2019

Yes, We Can! A Phenomenological Study of College and University Presidents That Hold Advanced Degrees in Social Work

Philip Giarraffa

BARRY UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK

YES, WE CAN! A PHENOMENOLOGICAL STUDY OF COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY PRESIDENTS THAT HOLD ADVANCED DEGREES IN SOCIAL WORK

A DISSERTATION

PRESENTED TO THE FACULTY OF

BARRY UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK

IN CANDIDACY FOR THE DEGREE OF

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY IN SOCIAL WORK

BY

PHILIP GIARRAFFA

MIAMI, FLORIDA

MAY 2019

YES, WE CAN! A PHENOMENOLOGICAL STUDY OF COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY PRESIDENTS THAT HOLD ADVANCED DEGREES IN SOCIAL WORK

By

Philip Giarraffa

2019

A Dissertation submitted to the Ellen Whiteside McDonnell School of Social Work in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

APPROVED BY:

_____
Heidi Heft LaPorte, D.S.W.
Chairperson, Dissertation Committee

_____
Walter J. Pierce, Ph.D.
Member, Dissertation Committee

_____
Carmen L. McCrink, Ph.D.
Member, Dissertation Committee
Barry University

_____
Sharron M. Singleton, D.S.W.
Director, Doctoral Program

_____
Phyllis Scott, Ph.D.
Dean of the School of Social Work

Barry University
May, 2019

An Abstract of

Yes, We Can! A Phenomenological Study of College and University Presidents that Hold Advanced Degrees in Social Work

by
Philip Giarraffa

Submitted to the Ellen Whiteside McDonnell School of Social Work in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Barry University

May 2019

The evolving continuum of the collegiate presidency and the skill sets associated with this role are necessary to meet the multidimensional needs of post-modern institutes of higher education. The overarching demands of this position coupled with a large number of expected retirements has created unique opportunities for individuals in non-traditional career trajectories to pursue these positions of executive leadership within higher education. As such, social workers are equipped with an ethical mandate and an incredibly useful skill set that can be valuable in fulfilling the role of a college presidency. However, social work professionals employed in higher education settings are not often associated with positions of executive leadership, namely that of president or chancellor. This research explores the lived experiences among current or former college and university presidents with advanced degrees in social work. The extent to which the NASW Code of Ethics guides these social work presidents when navigating the challenges confronting higher education is central to this study. This qualitative research will also explore how the skill sets and competencies associated with the Educational Policy and

Accreditation Standards (EPAS) for social work education prepared this unique group of individuals for the roles associated with the college presidency.

Keywords: Phenomenology, College and University Presidents, Transformational Leadership, NASW Code of Ethics, Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards (EPAS)

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This journey could not be possible without the guidance and support of Dr. Heidi LaPorte, who gave me the autonomy to explore every aspect of this project; and when it overwhelmed me at times – you always became the Pooh Bear to my Christopher Robin – bringing humor and compassion to my journey. Thank You, Dr. LaPorte! To Dr. Walter Pierce, who motivated me to pursue history! Because of you, I have become so much more appreciative of our profession's historical context. I loved our brief talks about the various historical periods. I look forward to some more. To Dr. Carmen McCrink, I want to thank you for your guidance and expertise during this journey.

I would also like to thank Dean Scott and the Barry University School of Social Work faculty and staff for all of their support. To my colleagues in the PhD Program, you were very much a part of this journey. I have made long-lasting friendships as a result and that is by far the best part of this experience for me.

Lastly, I would like to thank my participants for taking the time to share this window of their lives with me. In this sociopolitical climate, our social work professionals need to understand the importance of leadership. Each of you serve as a model and I think your stories need to be told. Thank you!

DEDICATION

To Fabian and Nadiah – My heart and soul. Always remember, "*You are my music makers and you are the* d*reamers of dreams"- n*ow go on and wish them true.

To my wife, Monica – I love you! You are my everything! This never would have happened without you.

To my parents – Raising 3 boys was never easy but you had always "done it" right!

