, empowering, or helping individuals was their primary focus. Others added that addressing challenges in their units was a key component of their desire for change in the workplace. Many faculty felt that the move to a formal leadership role meant a loss of passion for research, teaching, or working with students. Some faculty felt that the move toward administration was a barrier to promotion.

A dynamic interplay between the perception of administration and the perception of the faculty led to, “A perceived culture divide between faculty and administrators that was a deterrent to participation” (DeZure, Shaw, & Rojewski, 2014, p. 8). People skills were the most highly-valued trait a leader could possess according to DeZure, Shaw, and Rojewski (2014). DeZure, Shaw, and Rojewski (2014) discussed ways to identify, encourage, and cultivate leaders by introducing responsibility, asking faculty about their interests, encouraging faculty, discussing leadership, and defining leadership responsibilities. Similarly, the need for leaders to understand their role as a service-

oriented one was vital to their success in collaborating effectively with faculty.

Faculty who perceived a strong leader-mentor exchange relationship and who experienced model environments, pursued more development opportunities and held a more positive perception of their work environment (Bateh & Heyliger, 2014; DeZure, Shaw, & Rojewski, 2014; Horne, du Plessis, & Nkomo, 2016; Raines & Alberg, 2003; Skorobohacz et al., 2016; Smothers et al., 2011; Underwood, Mohr, & Ross, 2016). Horne, du Plessis, and Nkomo (2016) examined new ways of utilizing resources to enhance and improve employee's perceptions of their department leader's investment in them. Horne, du Plessis, and Nkomo (2016) showed promising evidence in demonstrating how the leader-member exchange (LMX) theory played a role that enhanced development of academic staff.

With a high-quality LMX, an employee is more likely to have a positive perception of the organization's investment in them and in their development. Horne, du Plessis, and Nkomo (2016) studied the role academic leaders played in developing academic talent among their faculty and staff. Their work discovered ways in which a leader-member exchange relationship, between a department head and academic staff, influenced the perceptions of support for development and investment from the leaders and the organization to the staff. The results suggested that a high-quality LMX provided increased development, learning, and job growth, as well as an increased impact on the volume of supervisory support provided by leaders for development.

“Employee development support comprises an objective component and a component that can be described as intangible” (Horne, du Plessis, & Nkomo, 2016, p. 1023). “Stinglhamber and Vandenberghe (2003) have pointed out that employees seem to

interpret managers' actions and behaviors as representative of the organization" (as cited in Horne, du Plessis, & Nkomo, 2016, p. 1035).

Discipline specific. In this case study, academic leaders in departments reconstructed their lived experiences that related to their epistemology, which in turn related to their discipline. Participants' unveiled factors that linked discipline specificity to effective subcultures. Discipline and location of institution are the enforced and induced differences present among academic institutions in America (Clark, 1997; Krause, 2014; Møthe, Ballangrud & Stensaker, 2015). Five systemic concerns for American professors were detailed by Clark (1997). The concerns were secundarization and remediation, excessive teaching, attenuated professional control, fragmented academic culture, and diminished intrinsic reward and motivation (Clark, 1997, p. 31).

The impact of each systemic concern in American higher education, emphasized the need for four broad ideas. The ideas could aid in directing higher education in the future. At the core of the higher education system is academic work that must be protected and strengthened. Second, integration of managerial and academic personnel requires constant attention. "Anything worth doing in a university or college required a number of people who wanted it to happen and who would work at it for a number of years" (Clark, 1997, p. 38). Third, the unique linkages and indirect forms presented within divergent academic cultures must be better understood and promoted. Finally, academic life's intrinsic rewards must be respected and highlighted.

Faculty allegiance was found to reside within a department, and not at the institutional level, because collegiality occurred more readily in the epistemological departmental culture (Clark, 1997; Krause, 2014). "Fundamental epistemological

differences gave rise to marked disciplinary contrasts in the norms and practices of day-to-day teaching, learning, assessment and curriculum design” (Krause, 2014, p. 5).

Leader and Follower. Leaders who were relational and who held dynamic constructs influenced followers toward a positive orientation (Horne, du Plessis, & Nkomo, 2016; Krause, 2014; Skorobohacz et al., 2016). Skorobohacz, Billot, Murray, and Khong, (2016) examined higher education leadership and followership through social constructionism by delineating a framework of metaphorical concepts. Skorobohacz et al. (2016) discussed their analysis and the necessity to define both dependent and independent positions for followers as they navigated the roles of both followers and leaders.

Discussion of the ways in which followers socially constructed the dynamic of the leadership-followership relationship revealed nuances. Specifically, nuances enveloped relationships as described in metaphors by followers. Leaders, according to Skorobohacz et al. (2016) existed only where there were followers present. There were aspects of a follower-leader relationship that increased or reduced academic engagement in higher education. With a different mental model, leaders and followers gained the potential to enhance their relationships and the environment in which they worked.

Both leaders and followers influenced and affected one another in a dynamic manner that necessitated flexibility. Three themes emerged that included follower’s perceptions of leadership efficacy, a range of responses to leadership, and various complexities of following and leading. Skorobohacz et al. (2016) revealed the interwoven nature to followership and leadership that uncovered an effect and an influence on those involved. Skorobohacz et al. (2016) adopted a social constructionist epistemology as a

lens to examine leadership, using metaphor as linguistic tool to communicate within given contexts. Leadership examined direct outcomes of social processes while they simultaneously discussed culture through the lens of leadership within social processes (Schein & Schein, 2017; Skorobohacz et al., 2016).

Followers affected leader efficacy when they perceived their leaders positively and acted upon their perceptions by allowing the leader to influence them and by trusting in leadership. Context, relationships, and activity were three lenses through which the leader-follower dynamic became flexible and complex (Horne, du Plessis, & Nkomo, 2016; Krause, 2014). Followers perceived leaders through morale, motivation, and satisfaction. As a result, followers affected leader efficacy. “Metaphors for followership and leadership can be either ‘conventional’ or ‘imaginative and creative’” (Skorobohacz et al., 2016, p. 3).

Participants’ values shaped their fulfillment, as did follower experiences of consistency, commonality, and compatibility (Skorobohacz et al., 2016), which led to fulfillment in their work. Through reflection and the use of creative and counterpart metaphors, leaders understood varied and numerous perspectives allowing for effective action within their varied contexts (Skorobohacz et al., 2016). Leadership needed to be a relational and dynamic construct if followers were going to allow themselves to be influenced and to trust those who led (Schein & Schein, 2017; Skorobohacz et al., 2016).

Community college faculty. Studies of community college faculty have historically separated into one of five topics: characteristics of the professoriate, faculty work, dimensions of the career and labor market, influence of institutional factors on faculty work, and teaching as a profession (Twombly & Townsend, 2008). Twombly and

Townsend (2008) depicted the state of community college faculty and emphasized a need to enhance research in their field through their work titled, *Community College Faculty: What We Know and Need to Know*. According to Twombly and Townsend (2008), community college faculty were the most satisfied among all faculty in academe. Additionally, faculty at community colleges were evenly split between males to females. Most faculty were hired locally with very little teaching experience or training.

The field of research on community college faculty has been greatly underserved. Twombly and Townsend (2008) stated, “it is clear that other institutional factors, such as the academic department and connections with the professional field, are likely to affect community college faculty work, but these connections have not been widely studied” (p. 17). Faculty members viewed their administrators as more autocratic than democratic and their increased involvement in governance served the managerial interests of the college, but not the faculty interests (Levin, Kater, & Wagoner, 2006).

Twombly and Townsend (2008) discussed status tensions among faculty at community colleges, both internal and external to transfer institutions. Twombly and Townsend (2008) discussed factors that held negative consequences when considering teaching as a profession. Twombly and Townsend (2008) made two suggestions regarding research of community college faculty. First, to move away from researching faculty at community colleges in a horizontal nature only. Second, to tie the roles of community college faculty members to the teaching and learning process. As a result, research that tied faculty to teaching and learning may provide data regarding effectiveness of programs.

“The essence of culture lies in the pattern of basic underlying assumptions ... to

understand a group's culture, you must attempt to get at its shared basic assumptions and understand the learning process by which such basic assumptions evolve” (Schein, 2010, p. 32). Through the formation of shared basic assumptions, a group's character and identity are formed, which functions as a cognitive defense mechanism for individuals and the group. An effective leader, according to Schein (2010), understands culture at deep levels, assesses functionality of assumptions, and can deal with anxiety when challenged.

Summary and Analysis: State of the Literature

A conceptual framework for the study included shared artifacts, espoused beliefs and values, and basic underlying assumptions. The conceptual and analytical framework combined the three levels of culture as Schein and Schein (2017) describe, and the themes derived from interviews. On the surface, organizational culture is not as uniform as the three levels might suggest. Within a given culture both micro and subcultures may exist (Schein, 2010). Subcultures form through shared assumptions within functional units. When differentiation is present, microcultures may form. Often, extensive differentiation results in a silo effect. The ability to get one culture to work well with another culture is heavily dependent on communication, consensus, and decision implementation.

Hierarchies form another type of microculture within an organization. Microcultures often develop when managers or leaders find techniques that work well and then train others how to use them or expect those techniques to work across all units under all circumstances. Sub and microcultures exist in every organization and must be managed well through effective leadership (Schein, 2010).

Effective leaders play an important role in the development of culture at every level. Through the formation of shared basic assumptions, a group's character and identity are formed, which functions as a cognitive defense mechanism for individuals and the group. An effective leader understands culture at deep levels, can assess the functionality of assumptions, and is able to deal with anxiety when challenged. Effective leadership skills and abilities are essential in leading planned change (Schein, 2010).

A leader's ability to impact culture through human resource management is a critical component to effective culture formation (Schein & Schein, 2017). Culture evolves through the entry into the organization of people with new assumptions, and from the experiences of persons located in different parts of the organization (Schein & Schein, 2017, p. 250). Smart (2003) posits that in a complex campus culture, leadership and culture must reinforce shared values and practices. Effective leadership is distinctive to the discipline within the department. Groups' shared artifacts, espoused beliefs and values, and basic underlying assumptions, directly correlate to the presence of learner-oriented culture dimensions.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

General Perspective

The purpose of this qualitative multi-case study was to utilize analytical generalization to investigate academic leader perceptions. Perceptions were examined through affective and social factors of individuals within three distinct subcultures on a community college campus. As researcher, I analyzed artifacts and conducted semi-structured interviews with participants from three departments within the same organization. A multi-case study approach employed an exploratory design to discover academic leader perceptions of their subculture. The study asked whether participant perceptions aligned with Schein's (2010) three levels of culture. Further, the study attempted to relate the ten dimensions of a learner-oriented organizational culture (Schein & Schein, 2017). Utilizing qualitative comparative analysis, this study associated the factors discussed by participants with the ability of a culture to become learner-oriented.

This study utilized purposive sampling to investigate all three subcultures (Miles, Huberman, & Saldaña, 2014). Use of inductive interviews, whereby, "the researcher discovered recurrent phenomena in the stream of field experiences and found recurrent relations among them" (Miles, Huberman, & Saldaña, 2014, p. 238) allowed participants to describe their phenomenon. I examined the participant's responses for emergent factors, as well as for the presence of learner-oriented dimensions (Schein & Schein, 2017).

The results of this multi-case study explored similarities and differences between three subcultures. Furthermore, this study intended to reveal the perceptions of academic

leaders regarding organizational culture and leadership at their institution and demonstrated the constructs contributing to effective subcultures. Research questions addressed aspects of effective subcultures, which included the dimensions of a learner-oriented culture. The research questions examined the perception of academic leaders, and the social and affective factors participants revealed in their narratives.

Research Context

Case study, as a research methodology, allowed for interaction, examination, and reporting of narratives. Narratives provided rich descriptive language to communicate the ways participants experienced their world. Research from Yin (2014), Maxwell (2013), and Creswell (2014), as well as Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña (2014) informed this multi-case study design. Yin (2014) provided a two-fold definition of case study research. The scope of a case study “Investigates a contemporary phenomenon (the “case”) in-depth and within its real-world context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context may not be clearly evident” (Yin, 2014, p. 16). Because context and phenomenon are not easily distinguishable, Yin provided a second definition. According to Yin (2014) a case study inquiry:

Copes with the technically distinctive situation in which there were many more variables of interest than data points, and as one result relied on multiple sources of evidence, with data needing to converge in a triangulating fashion, and as another result benefitted from the prior development of theoretical propositions to guide data collection and analysis. (p. 17)

Concerns regarding case study research noted by Yin (2014) included questions about rigor, confusion regarding case studies used in teaching, the sheer volume of effort

and the length of information/data collected, and comparative advantage. Yin (2014) adequately addressed each concern, leaving ample room to pursue case study research design. According to Yin (2014) there are five components to every case study research design. They included:

1. A case study's questions (*How* and *Why* questions)
2. Its propositions
3. Its unit(s) of analysis (Defining the case and bounding the case)
4. The logic linking the data to the propositions
5. The criteria for interpreting the findings

The main question for this case study asked, how do academic leaders within three separate departments at a rural intermountain-west community college perceive their subculture (academic unit)? Sub questions included, in what ways are academic leaders involved in shaping their subculture? What social and affective factors are present within a subculture of academic leaders? Which dimensions of a learner-oriented culture are present?

The following propositions were developed with the intention of furthering the conceptual framework from chapter two.

Proposition 1: Academic leaders willing to solve problems of external adaptation and internal integration are more likely to have effective subcultures.

Proposition 2: Academic leaders who desire a learning-oriented culture in their department are more likely to perceive their subculture as effective.

Proposition 3: Academic leaders who are proactive in their commitment to learning to learn are more likely to positively affect their subcultures.

Proposition 4: *Academic leaders who experience multiple approaches to change in their department are more likely to shape their culture.*

Proposition 5: *Academic leaders who perceive that they can influence the culture in their department are more likely to hold a positive orientation toward the future.*

Proposition 6: *Subcultures whose academic leaders value leader follower relationships are more likely to produce effective subcultures.*

Proposition 7: *An effective subculture will contain aspects of each of the ten learning-oriented culture dimensions.*

Each proposition provides a framework for the establishment of protocol questions. Questions, artifact data, and research triangulate academic leader perceptions within each individual case. The units of analysis or the *case* in this study are addressed in the design and analysis section of this chapter. As Yin (2014) stated, the researcher must consider both the definition of the case and the bounding of the case. In this study, the case was an entire academic unit or department, which included the full-time faculty and department head, and their perceptions of effective subcultures. The bounds of the case were limiters such as academic leaders had to work full time in the department at the college. The Department Head was included in the study, but part-time or adjunct faculty were not included. The three cases represented three separate departments on the college campus.

In this study, I utilized cross-case synthesis of three cases (Yin, 2014). The logic linking the data to the propositions included interview questions, three levels of a culture as defined by Schein (2010), and the definition of effective subcultures as learner-oriented (Schein & Schein, 2017). I remained open to emergent themes from the

narratives that provided unique context for effectiveness within higher education institutions.

This work relied on a conceptual framework to provide for analysis of the data collected. The criteria for interpretation of the findings is in the design and analysis section of this work. The process of interpretation in this case study was to identify and address rival explanations of findings (Yin, 2014). Important rival explanations included affective and social factors, the ten dimensions of learner-oriented subcultures, and perceptions of leaders. The criteria included analysis of each academic unit, coding methods, development of codes, and comparisons made between participants and their artifact data.