To Tino, Aidy, and Ericka – I can never thank you enough for your help during this time.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Page

LIST OF TABLES & FIGURES

Number *Page*

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

In an effort to meet an increasing number of constituent demands and challenges, institutions of higher education have been forced to evolve into complex entities (Selingo, Chheng, & Clark, 2017). Although the tenets of teaching, research, and service remain central to the strategic agendas of many colleges and universities, the public perception of higher education's value has become much broader (Flawn, 1990; Kauffman, 1982). Several factors deemed instrumental in creating shifts in the traditional organizational underpinnings of higher education have forged a need to find multidisciplinary leaders capable of negotiating diverse global enterprises (The Aspen Institute, 2017). As a result, the customary role of a college and university president has also been forced to evolve in order to address the varied, multidimensional needs and responsibilities of these institutions. Despite the ambiguity created by this continuum (Cohen & March, 1974), numerous studies illustrate a consensus as to the range of skills required to lead modern colleges and universities (Cook, 2012; Song & Hartley III, 2012; Selingo, Chheng, & Clark, 2017; The Aspen Institute, 2017). The enterprise of finding candidates that possess such competencies has begun to transcend the traditional academic pathways to the presidency. With pathways to the presidency becoming increasingly non-conforming to traditional modes - coupled with the large number of current college and university presidents expected to retire within the next decade (Selingo, Chheng, & Clark, 2017; Song & Hartley III, 2012), opportunities for

presidencies are expected to rise for contemporary academic leaders with unique skill sets.

In the past 10 years, a small group of collegiate presidents who hold advanced degrees in social work has moved beyond the traditional demographic of executive leadership in higher education (Malai, 2013). Despite not being viewed in this context, social workers aspiring to pursue executive leadership positions, with a college or university, have the opportunity to pursue multiple pathways toward a presidency. A social worker's pathway towards a college presidency may, in fact, be delineated by previously held positions: namely an academic dean or student/academic affairs officer. A limited body of knowledge exists on how skills garnered from the profession's educational, ethical, and practice-focused spectrums translate into leading an institute of higher education. Notwithstanding, social workers that aspire to become a college or university president in this modern era have an opportunity to learn from current or past presidents who possess advanced degrees in social work.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to understand the perceived meaning and value of an advanced degree in social work for college and university presidents who possess such credentials. Utilizing a phenomenological research approach, specific goals of this study are: (a) to examine the pathway towards the presidency for social work professionals; (b) to understand the lived experience of the *social work president* and the extent to which the social work profession's skill set and ethical mandates uniquely prepared current and former college and university presidents/chancellors with advanced degrees in social work for their role; and (c) to explore each participants' self-perceived leadership style.

This dissertation is organized into five chapters. Chapter I introduces the phenomenon of college and university presidents holding an advanced degree in social work and discusses the framework for which this study was conceptualized. Chapter II familiarizes the reader with the historical underpinnings of the roles and responsibilities of a college or university president, as well as dominant paradigms that illustrate common pathways to obtaining this position of executive leadership. Chapter II also introduces the theoretical models of leadership that are central to this study. The efficacy of these approaches will be empirically analyzed through relevant literature that is contextually associated with higher education and social work leadership. This chapter continues with an exploration of how the core values and ethical principles illustrated in the *NASW Code of Ethics* guide professional social work practice; and it concludes with a discussion on the intersectionality of social work and higher education. Chapter III outlines the research methodology used for this study. Chapter IV examines the lived experiences of 12 current or former college or university presidents that hold advanced degrees in social work. This chapter further examines social work's educational competencies for leadership preparedness as well as the profession's ethical standards that uniquely hold these participants accountable in their role as college presidents. Lastly, Chapter V concludes with a discussion on the implications for social work practice, education, research, and policy.

My Interest in This Topic

Events at Penn State University, the University of Missouri, Baylor University, and most recently, Michigan State University resulted in the presidents of these respective universities being charged with failure to respond appropriately to alleged

injustices confronting certain parties. More specifically, in 2017, the former president of Penn State University was found guilty of one misdemeanor count for failing to act accordingly in a 2011 child sex abuse scandal that ultimately forced his resignation and led to a criminal conviction (CNN Library, 2017); in 2016, the president of Baylor University was removed for negligently failing to thoroughly investigate multiple reports of female sexual assault committed by male student athletes between the years 2012-2016 (Tracy & Barry, 2017); in 2015, the President of the University of Missouri was forced to resign for failing to acknowledge and address the alleged systemic oppression and overt racial injustices confronting African American students (Son & Madhani, 2017); and in 2018, the President of Michigan State University resigned amid pressure over the handling of a sexual abuse scandal involving a former university physician (Haag & Tracy, 2018). The latter, Ms. Lou Anna Simon is now facing a criminal conviction for her negligence in the handling of this situation. Consequently, whether their involvement was direct or indirect, as the executive leader, each president was held accountable for the actions of their organization. As each story unfolded, it became clear that political and economic variables factored into how each president chose to handle the issue confronting their respective campus. Although each incident received attention, the primary emphasis in the national dialogue focused on protection of the reputation of the university and its leadership rather than addressing issues of social justice. Social justice and the dignity and worth of persons are fundamental to social work and are part of the core values that govern the profession (National Association of Social Workers, 2017). Further understanding of the factors that took place on these college campuses caused me to ask one simple question: *How would a college or university president with*

professional social work credentials as well as binding ethical mandates (for practice) have handled such issues?