This study explored subcultures through cross-case comparative analysis to “treat each case study as a separate study ... aggregating findings across a series of individual studies” (Yin, 2014, pp. 164-165). Narrative interview research endeavored to examine subcultures through in-depth examination of both phenomena and real-world context (Seidman, 2013). Schein and Schein (2017) defined a subculture as a subgroup formed from the differentiation of a macroculture. The subcultures in this research included academic leaders within a specific department (academic unit) who taught in the same general field (discipline).

This purposive sample included the Department Head. This was not a study designed to change culture or establish new cultural practices, it was designed to explore the phenomenon of effective subculture and its context within the departments, as they existed. I chose to study three departments on a rural intermountain-west community college campus. The departments represent the breadth of programs offered, and a variety

of teachers across disciplines.

In addition to interviews, qualitative research processes including ancillary documents, peer review, researcher reflexivity, and member checking insured reliability and dependability (Miles, Huberman, & Saldaña, 2014; Vogt et al., 2014). Member checking took processed information back to participants, so they could confirm the accuracy of the work. I emailed the transcribed document to the interviewee to allow them to correct or verify their statements. Peer review was used to allow outside readers the opportunity to review, ask questions, and provide unique perspectives to the research. Reflexivity was the recognition, from the outset, of research biases and assumptions that may affect the study (Creswell, 2014; Maxwell, 2013; Yin, 2014).

Research site. The research site for this study was a rural intermountain-west community college campus that offered courses for over 50 years. The community college consisted of over 120 majors including both certificates and degrees. This site was convenient, as well as realistic. I taught full time at the site and had direct access to all participants for interviews and emails. I collected programmatic data such as program profiles, meeting minutes, program-level outcomes and student-learning outcomes. Interviews with 25 participants took place in the fall semester of 2017. Participants were identified by provided pseudonyms. Participants were selected to include all members of each of the three departments.

Seidman (2013) stated that a purposive sample needed to be generalizable across the larger population, and that any concerns of external validity be, “replaced by a compelling evocation of an individual’s experience” (p. 55). Participants in this study represented three distinct departments. Each department offered courses in general

education, transfer courses, and career and technical education (CTE) courses, as well as dual credit course offerings. This case study design is transferable across community colleges campuses. Narrative interviews provided the depth and insight that artifacts were unable to offer. This study collected the reconstructed experiences of participants to examine the effectiveness of their subculture and the perceptions they held regarding culture, leadership, and change.

Data Collection

Instrumentation. A *case* in this research study was a department or academic unit within a rural, intermountain-west community college. This study examined three cases considering their collective narrative as seen through the lens of each participant. This qualitative, multi-case study integrated data archived from each department to enhance the process of case study research through face-to-face focused interviews with each participant (Seidman, 2013; Yin, 2014). I developed the interview protocol, available in Appendix A. I also utilized a separate department to collect pre-test data on the survey and the interview questions. I utilized a consent form (Appendix C) to provide participants with the information necessary to choose to participate. Yin (2014) referred to the need to develop propositions to limit the scope of the focus. From the literature reviewed, I developed seven propositions that informed the development of the interview protocol for this study. Research and interview questions for this study focused on the lived experiences of community college academic leaders in the context of their job. Open-ended questions allowed the participant the opportunity to reconstruct their experience. Each question examined multiple aspects of the ten dimensions of learner-oriented culture and required participants to reflect on their experiences within their

subculture.

Procedures. This qualitative multi-case study incorporated 25 interviews with academic leaders from three departments within a rural intermountain-west community college. Archival data collected from each department was coded. Coded archival data was used to inform the interview process and to cross-analyze varying aspects of the narratives. During the semi-structured interviews, participants were asked to reconstruct their lived experiences. The interviews were held in person, in a private office. Each interview was recorded using computer software. The results of the interviews were transcribed, coded, and analyzed. To ensure anonymity, the names of participants and any identifying markers were removed from the data. The three departments were given the pseudonyms ALA, ALB, and ALC. Their recordings were deleted after the data were transcribed, and transcriptions of their interviews were given pseudonyms. All data was kept secure on a password-protected computer in my locked office. Any paper documents were kept in a locked filing cabinet in the same locked office.

In the present study, the affective and social factors that academic leaders perceived in their culture were used to analyze effectiveness. The construct examined within this research study was that of an effective subculture, using Schein's (2010) three levels of culture. Furthermore, an effective subculture was defined as one that had members who embraced internal integration and external adaptation, and whose overall focus was one of a learner-oriented organizational culture. The research questions in this study aimed to discover and identify the presences of learner-oriented culture dimensions among participants. Research questions also examined social and affective factors present among academic leaders.

Interviews. Interviews consisted of open-ended questions. Each participant received an email with initial questions to answer and submit, prior to their interview. Each interview lasted between 30 and 60 minutes. Participants were asked to elaborate, reconstruct, and openly share their ideas and experiences related to the questions. According to Seidman (2013), “Meaning-making was a particularly human process, heavily reliant on language. A basic assumption of in-depth interviewing research was that the meaning people make of their experience affected the way they carried out that experience” (Seidman, 2013, p. 18). The research questions focused on drawing the experience out of the participant as they reconstructed their narrative. Transcriptions were coded independent of each academic unit and then correlated through cross-case analysis to show the similarities and differences among subcultures.

Demographic questions. Additional questions were created specifically for the present study to provide context for the sample population and are available in Appendix B. Three demographic questions were asked (e.g., “How long have you worked for the college in your current department?”). The relationship between independent demographic variables and the factors measured using artifacts and the interview questions enabled closer examination of the relationship between an academic leader’s nature in the workforce and the development of an effective subculture. Through the collection of this demographic data, the sample populations’ perceptions were more clearly understood, and in no way, compromised the anonymity of the study.

Data storage and security. All interview participants were given a pseudonym. Data was collected using email and recordings for convenience. The email data was copied to word documents and the emails were deleted. The participant’s emails were not

shared in the study. The resources used were my personal email address, a recording device, and a web-based cloud storage site attached to my graduate school email address. The emails, external hard drive, and computers were password protected with multi-layered encryption. The interviews took place in person. All identifiable data was altered including the name of the college. Participant's pseudonyms were kept in a separate location to prevent identification. The artifacts were emailed by each department and stored on my computer, which was password protected. Upon successful completion of the study, the data was deleted and only the aggregate analysis results were published and saved. The data was secured and then permanently deleted. Idaho State University's Institutional Review Board (IRB) approved the design, collection procedures, data storage, and all other aspects of this study in compliance with research regulations of human subjects before the research began.

Data Gathering

The current study is a small-*(n)* comparative multi-case study. This approach utilized an inductive, qualitative, and exploratory multi-case study design to compare three subcultures on a rural intermountain-west community college campus. The interview protocol allowed for phenomenology as a methodology. I captured narratives that were the descriptive study of lived experience. "Phenomenology ... is the attempt to enrich lived experience by mining its meaning" (Seidman, 2013, p. 18). I implemented qualitative comparative analysis and purposive sampling to investigate mined results of all three subcultures.

Artifacts, in the form of program profiles, meeting minutes, and outcomes, were gathered to represent historical data. Data was available through artifacts and collected

through interviews. Interview questions examined aspects of academic leadership and culture from the perspective of each individual participant and provided emergent themes. Aspects included Schein and Schein's (2017) ten dimensions of a learner-oriented culture, as well as perception, effectiveness, context, change, and leader/follower relationships.

Interview questions were designed to examine the participant responses to protocol questions. By providing in-depth semi-structured questions and sub-questions to explore the perceptions of the academic leader in relation to leadership, organizational culture, and change. The interview questions examined the participant's perceptions of the ten dimensions of learner-oriented culture as seen through the artifacts, espoused beliefs and values, and basic underlying assumptions of their subculture as reconstructed through their narrative.

Coding. "In qualitative research, our precision rests with our word choices" (Saldaña, 2016, p. 39). Saldaña (2016) argued that the most important skill in coding was an extensive vocabulary. I gathered data to develop codes (Saldaña, 2016; Yin, 2014). "Codes are labels that assign symbolic meaning to the descriptive or inferential information compiled during a study" (Miles, Huberman, & Saldaña, 2014, p. 71). "A code in qualitative inquiry is most often a word or short phrase that symbolically assigns summative, salient, essence-capturing, and/or evocative attribute for a portion of language-based or visual data" (Saldaña, 2016, p. 4). Coding of interviews and artifact data occurred predominantly after the data were collected (Saldaña, 2016). Recurring issues in coding included validity, judgement, reliability, symbol use, persistence, and justification. Coding interview data required that I pay attention to their goals, their role,

the sample population, the type of questions, the mode of communication used with the interviewees, the specific record-keeping practices, and tools necessary for success (Saldaña, 2016). “Coding straddled data collection and data analysis” (Vogt et al., 2014, p. 16). An interview in this case study was defined as interactions between a researcher and participants in which a series of open ended, semi-structured questions were recorded and later coded qualitatively.

Interviews in this study explored participant responses and informed the design of emergent and inductive codes (Saldaña, 2016). Codes captured the participants’ narrative responses and told their stories. A respondent’s narrative was coded. The collected data was sorted in two general formats, which included all answers from each participant, and all answers to each question. Preliminary codes included perception, affects, learning-oriented, and experience leading at the college, department/subculture, and general codes such as informational, attitudinal, emotional, contextual, and narrative (Seidman, 2013). The preliminary codes allowed for capture of original accounts and prompted the development of sub-codes as responses and sub-questions prompted responses with unique insights (Seidman, 2013). Examples of sub-codes included future oriented; multichannel communication; diversity; group sense making; systematic thinking; worldview as complex, nonlinear, interconnected, over determined; learner; inquiry; and change.

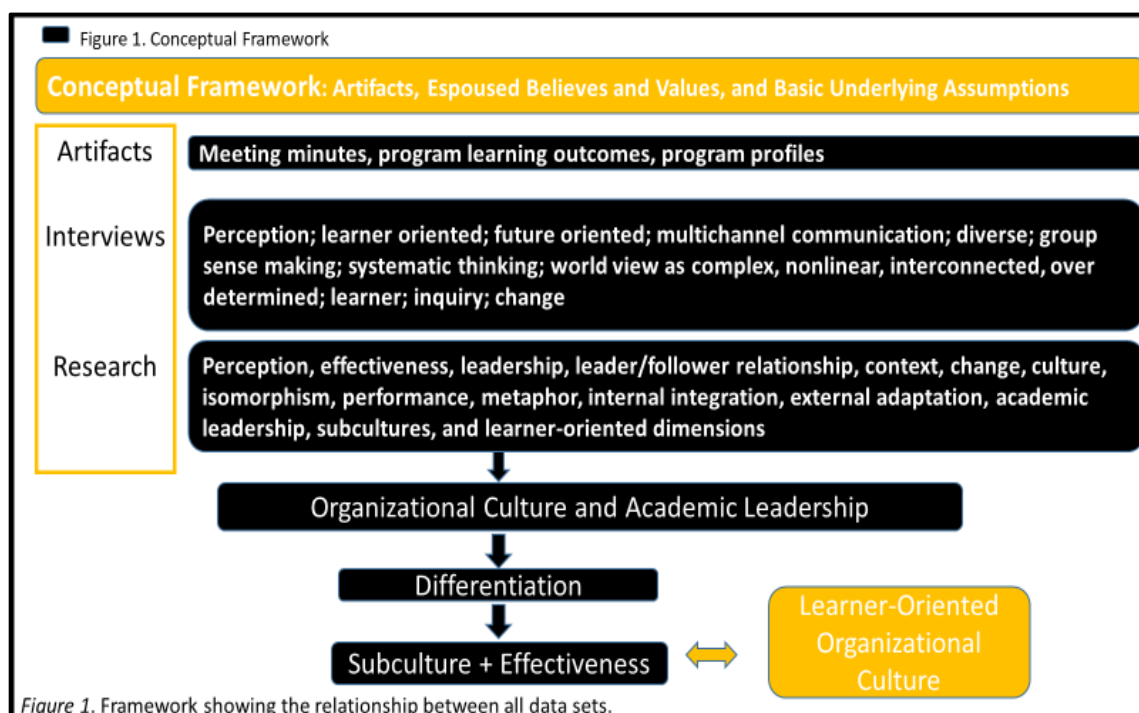
I utilized an open-ended interview protocol (Vogt et al., 2014) and coded and analyzed for both the participant’s and the researcher’s dialogues. Protocol questions aimed to understand what the interviewee perceived at the time of the interview. I planned to interpret participant responses based on the conceptual framework of effective

academic subcultures and examined what emerged from participant responses that might contradict or challenge the researcher's framework. This study utilized deductive codes, as well as *In Vivo Coding*, initially to understand both artifact data and interview data and then to allow for the challenging and emerging responses. The purpose of In Vivo Coding was to capture the participant's voice and meaning inherent to their lived experience. "In Vivo Coding is appropriate for qualitative studies ... that prioritize and honor the participant's voice" (Saldaña, 2016, p. 106). Initially, all interview data collected was digitally recorded.

Interviews were conducted in a face-to-face manner, in a quiet and private space. My office was private and allowed the participants to freely engage in discussion. If a participant desired, the interview was held off campus or in their private office. Vogt, Vogt, Gardner, and Haeffele (2014) stated, "The attributes and characteristics of the interviewees and their responses to the interview setting provide important interpretive clues that you can use in your subsequent coding and analysis" (p. 53). I observed and interpreted verbal data to produce supplementary questions. Initially, the research was mindful of attitudes, demeanors, and types of responses (ex: eagerness, nervousness, hostility, communicative nature). I also paid attention to the length of time, response volume, and depth of insight in each interview. I utilized cross-case synthesis to classify data points collected. Triangulation of narratives with demographic responses and the responses of entire departments completed the cross-case synthesis (Seidman, 2013; Yin, 2014).

Qualitative comparative analysis (QCA). This research study utilized intrusive methods of in-depth interviews coupled with artifact data. Seidman (2013) stated that it

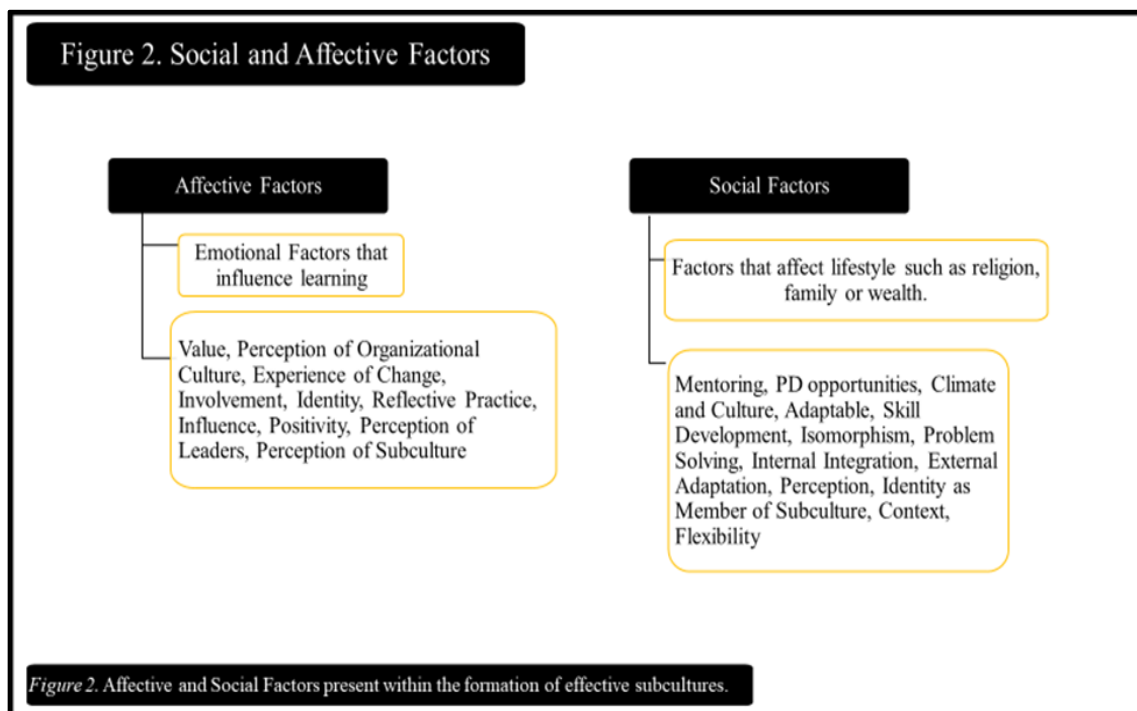
was important to ask participants to reconstruct their experiences by asking, “What happened” and not by asking “Do you remember” as memory provides impediments where reconstruction builds on memory and adds the pertinent details the participant recalls. I verified the phenomena and the context (Baldwin et al., 2008; Davison & Burge, 2010; Inman, 2011; Raines & Alberg, 2003; Skorobohacz et al., 2016; Smothers et al., 2011). Yin (2014) suggested the use of table shells to ensure the researcher captures relevant data for each participant while focusing on both the design and the data collection. This study utilized a table shell (Appendix D), also known as a word table, to identify the data, and to capture parallel information from all participants, which aided in analysis by providing an initial framework (*See Figure 1*).



Variable versus case-oriented research. Variable-oriented case study research may include a large population, random sampling, and hundreds to thousands of cases and variables that are manipulated numerically (Vogt et al., 2014). In this study, I utilized

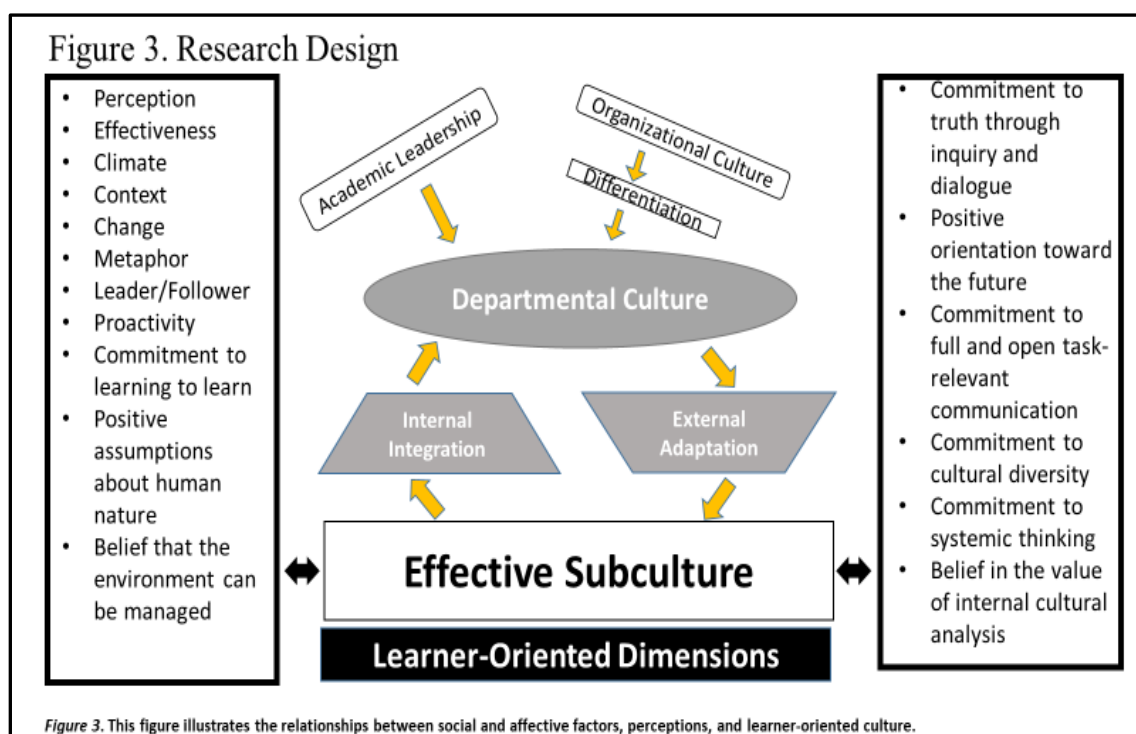
a case-oriented research design with a sample of 25 participants. The decision to utilize three departments was made based on instructive relevance and research. The number of variables was large, compared to the three cases examined, and the volume of narratives was large due to the size of each representative case. Each participant reconstructed their experiences, which yielded abundant data pertaining to the subculture and their academic leadership perceptions.

Nomothetic and idiographic approaches. This research study was nomothetic or generalizing in nature (Vogt et al., 2014). The research explored the affective and social factors present within three subcultures on a college campus to generalize between the three departments and to generalize across all three departments. I explored fundamental mechanisms of effectiveness, the identification of causes, and phenomena present in each (See Figure 2).



Generalizing efforts allowed me to explore each subculture independently while

collecting data to compare the effectiveness of each. The interview questions explored participant responses to their perception of their culture and whether their culture held a learner-centered orientation. Research related to perception, effectiveness, leader/follower relationship, context, change, culture, internal integration, external adaptation, and community college faculty, helped define the social and affective factors academic leaders experienced within subcultures. Interviews captured the lived experiences of academic leaders and revealed dimensions of learner-oriented cultures on the community college campus (*See Figure 3*).



Study significance. Perceptions of academic leaders directly impact the effectiveness of a subculture on a collegiate campus. The inimitable subcultures present on a college campus make an impact on the macroculture of the institution, and act as a distinctive construct within the culture (Schein & Schein, 2017). This study provided higher education administrators and academic leaders with insight into the ways

organizational subcultures develop within an institution of higher education. This design provided data to support the contributory relationships between learner-oriented cultures and the effectiveness of an organization (Harris et al., 2007; Hartnell et al., 2011; Møthe, Ballangrud & Stensaker, 2015; Smart, 2003).

This data sheds light on effective leadership practices (Blackmore & Blackwell, 2006; Sathye, 2004; Schein, 2010; Spendlove, 2007; Underwood, Mohr, & Ross, 2016; Yelder & Codling, 2004), which provide insight into more effective methods for training leaders (Wolverton, Ackerman, & Holt, 2005), for developing change (Cameron, 1984; Denison & Mishra, 1995; Piderit, 2000; Suess, & Fritz, 2011; Schein, 2010; Schneider et al., 2013; Simsek & Louis, 1994; Weick & Quinn, 1999), for experience as a follower (Horne, du Plessis, & Nkomo, 2016; Krause, 2014; Skorobohacz et al., 2016) and in the establishment of practices that positively impact the nature of a culture and how it is shaped. Schein and Schein (2017) conveyed that an effective leader was responsible for recognizing the consequences of differentiation within a culture.

This study points to a need to research the effects of subculture on teaching, leading, and the attitudes of the faculty in relation to their colleagues (Smart, 2003). This study may influence the practices and policies surrounding leadership development and organizational culture development from the perspective of administration, department heads, and faculty.

This study and its findings may support new leaders on college campuses who need support and leadership development (Spendlove, 2007; Wolverton, Ackerman, & Holt, 2005) to be successful. This study allows academic leaders an opportunity to examine factors that influence effective formation of subcultures (Schein & Schein,

2017) and to address their own perceptions (Bateh & Heyliger, 2014; DeZure, Shaw, & Rojewski, 2014; Horne, du Plessis, & Nkomo, 2016; Skorobohacz et al., 2016; Underwood, Mohr, & Ross, 2016)) as they relate to academic leadership and the shaping of culture (Morgan, 1997; Ogbonna & Harris, 2000; Schein, 2010; Schein & Schein, 2017) within their organization. The research provides insight pertaining to the ways leadership and culture interplay within the same institution to produce unique sub and microcultures.

Summary. The results of this study will help academic leaders determine which subcultures are effective, why they are effective, and what support academic leaders need to shape culture. The study provided insight into the varied subcultures present within a campus, the dimensions necessary for learning-oriented cultures to thrive, and the importance of the functionality of a subculture. These findings provided groundwork for future research on perception, change, and effective culture (Schein & Schein, 2017). Future research topics may include the impact a subculture has on other departments, as well as on the macroculture within the institution. Community college faculty in this study were examined as academic leaders whose social and affective factors influenced their subculture.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

Introduction

This study examined the perceptions of academic leaders' understandings of organizational culture and leadership through the lens of their subculture (academic unit). Academic leaders who perceived the subculture in which they worked as adaptable, flexible, and oriented toward learning, were more likely to express social and affective factors that promoted effectiveness (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983; Schein & Schein, 2017).

Chapter one provided the background to the study. Chapter two was a comprehensive review of the pertinent theoretical and contextual literature associated with the study. Chapter three provided a conceptual framework to examine the perceptions of academic leaders on a community college campus, explained the purpose of the study, introduced the research question, and provided rationale for a multiple case-study design. The third chapter also discussed the setting, participant selection, data collection, validity issues, methods of data analysis, ethical issues, the researcher as instrument, and the potential impact of the study.

Chapter four will examine the participants' perceptions. Perceptions included a participants': typical workday, decision making practices, departmental culture, the impact academic leaders made, participants' approach to handling challenging situations, approaching new contexts, remaining current, reporting information, and sense of departmental *fit* within the greater campus culture. Chapter four will also examine the triangulation of artifact data, demographic data, and thematic results, to provide insight into the nature of the subcultures. The chapter concludes with cross-case analysis of each

major finding, examination of major themes, and the relationship of the ten dimensions of a learner-oriented subculture.

The conceptual and analytical framework for this research incorporated Schein and Schein's (2017) organizational culture levels—shared artifacts, espoused beliefs and values, and basic underlying assumptions—to explore academic leaders' perceptions and the presence of dimensions of learner-oriented subcultures. Analysis included major themes that emerged from the research. First, academic leaders' perceptions of their culture influenced their ability to implement the dimensions of a learner-oriented organizational culture. Second, the formation of microcultures through hierarchy or silos, negatively impacted the formation of a learner-orientated organizational culture. Third, the label of *general education factory* impacted participant's abilities to develop and sustain shared beliefs and values.

Major themes contained the following underlying themes. First, academic leaders most readily shaped their subculture in context, and in discipline. Second, social and affective factors that were most influential include perceptions, problem solving, leader/follower identity, differentiation, and change. Each academic unit revealed characteristics of these themes and sub themes, related to learner-orientation.

Demographics

The following demographic data represents the participants in the study. Each case was comprised of a department, each department housed up to ten different programs. A program was a specific discipline of study. For example, Anthropology is a program within the Social Science department. Of three departments on the campus, one department (ALA) participated in full. The ALB department had representation from

seven of the twelve full-time members. The ALC department had representation from ten of the thirteen full-time members. The ALC participants averaged 10.5 years in the department with one person who had been employed for less than a year. Three participants held three years and the rest had worked at the institution for over nine years. Five participants worked for the college for thirteen years or more. The ALC department had six master's degrees and four doctoral degrees in it, and 100% of the participants taught in their degree of training.

The ALA participants had an average distribution of nine years in the department. Five of the participants had been in the department for less than five years. One participant had been there for ten years and the other two had been employed there for twenty or more years. The ALA department had two participants with bachelor's degrees, four with master's degrees and two with doctorates. Nearly all (87.5%) of the participants taught in their degree of training. The remaining 12.5% were teaching outside their degree of training.

The ALB department participants averaged 10.6 years with three participants being employed at the institutions for less than six years, and four members had worked at the institution for more than fifteen years. The ALB department participants held six master's degrees and one doctoral degree. Eighty-seven and a half percent of the participants taught in their degree of training. The remaining 14.3% were teaching outside their degree of training. The ALA department averaged nine years of employment among the faculty participants. The other two departments were almost identical with an average of 10.5 and 10.6 years of service at the institution. The average number of years of employment across all three departments was 10.0 years.

A combination of degrees included two bachelors, sixteen masters, and seven doctoral degrees. In total, 92% of the participants taught in their degree of training. The remaining 8.0 % were teaching outside their degree of training. The two participants who made up the 8.0 % were both hired to teach in their department for their specific skill sets. One held a degree in education. The other held a parallel degree and their industry experience was valued higher than their education when it came to both teaching and learning (*See Table 1. Demographic Data*).

Table 1. Demographic Data Data Representing Three Departments Demographics Related to Years, Degree and Teaching			
Academic Unit	Years in the Unit	Degree	Teaching Area
ALC (10 participants)	1 < 1 year 3 = 3 years 1 = 9 years 5 > 13 years Average: 10.5 years	6 MA 4 Doctoral	100%
ALA (8 participants)	1 = 1 year 1 = 2 years 3 = 4 years 1 = 10 years 2 > 20 years Average: 9 years	2 Bachelors 4 Masters 2 Doctoral	87.5% Yes 12.5% no
ALB (7 participants)	3 < 6 years 4 > 15 years Average: 10.6 years	6 Masters 1 Doctoral	85.7% yes 14.3% no
Totals	Average: 10.0 Years	2 Bachelors 16 Masters 7 Doctoral	92% yes 8 % no
Note. This table summarizes each academic unit's demographic data and provides insight into the average years of the faculty and department heads, as well as the degree they held and whether they were teaching in the subject area of their degree of training.			

Findings

This section analyzes each individual case regarding the respondent's perceptions related to each finding, and then provides a cross-case analysis. Artifact data was compiled for each department and the results of that data included. Artifact data included meeting minutes and agendas. I collected artifacts from the 2016-2017 academic year, as well as the fall semester of the 2017 academic year. Shared artifacts from each

department revealed the ability of the departmental culture to position toward or away from a learner-orientation. Departments that lacked shared artifacts were less likely to establish shared beliefs. Without artifacts that aligned to basic underlying assumptions, the members of the department lacked a shared sense of purpose and a learner-centered culture.

Case ALC

In the ALC subculture, differentiation developed into ten separate programs. One program had four members; all other programs had one or two members. The four-member program recently hired half their team, they were collaborative, and they believed one another to be capable, knowledgeable, and easy to work with. One new member stated that they were supported by their program members but had not found any of the other colleagues in the department to be helpful. When examining the subculture through a departmental lens, some collaboration on projects occurred, but a “sink or swim mentality” was commonly experienced. The primary approach by members of the department was to put one’s head down and wait things out. Some members of ALC said they were pleased as they mostly had a good relationship with one another. The subculture embraced a distaste for bureaucratic work, and was referred to as *laid back* in nature, lacked meaningful interaction and a shared curriculum. The ALC department was comprised of microcultures, one for each program they held, and one for each hierarchy they formed.

Artifacts. The ALC departments’ agendas and meeting minutes provided insight into the limited clarity and organization within the department. There were no minutes recorded for the better part of two years. The ALC department minutes from the fall of

2017, under a new department head, were highly organized and informative, but meeting once a month was ineffective in providing the ten separate programs with sufficient representation. The ALC team did not make time to solve problems together. The monthly meeting was a compilation of committee reports and general information sharing. Beginning in the fall of 2017, agendas were sent out regularly and notes from the meetings clearly articulated old business, new business, committee reports, and information items to be shared with members.

The ALC group lacked visible and tangible structures and processes. The ability of the group to establish trust was diminished. This led to an inability to develop behaviors that could lead to shared beliefs and values. The departmental meeting minutes revealed that dissemination of information by the department head took up most of the time. Extraordinarily little discussion or collaboration occurred during the department meetings.

Espoused beliefs and values . When looking at the comments of two of the longest-serving members of the subculture, one strong belief was that the department was very divided. Coupled with the belief that the subculture lacked comradery, community, or collegiality, the department was, by nature, individualized. Reference was given to the fact that the subculture used to have faculty parties and gatherings, but no longer did. The culture was known for informal discussions and one-person programs. One participant mentioned that the loss of their only other program member forced their program to deteriorate from one of the best in the state, to one of the worst. The subculture was comprised of multiple microcultures (in this case programs) bound by the department title. The department was described as a bunch of distinct units without much overlap.

Seven of the ten programs had one person who taught or ran the entire program.

Individualization prevented the establishment of leader/follower relationships and competition caused division. Very prevalent in this department, according to long-term members, was the idea that individuals were more worried about themselves and their programs than the department.

In the ALC four-person program, the experience of the four members was unique to all other areas of the departmental subculture. In general, the four-person culture believed they were in the process of establishing a new culture of collaboration. One member described their culture as,

It's okay to fail, but try, a culture of support, at least collegially, a culture of what we do matters, a culture of being passionate, with shared goals. A culture of having each other's back, sharing classroom curriculum and insight, institutional history, and making sure it was the best place to work and that members were excited to come to work each day (Personal communication with respondent C1, September 2017).

This microculture was a recent construct built out of change and necessity, that resided within a larger subculture in a department made of ten unique programs.

Overall, the ALC academic unit was very individualized and siloed. If faculty taught in the same program, they relied on one another. If faculty shared an office, they relied on one another. Otherwise, their initial instinct was to look out for their individual program first, and then to help when others needed it. Help usually came in the form of conversation or ideas, not action. One new member mentioned an interest in teaching across curricula, but this idea was not received well and no precedent for this was set in the department.

Participants reflected on the things they did within their department to make an impact. Members of the ALC department felt two distinct ways; half of the participants (one microculture) felt that what they taught was central, critical, and core to the mission of the college and the lives of students. They reflected on the necessity of teaching job and life skills to students. The impact was not simply curricular. One participant believed strongly that their program's contribution also included changing lives (department of four). Faculty perceived that their choices within the department effected the outcomes of courses and provided opportunities to impact students' lives. The impact was felt through the connections those programs had in society. One department member noted that students learn about the value of their personal lives affecting their future role in society. Faculty within this microculture worked to innovate teaching and incorporated hands-on labs and practical application pieces.

The remaining faculty in the ALC department (another microculture) felt there was little, or no impact made by them or the department. One participant stated that they simply handed out the syllabus and assisted students with transfers to other institutions. Many participants felt that the things they did in the department had little or no effect on the students. Participants agreed that things generated at the department level may have had some trickledown effect, but many times those effects were negative rather than positive. One participant felt that the college was yet to see the results of changes made over the last 20 years. Members who felt this way also described their department metaphorically, as a "general education factory" (Personal communication with respondent C3, September 2017).

Members of the ALC departmental subculture held varied beliefs about their

impact on the larger campus culture. There were some members who felt that they were in the way of change and they had to either change roles or retire. Some felt that they wanted quality but were told to go back to their silo and mind their own business. Some made suggestions for change but felt no one listened. Other members made suggestions of things that worked well, such as advising fairs, recruitment events, and getting out of the office or classroom and meeting with students. Some highlighted the need to hire the right people, to look for innovation and creativity. The clear split in the department members' ability to hold a positive orientation toward the future furthered their divisionalization.

The ALC department oversaw two student programs. Each program appeared to have one person in charge. The other departmental members knew very little regarding what was going on with other programs or faculty or whom they affected. Another faculty ran an annual symposium. Yet another faculty ran dual credit courses or had oversight of adjuncts. One faculty member felt that it was the way they instructed students in their classes that influenced the campus culture the most. One member of this subculture felt that the department should be the primary organizer of events, which influenced a civic education, something every student needed. Varied beliefs about the culture continued to develop microcultures within the academic unit.

The distinct manners in which academic leaders in this subculture viewed their impact created a series of solitary visions that at times overlapped, but most frequently negated their colleagues. Barriers forced the department to turn inward to rely on individual strengths and resources, not on departmental strengths. The competition for students and for programmatic success, outweighed the larger need to serve students.

Competition also prevented the establishment of an environment where members of the culture served as a unified populous. When the members of this department answered the questions on influence, they shared very fragmented responses.

The main responses included, “yes,” “sometimes,” and “no” with two specific distinctions. If the academic leader was newer, with less than five years in the position, they felt they had no influence on others. If the academic leader had been at the college for more than fifteen years, the feeling shared was that newer faculty held no influence over their decisions. The Department Head was the only member who felt contrary to that belief. Overall, this department struggled to move past individualized ideals, goals, values, aspirations, ideologies, and rationalizations. In general, the department was split into either individual or small groups of participants. Groups rallied together to express an ideology or to rationalize a belief they held. The fractured department never drew together their goals or values to establish a united front. Under new leadership, this department was beginning to establish artifacts that would eventually lead to departmental aspirations. The timeline needed and the adaptability necessary appeared to be unknown.

When a challenging situation presented by administration came to the ALC academic unit, participants noted that many times their first reaction was to be upset. Two responses were typical among members of the department. The first was to grumble and then do whatever it took to get the job done. The second was to become ambivalent or distant, then passively aggressively address the differences through confrontation, with a strong desire to get a point across without allowing the problem to escalate. Several department members were close to retirement and were perceived as dragging their feet,

tired of change.

The Department Head described themselves as someone who liked to collect information, to triangulate stories, to get everything on the table before deciding on a direction. The new Department Head's leadership was only beginning to take hold. The ability of the department members to collectively formulate a unified response to challenging situations was not visible in the immediate future. The instability of leadership and lack of shared artifacts prevented the department from joining together to discover solutions to identified problems. External adaptation was void departmentally, and participants took individual defenses against the challenges they faced, which further prevented them from integrating internally.

In general, the ALC department believed that the college was administratively top heavy. One participant stated,

I like to call bullshit on bullshit and there is a lot of that around. I do not believe in taking it from administration just because they are administration. I have an obligation to speak my mind. Now that tends to be at odds with people, but I think that is the nature of the college, you have an exchange of ideas. I am not confrontational; I am a pacifist, so I absolutely do not like things to get beyond debate and discussion (Personal communication with respondent C4, September 2017).

Participants recalled when they were new to their job and the processes they followed or discoveries they initially made. The ALC department offered two perspectives, that of mentoring, and that of figuring it out on their own. Members of the subculture with 15 years or more of experience told a story of informal mentoring programs, and their desire to try and do the same for others. Other long-term members

described learning by watching colleagues, talking, discussing, asking questions and being given the freedom to fail.

Newer members, those with less than 15 years, spoke of experiences such as handbook exploration, reliance on their Department Head, and referenced colleagues, especially colleagues that had office-mates. Several participants discussed their experience as having to “figure it out on their own” (Personal communication with respondents C2, C5 and C7, September 2017). Many participants in the department never spoke with a predecessor. A couple participants relied on previous job experience at a different college.

One example of a formal mentoring relationship existed in the ALC department. Three other participants intimated that they would be interested in working with a mentor. Most of the participants felt that their training was insufficient for their role. Most also felt that they would benefit from more time with a mentor and from time with a predecessor who had working knowledge in the field. In this department, it was typical to have one person running an entire program. They felt strongly that no one could be a thinking partner for them on subject matter. Two of the participants in this study made it clear that the Department Head had nothing to offer them as it pertained to their discipline. Seven participants felt strongly that their Department Head had their best interests in mind. They believed they were heard, and that they had an advocate of whom they could ask questions.

The ALC participants overwhelmingly felt an expectation to remain current and up to date in content. The expectation derived from their peers, student expectations, and the nature of the job. Others felt differently.

I do not perceive that there is any expectation to stay current in content to be honest. I think we put up roadblocks, such as resisting to send two faculty to the same professional development conference. I think this sends the message that we are not concerned with people staying current. Anything I do to stay current is just of my own motivation or determination; I do not think there is anyone pushing me. There is not enough time to pursue everything I need, to stay current, nor to pursue those things that I want to pursue (Personal communication with respondent C9, September 2017).

Participants in the ALC subculture felt they needed to work on their professional development and on staying up to date with the content in the discipline. One member felt there was absolutely no expectation to remain current, just to teach the textbooks, with no need to attend a conference, do research, or anything innovative. Another member felt it was not necessary to attend conferences or be a member of a professional organization. They felt there was not enough money provided by the college to travel (an underlying idea in all the recipients). One academic leader connected with peers on social media and read current blogs and updated statistics in the text they used to remain current.

Another member of the same department felt it was essential to remain current for both the learners and their jobs in the future. They perceived the Department Head had little to no knowledge of what the content was in their discipline, which also drove them to remain current. Participants with academic transfer degrees shared little to no expectation to remain current in the field. Those who had a career and technical education program, for the most part, or the discipline with four members, held one another accountable to knowing the new and most current information in their field. One

member let their pursuit of community-based professional development replace their focus on teaching as the most important aspect of their job. A brand-new employee reflected that they felt the expectation to remain current was not too high. They learned because they liked to pursue knowledge, and they were afraid of being left behind.

Three of the ten participants surveyed in the ALC department felt it was an expectation to remain up to date with the content in the field. Five of the remaining seven felt it was critical to be up to date, but they did not feel there was an expectation from the institution to remain so. All faculty stated that what they did learn, if it was applicable, would be implemented into their teaching. Only four of the seven spoke of actual plans to implement this new knowledge into their classes or programs. All ten members who were interviewed, reported that they were doing something to stay current. The biggest motivating factor for current knowledge in this department was the innate drive of a person to be known as an expert in their field.

The ALC department predominately stated that reporting into or out of their department occurred in department meetings, and rarely in hallway conversations. Participants felt the chain of command flowed directly “from administration to the chair to us” (Personal communication with respondents, C1-C5, and C7, C9-10, September 2017). Some members of the department felt that email was the main source of communication. All members agreed that the departmental meeting was the place they learned about the administrative initiatives that impacted them; unless their Department Head specifically came to them with a new concept or idea. One member stated that they had, “No idea how we communicate out. Our college is like an octopus with tentacles stretching far out; none of the arms knows what the other arm is doing” (Personal

communication with respondent C4, October 2017).

As the participants in this department furthered their personal ideologies and individual aspirations they segregated themselves from the larger departmental culture. Separation resulted in the inability to create basic underlying assumptions to benefit the entire academic unit. When asked whether they believed what they were told, responses varied from “I put a lot of trust in our Department Head” (Personal communication with respondent C1, October 2017) to “No, no I do not.” (Personal communication with respondent C3, September 2017). Sixty percent of the participants in this subculture believed what they were told. Seventy percent of participants regularly questioned what they were told. Eighty percent of the members of this department said they trusted the messenger (who was almost always the Department Head).

When ALC participants had a new idea, they shared that idea with the Department Head, an office mate, or with colleagues outside the department. The Department Head felt it was critical to take a new idea to everyone at the same time. In this department, those who had been at the college a long time only shared new ideas with faculty who had also been at the college a long time. Individual or small group beliefs and values remained the primary deterrent in the formation of an effective culture.

Basic underlying assumptions. The ALC department held three general perspectives concerning the perception of departmental fit within the organizational culture. First, there was a strong sense that individually they were respected on campus, but programmatically no one really knew what they did or provided to other programs on campus. Some viewed the department as having a bad reputation, labeled as being comprised of interesting characters in need of management. There was a strong belief that

they were a combination of many silos that did not communicate, and who were self-serving, “We go into our small spaces and do our thing” (Personal communication with respondent C2, September 2017).

The second perspective was that of a general education department that serviced other departments. Many participants shared that they felt like a general education factory, beholden to other departments and underutilized while also required to remain relevant. The third perception was self-degrading. “I think our department is underrated frankly. I am ambivalent, I am critical of our department in some ways, as we do not do more and more grandiose things.” (Personal communication with respondent C6, September 2017). “Some colleagues belittle the department. There are four or five outstanding professors of the year in our department; we have some very strong individuals in our department” (Personal communication with respondent C6, September 2017). “The college is very bad at promoting their talented people. They are good at promoting their buildings” (Personal communication with respondent C5, September 2017). Self-degradation within the department was described metaphorically as that of an *orphan child*. The academic unit lacked community engagement and participation in faculty senate or other collegiate-based programs and committees.

In the ALC department, perceptions shared by the majority of faculty suggested a lack of positive assumptions about human nature, a disregard for the environment, and a fundamental disagreement regarding the department’s commitment to cultural diversity. Academic leaders shaped their subculture in context and in discipline. The vast number of disciplines prevented them from establishing shared values and beliefs across the department. The small program of four members held shared metaphors and developed

ideologies as well as aspirations. The other disciplines remained isolated.

Each program was represented as a microculture. Microcultures prevented the academic unit from abandoning simple linear logic to favor new complex models. This prevented the higher-order coordination necessary to balance the varied silos.

Individualization within this department created a negative feedback loop which prevented the department from producing shared values and beliefs.

Case ALB

Members of the ALB subculture felt they were overtly cooperative and congenial, and shared a sense that all members would work together for what was best for students. Participants felt they worked well together, although some competition existed for the best schedule or course load. Perceptions revealed two types of educator existed within this department; members that wanted rigorous course work and those that wanted to make the course work easy and get through the job. The participants reflected on two distinct skillsets in the department. Some were good communicators with students, others could teach the material in depth.

A good communicator was capable of teaching to varied learners. Students were able to interact with faculty who communicated well. As a result, students felt understood and were engaged in their learning. Good communicators with students were also labeled as faculty who taught only the surface material, unable to teach the content with any depth. Faculty that taught the material in greater depth were heavily respected by other faculty. Their peers felt that teaching the material in depth was more valuable than establishing relationships with students. The two skillsets divided the faculty and prevented the development of basic underlying assumptions that could be shared by the

group's members. Every member believed their department head would not allow them to teach outside their level of expertise.

Artifacts. The ALB department minutes revealed concern for the department head to report on the needs of the administration. Minutes also spoke to the formation of groups, planned or otherwise, within the academic unit. The main distinctions were those of geographical isolation, curricular isolation, and the formation of groups to solve problems independent of the larger body. Group development furthered segregation by skillset or degree. As a department, the ALB academic unit did not share artifacts. The ALB department separated into groups to solve problems. Groups developed artifacts that they then brought back to the unit. The development of the groups created segregation. On a whole, each group held rigidly to visible and tangible structures and processes. Those processes provided consistency and stability yet promulgated the establishment of microcultures that held to distinct behaviors.

Espoused beliefs and values. Some participants in the ALB subculture held a creative vision, and the ability to apply their learning and industry experience. Others were good at trying new ideas and boasted of a desire to help students or possessed great teaching expertise. The participants were aware of a need to remain open to adjusting course work to meet the needs of the programs around campus. One member of the subculture perceived that students hated their department in general. Numerous participants perceived that other faculty and students outside their department portrayed their department as blocking their path to success. As a department, ALB did not promote the college internally, or go out of their way to serve the college or promote it in the community. Individual ideologies and rationalizations plagued the department. Shared

structure prevented the collaborative external adaptation processes from taking hold and slowed internal integration. The ALB unit failed to bond the ideas of individuals into a common vision or purpose.

Each participant appeared willing to discuss challenging situations. In general, participants revealed the departmental culture, day-to-day, as everyone doing their own thing, but very willing to come together to help one another. Colleagues were passionate about their students and student success. The Department Head believed that everyone worked together to achieve the same goal. The feeling from the Department Head was that administration often asked them to change, but they ended up back where they started, after a lot of work. The lack of trust in administration prevented the Department Head from modeling a leader/follower relationship. In turn, academic leaders in this department lacked the willingness to follow one another or their Department Head and relied on their own individual abilities.

Experienced participants recognized that the college would cycle periodically over the same problems. The Department Head held the belief that within certain programs people had different strengths. Therefore, people could not perform equally in each area, and were reoriented to other areas within the academic unit. The subculture dealt with dual credit and with the connotation of a *general education mill*. They felt a constant pressure to uphold standards. In recent years, they have not replaced retired faculty with new faculty members and student enrollment has steadily declined.

Participants who resided in a separate facility perceived their department to be full of collaborators who were micromanaged. The result of being micromanaged caused the department to focus on management and not on collaboration. Participants noted that

their building was comprised of strong teachers, interested in student performance, proud of what they delivered, and caring for one another and their students. Individual ideals, goals, values, and aspirations transformed the participants within this microculture.

Participants in the separate location shared meals with the faculty who were not in their department. They described their facility as very open, conversationally, where members spoke on a weekly basis. They believed, in the other building, people did not talk to one another except once a month at meetings. Overwhelmingly, the participants in the separate facility felt a need to remain positive and draw learners into learning. Every participant in the ALB department, regardless of their facility, shared the belief that their courses were integral in every other program on campus. Colleagues were understood to be knowledgeable. Participants continuously looked to improve, and they took their professional development seriously.

As a department, there were numerous underlying fragmentations. The department had three distinct microcultures which worked against one another. The department was separated by the type of teacher and by the course level taught. This was coupled with the formation of small groups to solve problems. The ALB department held to a self-diagnosed, inner-programmatic distinction in which faculty labeled one another as too easy or too difficult. This distinction formed a chasm that fractured the culture. Faculty felt micromanaged by their Department Head or by the College Administration. Faculty held to an identity as either a good communicator or content specialist. Only a few grappled with both identities and in doing so revealed the difficulty of balancing them.

The department members felt they were constantly under attack. Members felt

forced by administration and state policy makers to make changes without ample time or space to ensure their course designs were tested and true. Participants were also categorized by the type of classes they taught; those that taught pre-general education courses (zero level), those that taught general education, and those who taught program specific courses above general education. Some faculty taught across all three spectra, while others were siloed within one area due to their credentials.

Most participants felt they were a necessary part of the campus culture, although many people felt misunderstood. The labels that faculty felt arose from peer pressure. Across campus, faculty felt pressure to improve their teaching and their student success. Faculty in the ALB department responded to the burden of their peers in one of two ways, either by increasing the rigor and demands on their students or by adding recitation hours, tutoring, working extra hours, teaching more remedial courses, and designing bridge courses that assisted learners with the transitions to upper division course work. The responses were not unified, and the department was unable to establish unity in their efforts to adapt to external challenges. Varied responses furthered segregation within the culture.

A huge impact felt in this department occurred when state policy makers made changes to developmental programs. Some academic leaders built in recitation hours to ensure students had more time and more practice. The department offered computer-based tutorials and programs for test taking. Unfortunately, students needed to be trained to use those tools to improve and that training was not provided. As a department, the member's aim was to make students successful. The desire was to assist learners with degree completion. To assist learners in reaching their goals and understanding content,

faculty tried to provide quality educational programs while fostering curiosity and critical thinking. However, external pressure was too high for the department and internally the department lacked the ability to make sense of change as a group.

Every member of the ALB department agreed that they were a service department. As a department, many believed they were running some general education classes that discouraged students from continuing. As a department, it was clear that members were not handling that stigma well. Each member of this subculture wanted to be able to ensure that students passed their courses and could apply their learning. Overwhelming, this department upheld the notion that if students grasped the concept of critical thinking, it would provide them with lifelong problem-solving skills that were transferable.

The faculty in the ALB subculture were unaware of any influence they might have had on the community outside of the college campus. As a community college, a large part of the mission of the college is to serve the community. The inability of the members to articulate their influence suggested a lack of awareness of this fundamental mission. ALB faculty were unaware of any impact their teaching held on the lives of the learners or the impact their students might make as citizens. As academic leaders, the primary aim was to assist college students in completing general education coursework.

There was one club in the department and two faculty spoke to the club's success. Faculty hoped the club was a good place for students to come and do something that they were unable to do in the classroom. There was a reference to graduates who had formed good relationships and connections and received internship opportunities from participation in the club. Most faculty agreed that the club provided a great opportunity to

link the students to industry and the community. All seven academic leaders who participated in the study believed they could influence their colleagues. Interestingly, no one influenced anyone else unless they were within the same microculture.

The ALB participants typically pursued professional development in five ways; by expanding their knowledge base, reviewing relevant research, engaging with colleagues inside and outside of the college, and looking at national organizations, or to leaders who had written on the subject. One member felt they worked two to three times harder than other faculty in their department and that they did not have time to fix the mistakes people made. When faculty did not agree with administrative or state-level decisions, they formed microcultures to analyze and decipher the situation. Participants' typical response, when faced with a difficult decision, was to talk with their colleagues to logically take the problem apart and discover how to solve it. Most people worked hard to analyze the problems or challenges confronting them. The department instituted a plan to develop small task forces to address challenges and then report their findings. This resulted in further microcultures forming.

Six of the seven participants in the ALB department stated explicitly that colleagues mentored them. None of them mentioned their Department Head as their source of support. No member relied on their Department Head when they were faced with a challenge. One faculty, hired to teach higher-end transfer courses, felt as though they had no idea what they were doing or were supposed to do regarding several processes, and that they were surprised all the time.

The Department Head held the belief that as an individual, they had had plenty of leadership training. The Department Head also pointed out numerous problems they

faced in their role, and how they used trial and error to solve them. No faculty approached their Department Head with questions or concerns. Participants felt that approaching their boss would show signs of weakness that may affect their day-to-day teaching and the climate of their department. Culturally, this created a sense that faculty were micromanaged. The climate prevented the academic leader's ability to think creatively or utilize the Department Head as a thinking partner.

In the ALB subculture, participants felt an expectation to remain up-to-date with the content and expectations of their discipline. The expectation was to be knowledgeable in teaching the material, to teach it effectively, and to gain specific credentials. Most academic leaders felt the expectation came from the job or the title of *teacher*, and not from an intrinsic motivation to know more. Expectation from extrinsic driving forces such as industry demands or a push from the institution to develop educators as holistic or effective teachers, was also missing. "What I teach does not change, but the pedagogy is constantly changing as the learner is changing." (Personal communication with respondent B4, September 2017). Three members of this subculture appeared to be driven to improve the way they were teaching and the ways their students learned, through their professional development and the implementation of this development in the classroom. Participants in this department held the national association membership and annual conference in high regard.

One member, of all twenty-five participants in the study, relayed their Individual Development Plan (IDP) expectations. They stated that they did their best to attend conferences, to teach at conferences, to read, and to connect with colleagues in their same role at nearby institutions. They shared what they learned with their office mate. They

implemented new concepts in the classroom and asked for student feedback. The IDP was the only college-wide cultural norm. The IDP provided faculty with an opportunity to reflect on accomplishments and connect their learning and teaching to a budget.

The ALB department felt that the chair reported to the members at the department meeting. The participants in this department perceived their new ideas would first be heard by coworkers, then the whole group, if the ideas were good. “I discuss new ideas with coworkers in my department. I have two that I trust, I have many good ideas in my opinion, but most of them are shot down” (Personal communication with respondent B2, September 2017). Some members bypassed the Department Head and went straight to the Dean. The consensus in their department was that faculty had very little control. A lack of control suggested that members could not manage their environment. This furthered disconnected faculty from the departmental culture as it robbed them of their autonomy.

Faculty perceived their Department Head was powerless to get things done. The division between administration and faculty created a power struggle in their eyes. They perceived Administration had their own ideas of what needed to be done, and that very frequently administration did not share their long-term view. “We tend to be skeptics” (Personal communication with respondent B1, September 2017). Five of seven participants believed what they were told, but only two members believed without really questioning or being skeptical of why things were said or done.

Basic underlying assumptions. The ALB department felt as though they were an integral part of the campus. The participants reflected that they were respected as professionals. They believed, “there was always room for improvement, and how they served could be improved as well” (Personal communication with respondent, September

2017). The general response of this subculture was to research, analyze, and try to determine modes of change that would improve their quality and performance. They wanted others to say, “We can count on them” (Personal communication with respondent, September 2017).

The department was unable to adapt to change and their structure created rigidity where flexibility was needed. The ALB academic unit held very little unconscious, taken-for-granted, beliefs and values. As a unit, they did not share assumptions. This negatively impacted their ability to determine processes that would assist in the establishment of shared perceptions or behaviors. As a result, the assumptions were largely individualistic and lacked depth.

Most of the challenges the ALB department faced developed from a sense that administration micromanaged them. Further, they perceived that other programs held an aversion toward their department. Participants experienced a tension in their department. They were necessary in each program yet felt like a roadblock to student success. “We are labeled as the stumbling block or impediment, to other departments students graduating. We are the essential brother, but the least liked brother” (Personal communication with respondent B5, September 2017). The ALB department shared a desire to have other faculty and departments encourage their students to be positive about their departmental presence and degree requirements. The metaphors the ALB department used only furthered the segregation of the department into silos.

The ability of the ALB academic unit to balance external pressure and adapt to change, was not evident. The result of their unit not integrating or adapting resulted in the unit fractioning. Separation did not provide the support and proactive development of

ideas that their community needed to establish shared values and beliefs. As a result, the academic unit lacked the ability to orient toward a culture of learning. Academic leaders in the ALB department failed to shape their subculture within the context of their discipline and they lacked any shared positive metaphor. The context of their department drove them toward division.

The dimensions of learner-orientation that this department did experience were constantly eroded. Erosion occurred through the lack of task-relevant communication, diversified learning, or the ability to use dialogue to seek truth. The ALB subculture did not believe their environment could be managed, nor did they hold a positive orientation toward the future. The subculture did commit to systemic thinking, although, participants' inability to sense-make as a group deteriorated the formation of joint causal effects. Perhaps the greatest weakness of the ALB subculture was the lack of a belief in the value of internal cultural analysis. This theme was also present in the ALC subculture.

Case ALA

ALA participants intentionally fostered a familial departmental culture. Everyone was welcomed and recognized. Everyone sought to produce the best product, which they defined as educated students. Participants described one another's strengths, which included being concrete, driven, and logical thinkers. They felt they tended to have a more conservative, slow moving approach to change. They were rare to jump on a new train. They assessed challenges, were tight-knit, and held a deep notion that people need community during stressful times. Things were said in respect for one another's space. They were team oriented; they spoke their minds, even "popped off" and at times said inappropriate things to one another, but knew they had a healthy relationship. "My

colleagues are reasonable and very sharp, and I like working with them every day”

(Personal communication with respondent A4, September 2017).

Artifacts. The ALA subculture shared a mindset and work ethic. They described themselves as open to change and as team players. They described their work as familial, with their own subculture separate from the college culture. Artifact data revealed that the ALA department met regularly as a group. They wrestled with major topics, planned to actively support one another, and relied on one another’s strengths to solve problems. The ALA department artifacts provided substantial insight into the level of communication their department supported, and the familial nature their unit developed. The minutes revealed shared experience, group problem-solving practices, and teamwork in the face of adversity. A unique attribute to the meeting minutes in the ALA department was the presence of a discussion section. Each month, the department spent time intentionally discussing ways to address and solve problems.

Shared artifacts among the department included their visible behaviors toward one another. Every week the unit shared a meal. The first people they turned to in times of difficulty were one another, and they knew the strengths of each of their department members. Development as a familial unit and teamwork were factors unique to this department. These are examples of factors not specifically related to Schein and Schein’s (2017) ten dimensions of learner-orientation. These two factors played a valuable role in the effectiveness of this culture. Artifacts included shared calendar items. The department used calendars to continuously keep their unit apprised on one another’s responsibilities and upcoming events. Every member of the department was regularly present at meetings. Meeting minutes revealed that discussion was shared among all participants.

Espoused beliefs and values. The ALA academic leaders described their colleagues three ways. Members have, “many skills and talents, lots of experience and knowledge, and as a ‘utopia inside a utopia’ where everyone was focused on student well-being” (Personal communication with respondent A1, September 2017). The department shared the same goal for student success and made time for conversation. They described the importance of good foresight, problem-solving, and collaboration. They discussed anticipating the needs of students, and they relied heavily on one another. Members mentored and believed in one another which allowed them to lead and to follow when necessary. The ALA department held individual ideals. Members also held individual aspirations while simultaneously providing space for the values, ideologies, and rationalizations of their colleagues. Differentiation within the department developed seven unique programs. Programs all shared values and beliefs which provided continuity in the face of adversity.

The ALA departmental subculture appeared united. Each person shared their strengths and abilities. They all worked hard and enjoyed their community. When something threatened one of them, they banded together, were proactive, and supported one another. Members took their support beyond conversation. They provided skills and knowledge to their colleagues, they related their expertise. Each academic leader looked for ways to incorporate their teaching and learning into the lives of every learner. They knew their strengths and where they could use support. They sought balance in the give and take. As the ALA department sought balance they developed common beliefs that unified them in their work.

The ALA department described their impact on students, the college, and the

community equally. They listed several ways they influenced their department and their students. Illustrations included, leading by example, careful examination of ways to influence student choices, committee involvement, and coordinated activities with organizations around campus. Every single member of this department stated that their number one concern was to be student focused. Participants ran clubs and worked with industry partners to assist students with finding jobs. Students were enculturated with expectations. Students were taught to take their learning into their own hands, apply their learning, and strive for success in every course. Faculty in this department taught utilizing their life experiences. Members utilized industry knowledge to augment their instruction, which related directly to student success and the effects on the larger community.

The community impact from this department was noted in the way they hosted events, gave tours, and brought people on campus. Participants believed that every aspect of their program influenced the community. Individual ideologies linked together within the department. Visibility in the community and across the campus, was the primary way that the academic leaders in this department felt they made an impact. While this subculture had offices primarily in one building, their jobs kept them in the field, working around town and across the campus. Participants felt that they contributed to numerous college-based programs and activities.

The ALA academic unit felt that most people perceived them positively and as a department other programs could model. Two separate references were made to the department as a utopia, and in general, members felt they collaborated to make decisions. Academic leaders spent many hours in the community and brought people from around

the world to the college to train their students. A common thread academic leader's in this subculture shared was to teach the students to respect the larger culture. One faculty member felt that their students only interacted with the rest of campus to get their general education courses completed, and for no other reason.

Six out of eight faculty in the ALA department believed they influenced others in their department. The two members who believed otherwise alleged that the connotation was negative. Both of those leaders positively influenced each of their colleagues on a regular basis. The unified vision of this department prevented fragmentation and the silo effect. The members of this subculture united through common purpose. Similarities allowed members to serve students, the college, and the community while remaining linked to one another.

The ALA department shared a common notion that they needed to make sure they understood why decisions were made or change was needed. The department worked together to solve problems, each utilizing their separate strengths to enhance their findings. Some would research, others would *take the bull by the horns*, while others would grumble a little before getting on board. One member did say they would probably wait and see if the problem "came back around" (Personal communication with respondent A7, September 2017) again. The department took on challenges from different angles/perspectives. Faculty wanted to survey the problem and then get behind a solution. In general, they gave administration respect and then followed through with what the institution wanted. The response of the department to unify and approach problems from their unique perspectives allowed their ideals and values to shape their culture.

The ALA subculture was extremely tight-knit, despite two participants who were housed in separate facilities. They shared the characteristics of learning together and overcoming diversity to promote an effective culture. Participants that were hired 15 years prior to the interviews for this study shared interesting stories of self-discovery and exploration. Those that were hired in the last five years attributed their success to their colleagues, their Department Head, and their industry experience.

Two ALA academic leaders had teaching experience, while many of the newer hires attended professional development workshops and weekly meetings on the campus. The department held a weekly luncheon that provided a platform for communication, discovery, and support. Participants felt that they could rely on and approach their Department Head. No one in the ALA department felt that they immediately walked into their role and knew exactly what to do. Each of them found obstacles that were new and challenging and they relied on those around them to solve problems. As the ALA subculture learned, they developed unconscious beliefs and values. Their values carried their department through challenges. Values provided a safety net within their departmental culture where they were safe to fail and learn with their colleagues.

According to an ALA department member, “The expectation is that we are on the leading edge and up to date in everything” (Personal communication with respondent A1, September 2017). All eight members of this department felt it was critical to remain relevant and current. They agreed it would be a detriment to their students and their department if they were out-of-date regarding content knowledge or skill. The direct impact would be catastrophic for their graduates. Members believed each program would be obsolete within seven to ten years if the academic leader did not remain on the leading

edge. All eight members of this department worked closely with industry partners and accessed professional development opportunities to continuously improve. Every participant perceived their professional development as critical to their programs' success. Participants successfully placed students in industry year-after-year.

One final espoused belief in the ALA department was that information was perceived as shared from administration to the Department Head to the participants at monthly meetings. Some members spoke to their need to market their program through the public information office. Members reflected on the exorbitant amount of communication shared with them from the community and industry, as well as from administration and state policy-makers. As a department, they decided how to filter and sort the information to retain the most pertinent and applicable.

As a department, the ALA subculture viewed themselves as teachers, trained to be skeptical and to challenge the way others thought. Seven of the eight members believed what they were told, while one member questioned administration, not their Department Head. All members trusted the messenger, and fifty percent of them questioned what they were told. Within the subculture, a new idea was first shared among colleagues; "If I have a new idea, I may take it for critique to one person and for support from another. In the end, everyone would hear it" (Personal communication with respondent A2, September 2017).

Basic underlying assumptions. When reflecting on their fit in the campus culture, the ALA department believed they were somewhat undervalued and felt others probably did not understand how they influenced the region. Some felt pushed to the side of campus and labeled. As a result, the subculture believed that one of the strengths of

their team was their ability to rely on one another. The Department Head shared the belief that the number one priority was to hire the right people. Participants agreed that their success was due to the people, “We have good-hearted people who want what is best for students, the community, and the institution” (Personal communication with respondent A5, September 2017). Academic leaders shaped their subculture in context as a department, and as members of a united discipline. The ALA unit shared metaphors of a communal and familial nature which provided a framework for change.

A strong undercurrent in the department dealt with their awareness of the differences between the CTE and Transfer/Academic programs. While some participants argued their vitality among the campus culture, other participants shared that they viewed the department as foundational on the campus. “I see a shift in the way things are going, that other programs are willing to work with us to prepare our students for industry” (Personal communication with respondent A1, September 2017). Many attributed their positive correlation with other programs to their Department Head’s positive reception. Others shared recognition of their role as key to the mission. Their perspective included the jealousy of other departments toward them. As an academic unit, they received a lot of grant money and continuously innovated and attracted students. The ALA subculture shared distinct behaviors, perceptions, thoughts, and feelings (Schein & Schein, 2017).

The ability of this department to use the negative perceptions from the campus culture to pursue a positive view of themselves has been a strength. They were able to draw together and identify a common ground that unites them. As a result, a subculture formed that was learner-oriented and capable of impactful change on a collegiate campus. Instead of building silos and separating themselves, they drew together and supported one

another. The external forces on the ALA department gave them reasons to develop complex mental models. The academic unit was able to diversify and utilize other peoples' strengths and adapt to change while maintaining a positive orientation toward human nature. The ALA subculture perceived their academic unit as learner-oriented, and their leadership provided a healthy environment for adaptation and change.

Cross-Case Analysis

This section examines each finding from the perspective of all three cases. I analyze the abilities of each academic unit as they relate to one another. Findings revealed three distinct collegiate subcultures with unique abilities and climates. Each subculture has formed strengths and has dealt with challenges. In this section, I examine each finding as they relate to all three cases to show how the cases differ, how they are similar, and how effective subcultures might be sustained.

A typical work day. A lack of time spent with students on a regular basis spoke to the daily rigor of the workload that many faculty described. Time only further enhanced the delineation among departmental subcultures. While the ALA department was made up of eight separate programs, their cultural expectations for clubs and programmatic development drew learners and teachers together daily. The ALB and ALC departments spent significantly less time with their students, which was attributed to their schedules and resulted in a lack of club or organization participation. The general sense existed that their role as an academic leader was to teach and not to develop relationships outside of the classroom. The beliefs and values of these departmental cultures led to assumptions that either built up or eroded subculture effectiveness.

Participants were asked to recall what a typical workday involved. Most

participants discussed the approximate time they arrived at the college. Many described their last-minute preparation for classes, their delivery of content to students, their office hours, and any club, organization, or committee meeting they attended. Participants discussed the differences in their schedule from one day to the next. Eleven of the twenty-five participants specifically mentioned preparing for a lesson each day. Four of the twenty-five participants mentioned taking work home or doing work at home regularly.

The word colleague(s) appeared 12 times within the participants' perceptions. Six out of twenty-five participants (24%) intentionally spent time with their colleagues on a regular basis. Three respondents (12%) said they were too isolated, while sixteen respondents (64%) did not mention time with colleagues at all in their description of a typical workday. When participants described the manner in which they spent time during their workday, they typically spoke of email, students, preparation, free time, colleagues, and teaching/lecturing.

Student interaction varied among the academic units. Each academic leader taught courses on a typical day. Many did not discuss meeting with students or interacting with students face-to-face, as part of their regular routine. Four of the seven members of ALB mentioned regularly interacting with their students outside of class. ALA members mentioned time with their students as a regular workday practice. Only three ALC faculty mentioned having intentional time with students during the day. Overall, 15 respondents (60%) regularly spent time with students outside of class and during preparation.

Findings suggested that 75% of faculty did not value time spent with their colleagues or regularly made time to spend with their colleagues. This speaks to a lack of

commitment to proactivity, full and open task-relevant communication, and the promotion of group sense-making within the departments. The ALA departmental subculture relied heavily on the skills and knowledge of their colleagues. The other two subcultures remained isolated and siloed within their programmatic definitions. Data analysis suggested that the ALA subculture held a strong commitment to systemic thinking. The other two departments lacked collegial relationships or the willingness to promote sense-making as a group.

Reflection on change. Participants reflected on decisions about change. Sixty percent felt change derived from administration or above. Forty percent reflected on change decisions that were derived from within their department. When prompted to discuss the formation of a new class, the ALA subculture revealed that they talked together to solve problems and made decisions in their department meetings. The ALB group discussed things in the department meetings and then formed small groups to tackle their programmatic needs. The ALC group determined they were too large to meet effectively as a group; therefore, they met individually with the Department Head to determine their course of action.

Participants discussed people's strengths within their departments. Fifteen of the participants felt they relied on people's strengths when decisions were made. Six participants felt that people's strengths were not considered, while four participants did not answer the prompt directly or felt they did not know. Three participants believed that for their department to be successful it was imperative that they relied on one another's strengths. Most respondents listed at least two strengths of their colleagues. The remaining respondents had a difficult time expressing more than one strength for

members in their department.

Participants were unaware of their colleague's capabilities, which resulted in an inability to rely on them. Many participants mentioned their colleagues had strengths but appeared to disregard their strengths. Most participants were unable to capitalize on the abilities of others to promote and sustain their subculture. Small percentages of participants within the ALB and ALC departments recognized and relied on other people's strengths in the microcultures that were established. Contrastingly, the ALA department was very aware of their colleague's strengths and utilized them when necessary. All three subcultures failed to show a deep commitment to cultural diversity. The ALA group showed commitment to higher order coordination within their subculture, which would provide for a balance in multicultural groups of learners.

Participants were asked whether everyone in their department had a voice. All but one respondent felt that everyone had a voice, although many felt that some member's voices were ignored or not afforded equal opportunity. Most participants confirmed the presence of a hierarchy. There was agreement that a hierarchy existed in a few forms, including institutional knowledge, seniority, and job experience. Of those who noted that there was a hierarchy, overwhelmingly, they responded that it was not a negative aspect of their departmental culture. A few felt that a hierarchy was not present, while two participants felt that the presence of hierarchy negatively affected their culture. Results suggest that hierarchy may produce microcultures.

Many participants in this study felt as though their voices were ignored within their departmental culture. Participants believed their ideas were not heard and that they were unable to participate with their department in solving problems. This impacted the

way the participants viewed their ability to influence their culture. A lack of opportunity for equal access created a sense that some voices were more highly valued, and that some voices simply had no merit. In the ALA department, there was clear evidence of task-relevant communication. Communication was central in the ALA department. The subculture established a multichannel communication system using email, monthly meetings, and hallway discussions, coupled with weekly gatherings around a shared meal. In the ALA department, and in scattered instances between the other two departments, the truth shared was also personal. In those instances, truth provided depth and allowed for further communication.

Decision making. Participants were asked to reflect on how they responded when something in their department failed. There were three main responses to this prompt; to talk, analyze, and change were the intuitive responses of academic leaders. There were four participants who gave responses that denoted a negative experience with the term failure. The four negative comments included, “No one was willing” (Personal communication with respondent C2, September 2017); “If it fails, we just keep doing it” (Personal communication with respondent B3, September 2017); “Just improve it and give it to the next guinea pigs” (Personal communication with respondent A5, September 2017); “Deal with it if it is big, and hope it goes away if it is small” (Personal communication with respondent C3, September 2017). One member of each department held to at least one negative response. Other terms associated with the three main positive responses included, hallway conversations, talking, working with others, and/or seeking out colleagues, plan, analyze, assess, evaluate, fact-find, past, reflect, context, regroup, walk-away and think, process, ask, or change, act, don’t do it again, try, willing to risk,

recitations, next option, pick-up-the-pieces, do your best.

Among all three academic units, participants intuitively pursued three proactive responses when faced with failure. The presence of proactivity was most evident in the ALA department. Every member portrayed a strong relationship with their environment and a desire to be proactive problem solvers. Within each departmental subculture, one or two members echoed the notion of passive acceptance. The ALA department members remained inclined toward problem solving. The ALB and ALC department members passed new ideas on to one another to uphold the status quo. Experienced members believed that all too often old ideas would reappear as new ideas. Their inclination was to let them disappear again.

Within the ALA department, 62.5% believed they chose which changes to tackle in their department. As a department of eight, the ALA group talked to solve problems and make decisions. The department was the opposite of the other two. The ALA member's first response was to take their problem/challenge to the group and work hard to solve it. Within the ALB department, 71% believed change derived from the top down at the state level or at the administrative level at the college. The department formed committees to solve problems after discussion at the departmental level. Within the ALC department, 70% of respondents believed change came from the top down, and that they were told, not asked to change. The Department Head used individual meetings with each academic leader to solve problems given to each program that was typically comprised of one person. A belief in change derived from the top down negatively impacted the way two departments perceived their ability to influence change.

Perceptions of culture. There was a strong belief within two departments that

administration was telling them what to do, which, in turn, greatly influenced their ability to be proactive. This belief also limited their ability to commit to learning or to seeing failure as a learning opportunity; it removed the desire for the academic leaders to dialogue or experience other cultures, and diminished interdepartmental communications. Ultimately, the notion of being told, stifled the ability of the departments to understand joint causal effects, to favor more complex mental models, to search for interconnectedness, to abandon simple linear logic, and to promote group sense making (Schein & Schein, 2017). The ALA department was able to do the opposite. Their Department Head created a clear sense that they had the ability to make a difference. They believed that what they were doing mattered, not only to their colleagues and to industry, but also on the campus.

When asked to reflect on their perceptions of their departmental culture each department revealed unique attributes. Examination of the three subcultures revealed that the ALA department believed they could manage their environment. They committed to discovering truth together, pragmatically. They relied on resources in industry and outside their subculture to enhance their communication. Finally, they created new subcultures on campus that included student clubs and events.

Members of the ALC community perpetuated the silo effect in their programs by reducing communication. They did not pursue truth through dialogue with their colleagues. Many of the ALC members believed that across the department each individual program was more inclined to look out for themselves. A lack of higher order coordination among the programs existed. This diminished the subcultures ability to rely on the strengths of its members and to maximize its efforts.

The ALB academic unit was a combination of the other two groups. Members were united in the group through the common purpose of educating effectively. The unit was plagued with communication disconnects, labels, and geographic separation that perpetuated a sense of *them versus us*. Members worked well in small clusters or pairs. The department was not functioning as a unit. Members placed their energy in various places that did not maximize their skills or abilities.

Impact. Twenty-two out of the twenty-five participants felt they influenced others. One disagreed because they were brand new (three months on the job). The other two directly influenced others but did not like the connotation of the term and chose to define influence in another way. One was a Department Head and the other was a 20-year employee who everyone in the department respected immensely.

In general, the twenty-five participants in this study believed that humans could learn. They believed in learning, provided learners were given the necessary resources and a safe environment, psychologically. The inability for some members to manipulate their environment affected the culture. Furthermore, the inability to focus teaching on the future, assess the problems around them, or orient positively to the future deeply influenced their ability to affect culture. Most prevalent was the ability of the ALA department to think systematically and remain unified. The other two departments struggled to promote group sense making. They did not take the time to understand joint causal effects and affect change.

Across the three departments, eighty percent of all participants believed they were non-confrontational. Of the remainder, three were on the verge of retirement, and one was a Department Head who felt that their confrontation was only necessary with

administration if given something that would negatively affect their department. The final participant felt that confrontation was a means to protect their department from administrative decisions that were poorly conceived. The primary response from participants was to gather and decipher the change, then, to initiate a plan to make the change happen. The ALC Department Head individually completed this with each program in the department. The ALA department completed this as a unit. The ALB department divided their faculty into committees to tackle new problems. The distinct manners in which each subculture responded to change aligned or misaligned them with a learner-oriented organizational culture model (Schein & Schein, 2017).

Challenges from administration. Systemic thinking was present within the ALA department, and on a small scale within the microcultures of the ALB department. Communication was limited to individual conversations in the ALC department, or amidst the microcultures in the other two departments. Orientation toward the future was dramatically hampered in the ALC and ALB departments. This was due to a lack of commitment to truth through inquiry and dialogue. The ALB department appeared to spend ample time researching problems on their own, outside their departmental meetings.

Current context. Analysis across all three departmental subcultures suggested that the ALC department was marked by three components; individualized drive, a lack of positive orientation toward the future, and very little commitment to the search for truth through inquiry or dialogue as a team. The ALC subculture was unable or unwilling to manage their environment. Members who had been present for over 10 years felt the administration was limiting their ability to adapt or lead and disrupt simultaneously.

Their feelings were made known to every member of the department. Individualization in the ALC subculture revealed the inability of most members to be proactive or commit to learning. Each instance was isolated. A void existed between necessary vulnerability and an empathy for participants. Members did not provide room to fail or to learn from their mistakes. The ALB department was very similar.

Members of the ALB department who resided in a separate facility held a more positive orientation. They communicated more clearly with one another and allowed their orientation toward the future to be a driving force. Like the cluster of four participants in a program in the ALC subculture, each of these distinct microcultures mirrored the culture of the ALA department, in their balance of independence and reliance on their peers. Microcultures provided a safe place within subcultures for the development of positive assumptions about human nature. Microcultures provided a place to reflect and to develop shared assumptions. Together, unified members were more likely to manage their environment, to be flexible, and pursue systemic thinking.

Departmental reporting. In the ALB department, three of seven members trusted the messenger, two did so with absolute trust. Five of seven were not sure and said that their trust of the messenger depended on who the messenger was, or where the message was coming from. In the ALB department, a new idea was shared with an office mate, and then taken to the rest of the department members or to the Department Head. Across all three departments this response was uniform. Most participants shared their ideas with a colleague. Some had specific colleagues within their department they trusted, while others went outside their department. Some went straight to those that taught the same programs or courses. Others felt it was a good idea to seek outside input. Most

participants went to their peers for support for their idea. If they found the level of confidence and support they wanted, they took the idea to the Department Head. Only the ALA department seemed to include the Department Head in the process of making decisions. Other departments took a vetted idea to the Department Head for permission or approval after the fact.

Fit. The ALC department felt underrated, busy, and full of silos. They labeled themselves as a general education factory or service department, “Full of numerous microcultures within a subculture, and often like an orphan child” (Personal communication with respondent C8, September 2017). The ALA department felt somewhat undervalued on the college campus. The ALA familial culture found great value in industry, and in faculty they hired. Negative external perceptions drew the ALA group together and gave them shared belief and purpose. Instead of building silos and separating themselves, they gathered and supported one another.

The ALB department felt they were integral to the campus and embedded in each program. They held a sense that there was strong distaste among the other programs at the college for their department. The ALB subculture hinged on the label of obstacle, an impediment, the preventer of student graduation. Every member of the department took pride in their work, but they lacked the ability to manage their environment. Their assumptions regarding human nature as malleable were diminished. They left no space for the stimulation or promulgation of diversity. The ALB and ALC subcultures lacked the ability to work congruently to think, analyze, and understand joint causal effects. Neither department recognized multiple causation within their work, triggering linear approaches to problem solving.

Summary. Effective subcultures necessitate a learner orientation, something that the ALB and ALC subcultures lacked. In the previous two sections each subculture's perceptions were individually analyzed case-by-case, then each finding was analyzed across cases. Three main themes include the understanding that academic leaders' perceptions impacted their ability to implement learner-oriented culture dimensions. Second, the formation of microcultures through hierarchy or silos impacted a cultures' ability to orient toward learning. Third, the label of *general education factory* impacted participant's abilities to develop and sustain shared beliefs and values. Prominent social and affective factors spoke to shared artifacts, espoused beliefs and values, and basic underlying assumptions that provided the establishment or deterioration of learner-oriented cultures.

The first theme revealed that the ALA department's ability to perceive the administration and their Department Head positively, aligned the entire department toward learner-oriented dimensions. On the contrary, the other two department's perceptions of leadership drew them away from learning as an orientation and developed silos within their departments. A departmental subculture that did not share beliefs and values or that held negative beliefs, values, and assumptions about leadership, was unable to effectively engage in learner-oriented organizational culture dimensions.

Social and affective factors provided insight regarding the context specific to each department and revealed that each member of a department built their own perceptions. Whether discipline specific or not, context determined a member's willingness to both lead and follow. The lack of shared artifacts and varied beliefs about the nature of their work environment, furthered the distinction of context within a given subculture.

The second theme revealed a distinct construct within two of the departmental cultures. The departments formed various microcultures due to hierarchy or silos within their academic unit which alienated the members. The formation of fragmented units within the subculture led to isolation. Each microculture was devoid of leadership and connectivity to the larger culture of the institution. Microcultures were also lacking resources necessary to be effective. Fragmentation within the academic units led to diminished dialogue.

The four-person microculture within the ALC department was able to implement learner-oriented dimensions. Through the development of a positive orientation toward the future, and commitment to communication that was “full and open and task-relevant” (Schein & Schein, 2017, p. 347), the culture was able to establish shared beliefs and values. Metaphors were used in every academic unit, and more so within microcultures among the units. Metaphors revealed the shared beliefs of the department, or the lack there of, and gave insight into the shape of each subculture and the ability to be adaptable in the face of change.

Metaphors were used by participants to discuss or describe their roles or the way they perceived their culture or the culture of the institution. Metaphors most often took on the role of a mechanistic approach, which lead to apathy, such as the metaphor of a life boat full of participants paddling like crazy just to stay afloat. The academic leaders who had healthy metaphors were also proactive faculty, who used the metaphors to construct their reality, and to draw others alongside them, metaphors such as family utopia. One department utilized this well; the other two had small pockets of people who utilized metaphor, which lead to pockets of varied belief and importance. Ultimately, those

pockets formed microcultures.

The third theme specifically revealed the demoralizing effects of being labeled as a factory for general education. Community college faculty and department heads interviewed in this study were passionate about student success. They diligently worked to better themselves. The label of factory greatly impacted how an academic unit viewed autonomy, as well as their ability to manage their environment. This label was strongly felt in both the ALC and ALB departments. Only a select few academic leaders in this study were proud of their role as purveyors of general education. Most members felt that the label, and the volume of courses they taught, only added to the challenges they faced, such as providing courses for every other program and included the pressure to ensure student achievement or be labeled further as a roadblock to student success.

The most common social and affective factors present within the three departments were perceptions, problem solving, leader/follower identity, differentiation, and change. Differentiation as Schein and Schein (2017) discussed, was achieved through five basic means. Each of those means allowed for the harmonization of a subculture. The ALA subculture, through continued differentiation, was able to capitalize on their climate and remain open to change. The ALB and ALC departments were also differentiated, yet their tendencies were to isolate, and they were unable and or unwilling to share metaphors or be proactive. The result of differentiation among these two departments was stagnation within the subculture and a loss of adaptability.

The ALA subculture was able to embrace change even when disconfirmation took place. They remained loosely coupled, and they balanced intra-organizational heterogeneity. The ALB and ALC departments both felt change was thrust upon them,

they did not trust administration, they lacked a willingness to change, and, therefore, they lacked adaptability, would not differentiate, and were not proactive in solving problems. Geographic decentralization, divisionalization, and differentiation by hierarchical level, proved too great a separation for these two departments. In the next section, I discuss the role of the ten dimensions. I also provide six conclusions that correlate with each theme.

Ten dimensions

A learner-oriented organizational culture may contain aspects of each of the following ten dimensions; proactivity, commitment to learning to learn, positive assumptions about human nature, belief that the environment can be managed, commitment to truth through inquiry and dialogue, positive orientation toward the future, commitment to full and open task-relevant communication, commitment to cultural diversity, commitment to systemic thinking, and belief in the value of internal cultural analysis (Schein & Schein, 2017).

Within this study, each of the themes revealed correlations with one or more dimensions of learner-oriented subcultures. Across all three academic units, I drew the following six conclusions:

1. Perceptions of colleagues, leadership, or administration, demonstratively affected the ability of the subculture to develop learner-oriented dimensions.
2. The lack of some dimensions of a learner-oriented culture, created a negative feedback loop within the subculture.
3. Some department subculture effectiveness formed through microcultures. Microcultures formed through further differentiation, including geographic isolation, or common programmatic teaching roles and reliance on a commitment to communication.

Microculture development caused further demise to the overall subculture by fracturing its membership but provided healthy avenues for faculty to co-exist apart from the subculture.

4. Effective academic units balanced both internal integration and external adaptation, despite the pressures of the collegiate or departmental culture.
5. Subculture effectiveness appeared most prominent within a subculture if they developed truth through inquiry and dialogue.
6. An effective subculture required at minimum, the presence of positive perceptions of leaders and of the culture, group problem-solving abilities, a positive perception of self, and a practical and realized reflective practice.

Conclusion

The results from this study provided the lived experiences of twenty-five participants from three subcultures on a rural intermountain-west community college campus. The perceptions of academic leaders speak to the presence of social and affective factors present in each department and across all three departments, and the ways in which those factors influence the academic unit. Cross-case analysis provided support for previous research and practical applications for the formation of effective subcultures. Examination of the ten dimensions of learner-oriented cultures revealed factors that delineate redefined cognitive practices and beliefs within and across academic units.

Proactivity, or the ability of the subculture to come together to solve problems, was not present among most subcultures. A commitment to learning to learn was directly correlated with those participants who aspired to teach effectively. This was missing

quite often in the formation of common cultural practices within each academic unit.

Positive assumptions about human nature were fostered in the ALA department.

Individuals had this dimension present in their personal values. The ability of an academic unit to maintain positive assumptions was greatly lacking in two departments. Belief that the environment could be managed was a shared dimension among the ALA subculture. Microcultures that formed in the other two departments shared this belief.

A commitment to truth through inquiry and dialogue also occurred in the ALA department, and in the microcultures present in the departments examined in this study. The same commitment did not occur in the other departmental cultures, nor in the perceptions that participants shared of the administration of the college. A negative feedback loop was established due to a lack of shared beliefs and values, and lack of positive assumptions. The feedback loop continued where a positive orientation toward the future was diminished. A commitment to full and open task-relevant communication seemed to be present in every department. The value, or the access, necessary for each participant to share their voice was lacking in certain subcultures. A commitment to cultural diversity was lacking in every departmental subculture. A commitment to systemic thinking was longed for in the ALA and ALB departments. Fragmentation prevented the development of complex mental models. The ALA department worked diligently to foster an environment where complex models existed. The ALB department analyzed and dissected systems to the point that the environment was ineffective.

A belief in the value of internal cultural analysis appeared to be handled uniquely by each department. The ALC department had no desire to analyze their culture, only their individual programs. The ALB department wanted to analyze everything. They used

one formal process to analyze three distinct climates within their department. The process was not effective for the unique internal pressures formed by their fractured culture. The ALA department reflected on and analyzed their culture regularly, they shared meals, held hallway conversations, conducted team teaching, and supported the development of new teaching and learning methods. All three subcultures contained components of effective subcultures as learner-oriented within the definition provided by Schein and Schein (2017).

CHAPTER V

IMPLICATIONS

Introduction

This chapter briefly reviews the purpose of the study, the methodology and the findings. Results, arranged thematically, address the participants' typical workday, decision-making practices, perception of departmental culture, the impact academic leaders made, how participants handled challenging situations, approaches to new contexts, remaining current, reporting information, and departmental fit within the campus culture. In this chapter, I discuss the general question this study set out to answer, the findings provided through the perceptions of each academic faculty and department head, and the major themes. Then, I discuss the implications and ideas for future study.

Discussion

This work set out to answer one main question regarding culture, leadership, and change. The question asked how academic leaders within three separate departments at a rural intermountain-west community college perceived their subculture (academic unit). Further, sub questions involved ways in which academic leaders were involved in shaping their subculture? Which dimensions of a learning-oriented culture were present? Each sub question lead to the development of propositions. Utilization of Schein's (2010) definition of culture, coupled with the factors present in academic leaders, produced the findings provided in chapter four. Those findings are discussed here in direct relation to each original proposition.

Proposition 1: *Academic leaders willing to solve problems of external adaptation and internal integration were more likely to have effective subcultures.*

An effective subculture, as defined by Schein and Schein (2017), posit that all ten dimensions of a learner-oriented subculture should be present to some degree. An effective subculture should integrate and adapt to the world around them in response to identified challenges. A subculture that had a positive orientation toward the future, a commitment to truth, and the development of systemic ways of thinking were more likely to be effective. An effective subculture balanced both internal integration and external adaptation.

The ALA department operated under the conditions of internal integration by sharing ideas, learning with one another, solving problems as a unit, and through the development of shared practices that provided commonality in their decision making. The ALA department operated under external adaptation through their united responses to external challenges, their unified approach to the pressures and expectations from their external constituents, and their consistent drive to improve and provide the highest quality and industry-specific training possible.

The ALC department struggled to integrate a unified approach against the strong cultures of each individual program. The ALB department fell short of internal integration by fractioning into three distinct silos within their department. Neither the ALC, nor the ALB departments adapted externally well, as they struggled to find purpose in unified adaptation, and the only shared purpose they held was transfer articulation.

The initial lens into each departmental subculture included the three levels of a culture describe by Schein (2010), which include shared artifacts, espoused beliefs and values, and basic underlying assumptions. Upon completion of coding and cross-case analysis, the presence of learner-oriented dimensions provided insight into the

effectiveness of each sub and microculture. This study specifically looked at perceptions which Schein and Schein (2017) considered to be one component of the basic underlying assumptions that members of a culture held.

Proposition 2: Academic leaders who desired a learning-oriented culture in their department were more likely to perceive their subculture as effective.

Academic leaders in all three departments desired aspects of a learner-oriented culture. The individual leaders and impacts on their subcultures were varied. One entire department perceived their subculture as effective, and their department revealed aspects of all ten learner-oriented dimensions. Other individual members or microcultures within departments also revealed all ten dimensions but were unable to coordinate those dimensions among their entire department and remained isolated. For many academic leaders, the desire was present for all ten dimensions, but the knowledge and ability to implement the dimensions effectively was missing.

Proposition 3: Academic leaders who were proactive in their commitment to learning to learn were more likely to positively affect their subcultures.

There is no question that an academic leader who was proactive made an impact. The research revealed that it took a collective commitment to positively shape the subculture. Two departments had a few proactive leaders who were positive, but many members remained in their subculture who were not committed to learning or active at problem solving. This approach resulted in individual and programmatic isolation and an innate need to protect one's job. The tendency to silo drew academic leaders away from shared practices, beliefs, and values, and eroded their assumptions about even the most basic beliefs or practices in their subculture. This in turn led to the development of

perceptions for participants that negatively impacted their academic unit.

I referred to this impact as a negative feedback loop because it caused the erosion of other dimensions. When those same dimensions were examined for participants as single entities, they were often healthy or perceived as healthy within their microcultures, but they were distorted within the program culture or the campus culture in the eyes of that same participant. The participants' proactive nature within their own program may have been high, but their willingness to be proactive with their colleagues in the department was greatly diminished, resulting in a climate that did not support the larger academic unit's success.

Proposition 4: Academic leaders who experienced multiple approaches to change in their department were more likely to shape their culture.

When academic leaders chose to tackle difficult changes or requirements placed upon them, through multichannel communication systems, with group sense-making practices, and an understanding that learning was an outcome of shared dialogue, the culture in which they worked took on a climate they desired to embody. The opposite was true of those academic leaders who perceived that change was linear. This proposition held true for those that experienced multidimensional change, but this proposition was also unclear, as those that experienced linear change approaches also shaped their culture. In this way, culture was shaped in a manner that negatively impacted the participant's colleagues, and the larger campus culture.

Proposition 5: Academic leaders who perceived that they influenced the culture in their department were more likely to hold a positive orientation toward the future.

An academic leader who perceived that their opinion mattered, that they had a voice, was more likely to positively influence others in their culture and feel as though they belonged. The sense of belonging held to the formation of a positive orientation toward the future, one that assessed current problems, assessed any systemic consequences present due to a course of action, and balanced both a near future and a far future positive orientation. A leader who perpetuated a negative influence over their peers subsequently impacted their department in a negative way. These findings did not support the proposition and suggested that the positive orientation toward the future must be linked to more factors than perception of influence.

Proposition 6: Subcultures whose academic leaders valued leader-follower relationships were more likely to produce effective subcultures.

The academic leaders who revealed leader-follower relationships that were positive, were those who trusted the messenger, who felt they could believe what they were told, and who truly had developed a belief in people, and in human nature as good. Academic leaders who felt that a leader, if given the right resources and a safe psychological environment, could learn, were able to positively impact their colleagues. Positive assumptions about human nature provided a culture in which other academic leaders trusted and were open to following others. In turn, those subcultures and microcultures became effective at balancing the role of both leading and following among all academic leaders. This proposition was also supported in that academic leaders who valued leader and follower relationships, also valued learning and the potential knowledge their colleagues brought when attempting to solve new problems.

Proposition 7: An effective subculture would contain aspects of each of the ten

learning-oriented culture dimensions.

This final proposition must be examined considering each academic unit and its complex sub and microcultures. Examination of the complexity of the definition of each of the ten dimensions of a learner-oriented culture was necessary, as well. One subculture in this study showed the presence of, to one degree or another, each of the ten dimensions. The other two subcultures did not. The other two subcultures revealed a lack of proactivity, belief in the management of their environment, or commitment to truth which resulted in numerous dimensions eroding simultaneously. Schein and Schein (2017) discussed the complexity of the ten dimensions and alluded to the need for each unique culture to be learner-oriented, not necessarily to adapt all ten dimensions to their environment.

The three departmental portraits provide rich perceptions of twenty-five academic leaders as to the effectiveness of their subculture. This study will impact current academic leaders in departments across colleges and universities as they embark upon development and sustainability of academic units. Given the vast array of leaders in academia, and the ever-changing nature of the workforce, this study will provide higher education administrators with insight and support toward the development and sustainability of effective subcultures.

Summary. Faculty and Department Heads are dynamic by nature; they progress, they cultivate change, and they modify their personalities and abilities to adapt to new experience. Schein and Schein (2017) stated, “In team situations formal status and rank become less important than patterns of who is dependent on whom at a given moment in accomplishing a task” (p. 28), something Schein and Schein (2017) referred to as “here-

and-now humility” (p. 28). Schein and Schein (2017) further noted, “It is the degree of alignment or congruity between the three levels (artifact, espoused beliefs, and behavior) that determine how an individual’s sincerity or integrity is judged by others” (p. 28).

Learning-oriented cultures need learner-oriented leaders who can discover “how to be simultaneously clear and strong in articulating their vision and yet open to change as that very vision becomes maladaptive in a turbulent environment” (Schein & Schein, 2017, p. 351). While analyzing the perceptions of these twenty-five participants, several discoveries continue to be pertinent to the ongoing qualitative study of community college learner-oriented leadership development. Those discoveries are derived from the present and future implications explored next.

Implications

Implications for practice. Subcultures within departments on a college campus impact their macroculture and provide a distinctive construct within the culture (Schein & Schein, 2017). Collegiate macroculture influence affects practices and policies surrounding leadership development and organizational culture development. From the perspective of administrators, department heads, and faculty, collegiate subcultures should be evaluated, and the perceptions of academic leaders should be analyzed. The following implications may be of use to academic leaders.

First, academic leaders should develop and enhance their ability to solve problems in a cultural context, with attention paid to internal integration and external adaptation. As faculty, professional development and consistent time spent learning with their peers provides internal integration. Professional development also provides opportunities to adapt externally in their discipline and in the art of teaching. For Department Heads,

internal integration involves leading their faculty well and managing the day-to-day operations. External adaptation requires an eye toward the needs of administration, the changes in the field, and awareness of the complexity involved in providing an environment in which all faculty can adapt, change, and remain flexible.

Second, academic leaders need to reflect on their perceptions of their subculture. Then, faculty will develop an orientation toward learning in their leadership. An academic leader can change their own perceptions. Factors academic leader perceive in the culture, determine their learner-orientation. Academic leaders need to establish an orientation that promotes shared beliefs. They must critically think with their colleagues, challenge the formation of silos, and establish truth through dialogue.

Third, academic leaders need to be proactive. They must remain committed to learning. If they do, they will positively impact their subcultures and those they interact with. If subculture members perceive that they can influence their culture, they are more likely to develop a positive orientation toward the future. Through positive future orientation, an academic leader finds depth and purpose in their work. They are more likely to establish lasting relationships with their colleagues and in their discipline. Discovering a proactive culture reinforces the ability of an academic leader to think, fail, feel empathy for others, and cultivate a desire to improve.

Fourth, effective subcultures must foster multiple approaches to change. They must embrace diversity in their learning, leading, and following. Departmental subcultures that embrace multidimensional change practices will remain viable and adaptable. For an academic unit to remain viable into the future they must learn to adapt to their surroundings. Cultures that adapt can respond quickly and relatively easily to the

demands of industry and the needs of their constituents. Adaptable cultures utilize the strengths of their entire team to approach change from multiple angles and solve problems together. Academic units in this study had members of varying ages and experiences. Participants who had longer tenures were less likely to change.

Fifth, only a subculture that values leader/follower relationships will be effective. The ability of every member to take note of their role as a follower, and to create space for others to lead, specifically relates to the overall effectiveness of the subculture. Those subcultures whose members believe they are not followers, or who do not trust their leadership, undermine and undervalue the culture and erode its effectiveness. A healthy academic unit is led to understand their strengths and weaknesses, and to rely on the abilities of each member. A dynamic leader models followership. Through the continued practice of relationship development, a dynamic leader provides space for members to explore new things, take on leadership roles, and discover their abilities.

Sixth, organizational cultures that promote the ten dimensions of a learning-oriented culture will be more likely to be effective. While the ten dimensions are not exacting, they are a framework for effectiveness. The dimensions require a leader to be learner-oriented, which in turn provides an effective platform for cultures to adapt. A leader in an academic setting must have the ability to balance varied dimensions of learning. As the environment constantly changes so must the leader. There are numerous ways to apply each dimension. A leader is obligated to develop maturity, respond through diversity, and seek help when faced with adversity.

Each implication provides insight into the need for academic units to develop an effective culture. The implications for healthy culture formation rest heavily in the ability

of a group to become a culture. The group must share basic assumptions and challenge one another to learn and solve problems together. When a group becomes a culture, they align themselves with a learner orientation, they perceive similarly.

Recommendations for future research. While it is tempting to continuously explore beyond the scope of this study, it is with awareness and gratitude that this work concludes its focus on the examination of the perceptions of academic leaders. However, the valuable information that came from the participants of this work suggests additional research, and so this study ends with recommendations in this area.

First, academic leaders should examine correlations between effective subcultures and student success. Research surrounding student success will enhance the field of study by providing insight into the perceptions of students directly impacted by learner-oriented organizational cultures. Perhaps more than the correlation, would be the construction of a subculture within each learning environment that incorporated students.

Second, research that examines the entire subculture within the macroculture context of higher education, may provide correlation. Specifically, association between the collegiate cultural context and the academic subculture context, regarding learning orientation, and organizational effectiveness.

The third recommendation for future study should examine disruptive factors, such as geographical distribution, leadership style, discipline specific expertise, personality style, teaching and learning understanding or definition, perspective on the student as a learner, and the importance of content.

Fourth, a closer examination of effective development and training of leaders. Within an institution, insight regarding the manners in which an effective subculture is

led, supported, and nurtured is needed. In this study, the same administration existed for all three departments although a different direct report was in place for each department. This yielded one department capable of the formation of a learner-oriented organizational culture.

Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to gather and analyze perceptions of academic leaders from three departments on a community college campus, perceptions as to the nature of their subculture and the organization, as well as perceptions on leadership. The responses of participants to the open-ended questions provided broad descriptions and rich information. In conclusion, I have some final thoughts concerning what makes a successful academic leader and an effective subculture on a community college campus.

Subcultures built on shared experiences, espoused beliefs, practice, and values, are more likely to participate in internal integration and external adaptation. As an academic leader evolves, they need to develop relationships, trust, and the ability to problem solve within the culture. An academic leader must learn to balance proactive teaching and learning, with time and followership, to promote an effective subculture. This is so vital, that without it, the academic leader negatively impacts their culture.

No academic leader arrives fully equipped for the job. An effective leader understands the necessity of continuous learning. The mindset of a learner-oriented leader is conciliated only in the continuous improvement of themselves and those that contact their culture. Academic leaders learn as they try, and they learn through failure. The successful academic leader embraces change and model's effective practices necessary for their culture to thrive.

Complexity lies in the reality that there is no mold or blueprint for which an academic leader can be defined. Each culture, subculture, and microculture is defined not only by the differentiation that created them, but also by those who exist in them and those that interact with them. The leadership challenge lies in discovering the abilities of each participant and nurturing the environment so that the members within the culture learn together. Equally valuable is the recognition of each individual leader, their need for transformation, and their journey to co-exist.

To be honest, I was transformed through this research process. This began as an exploration of culture, change, and leadership, and the intention to take a closer look at the nature of three departments on a community college campus for the perceptions related to leadership and organizational culture. Perhaps, it was inevitable that I would discover factors within myself that necessitate change. I interviewed twenty-five colleagues, all of whom passionately taught because they believed that students deserved to learn.

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Appendix A: Interview Protocol

(Start with demographic questions)

- a. What is a typical workday like? (11, 6, 1)

- a. Prompt: Time, how much and in what capacity? Values, what do you spend time doing?

 With whom are you spending time?

- b. Describe to me one of the last experiences your department had in making a decision

 about a change. (8, 9, 12, 10, 7, 5, 2, 1)

- a. Prompt: describe how your department formalizes/makes a decision. Do you rely on

 people's strengths? Do your processes/methods vary? Does everyone have a voice? Is

 there a hierarchy in your department? (Longevity, seniority, institutional knowledge?)

- b. In your department, how is a new course created? How is a course retired?

- c. If something in your department fails, what are your next steps? (What? So What? Now

 What?)

- c. How do you perceive your department's culture? (4, 5, 7, 8, 10, 11)

- a. Prompt: Scenario: how do you handle AI incidents? What strengths do your colleagues have? Do they help you? What role does Dual Credit play in your department? How do you feel about the label: general education mill or service department?
- d. How do the things you do in your department make an impact on your students, your department and/or CSI at large? (3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11)
- a. Prompt: Where is your impact? Are you able to influence others? What is your impact on other programs/courses in your same department? Does your department run a student club?
- e. Describe what you would do to handle a challenging situation given to you by administration. (1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 11)
- a. Prompt: Who initiates? Do you tend to ignore it? Are you likely to gather and decipher information? Are you proactive? What is your communication style? Are you confrontational?
- f. Reconstruct for me, when you were new to your job. How did you approach figuring out what you needed to do? (1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9)

- a. Prompt: Whom did you work with? What steps did you take to get what you needed? Did you experience mentoring?
- g. Describe how you remain current in your discipline. What do you perceive your expectation is to remain up to date in content? (1, 2, 5, 6, 12)
- a. Prompt: What do you do after a conference? Do you reflect?
- h. Describe the typical way your department reports out or receives information from the campus (chain of command). (1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10, 11)
- a. Prompt: Do you believe what you are told? Do you trust the messenger? Can you depend on those around you?
- b. Where do ideas typically generate? Who receives your ideas?
- i. How does your department fit into the overall campus structure? (4, 8, 9, 11)
- a. Prompt: How do other departments view you?

Appendix B: Demographic Questions

How long have you worked in your current department?

What is your highest degree attained, and in what discipline?

Are you teaching in the discipline of your degree of training?

Appendix C: Consent Form

Dear Participant:

I am inviting you to participate in research that is completely separate from your role at the institution. The purpose of this interview is to gain insight into individual's perceptions of academic leadership and effective subcultures. The interview protocol will ask questions about your perceptions of the culture in which you work. It is my hope that information from this interview process will contribute to a better understanding of individual's perceptions of effective subcultures and the presence of learner-oriented dimensions within your subculture.

The study procedures will take place in the researcher's office, or in the office of participant, or in another office as designated by the participant. The interview will last up to one hour, and the study will last through the spring semester of 2018. The interviews will be recorded, the recordings will be transcribed, and the originals will be deleted. The recordings will be kept on a password-protected computer, inside a locked office. All names and departmental references will be replaced with pseudonyms.

Your responses to the interview protocol will be anonymous. Your name will not be collected or appear anywhere, and pseudonyms will be created to disguise the departments and the college. Risks involved include the risks of a breach of confidentiality. Your responses may speak critically of colleagues, administrators, culture, etc. As soon as your responses are recorded they will be transcribed, and the recording will be destroyed. Each individual's transcription data will be made available to the individual member to check for accuracy. The transcribed data will be kept on a locked, password protected computer in the researcher's office.

Participation is voluntary, and you may withdraw at any time. There is no reward for participating or consequence for not participating.

For further information regarding this research please contact Mr. Jonathan Lord at (208) 732-6484, email: jlord@csi.edu or lordjon3@isu.edu

If you have any questions about your rights as a research participant, you may contact the Idaho State University Institutional Review Board at (208) 282-2179.

After signing this letter, keep one copy for your records and return the other one. Thank you in advance for your cooperation and support.

Please indicate your agreement to participate by signing below.

I am 18 years or older and have read and understood this consent form and agree to participate.

Signature: _____

Name: _____ (Please Print)

Date: _____

Appendix D: Table Shell

Research Question	Idea/Statement	CODEs
1. How do academic leaders within three separate departments at a rural intermountain-west community college perceive their subculture (department)?	Perception	Effective, Ineffective, marginal, suppressed, loosely coupled, required, obsolete, highly valued,
Proposition 1: <i>Academic leaders willing to solve problems of external adaptation and internal integration are more likely to have effective subcultures.</i>	External, Internal, proactive, differentiation, Dialogue	Problem solving is valued, PS is individualistic, PS is not worth the effort,
Proposition 2: <i>Academic leaders who desire a learner-oriented culture in their department are more likely to perceive their subculture as effective.</i>	Desire to learn, perception	Learning is paramount, PD is highly valued, learning is central, diversity is important, communication is central,
2. In what ways are academic leaders involved in shaping their subculture?	Learning to Learn	Not at all, a little, a lot, completely,
Proposition 3: <i>Academic leaders who are proactive in their commitment to learning to learn are more likely to positively affect their subcultures.</i>	Proactivity Positive Affect	Learners are models, learning is life long, learning is a distraction, learning is mandatory, I don't have time to learn,
Proposition 4: <i>Academic leaders who experience multiple approaches to change in their department are more likely to shape their culture.</i>	Multiple Approaches to Change	AL's who are change agents are not liked by their peers, AL's who shape culture are highly sought after, AL's who are MD in approach are leaders people respect,
Proposition 5: <i>Academic leaders who perceive that they can influence the culture in their department are more likely to hold a positive orientation toward the future.</i>	Climate and Culture Impact	Belonging, Change agent, influential decision maker, future oriented leader,
3. What factors within a subculture produce more effective academic leaders?		Social and Affective Factors, Emergent factors, leadership that is effective,
Proposition 6: <i>Subcultures whose academic leaders value leader follower relationships are more</i>	Leader/Follower Value	followers are valued, leaders are humble, opportunity to lead exists, room to fail, room to

<i>likely to produce effective subcultures.</i>		grow, room to explore, experiential nature of the department,
4. Which dimensions of a learning-oriented culture are present?	Aware of all ten dimensions	some dimensions are not necessary, some dimensions have more weight than others, some dimensions do not apply to my department,
<i>Proposition 7: An effective subculture will have aspects of each of the ten learning-oriented culture dimensions.</i>	There will be variance in the amount of each dimension represented	Gradients of each dimension are present, the subculture is at work on each dimension in some form or another, each dimension is valued,