Despite the aforementioned incidents being cases of extreme nature, they serve as a microcosm for the complex social challenges and responsibilities facing institutes of higher education. The importance of diversity, inclusivity, and social justice are articulated and codified in many university mission statements, yet micro-omissions of various student populations continue to taint the student experience and bring forth a rise in student activism. Furthermore, having spent over a decade working in both the public and private sectors of higher education, it is my belief that there is a unique need to consider how college presidents with a social work background and education understand the transformation that colleges and universities have undergone in an attempt to preserve social justice and human rights in the face of unprecedented challenges in areas of enrollment, fiscal sustainability, diversity and inclusion, curricula delivery, and technological proficiency. Social workers, while often confronting various bureaucratic, political, and economic pressures, have a civic responsibility to protect society, particularly vulnerable and oppressed populations (National Association of Social Workers, 2017). Utilizing the theoretical constructs of role theory and transformational leadership as a lens, this study will explore the extent to which college and university presidents with an advanced degree in social work perceive their skill sets and abilities to navigate the aforementioned challenges confronting higher education as well as lead university-wide agendas in the execution of social justice initiatives.

Lastly, a large body of literature as well as almost daily current events showcase many of the pitfalls of assuming a college presidency–the hurdles of bureaucracy, loss of

privacy, surmounting internal and external pressures, responsibilities to an overwhelming number of parties, and having what is perceived to be an abundance of power; yet so little ability to accomplish much of anything (Lemons, 2015; Kauffman, 1982). Social workers often face similar dilemmas, including bureaucratic obstacles, problems of space when privacy is necessary, inadequate resources coupled with higher demand for services. In addition, there is a perception by clients that social workers have enormous power. Given these extraordinary pressures, one wonders what motivates those who choose professions with such stressors. Pay scale aside, given the similarity of challenges, the literature suggests that many social workers view their role as a calling, not just a career (Billups, 2002; Lieberman & Nelson, 2013; Costin, 1983). Motivation for choosing social work as a profession is unlike many other professions (Haynes & Mickelson, 2006; D'Aprix A. S., Dunlap, Abel, & Edwards, 2004), in that aspiring social workers not only want to address the needs of others, but also are driven by a strong desire to carry out their work in the service of others (Bowie & Hancock, 2000; Lieberman & Nelson, 2013). Institutions of higher education, more than ever, are grappling with multi-dimensional issues of service. Essentially, colleges and universities have become extraordinarily complex human service organizations that have moved beyond the tenets of teaching and learning. Within this context, this study aims to advance the social work profession's contributions to organizational and educational leadership. In an era of post-secondary educational uncertainty, where the aspiration to become a college president is dwindling, maybe it is time for social workers to respond to the call with greater frequency.

Research Questions

This research study aims to understand the experiences, perceptions, and leadership dynamics of college and university presidents that hold advanced degrees in social work. The following research questions will serve as a framework for conducting this study.

1) What has been the experience of holding the position of college/university president, for those with advanced degrees in social work?
2) How do you feel (if at all) the profession of social work's core values and ethics inform the governance and leadership of institutions of higher education for presidents holding advanced degrees in social work?
3) Why do so few social workers pursue college and university presidencies?

Definition of Important Terms

For the purposes of this study, the following definitions will be used:

1) College President – Refers to the chief executive officer of an institute of higher education.
2) Chancellor – Known as the leader of a college campus that is part of a larger university system. For the purposes of this study, the term chancellor will be used interchangeably with the term *President*.
3) Advanced Degree in Social Work – Exceeding the undergraduate bachelor in social work degree, this term refers to individuals that have achieved one of the following academic degrees: Master in Social Work (MSW), Master of Science in Social Work (MSSW), Artium Magister (AM), Master of Social Service (MSS),

Doctorate of Philosophy in Social Work or Social Welfare (PhD), or a Doctorate in Social Work (DSW).

4) Social Work College or University President – An individual with an advanced degree in social work currently assuming, or who has previously assumed the role of a college or university president.
5) *NASW Code of Ethics* – a published set of core values and ethical principles that were established by the National Association of Social Workers to guide the professional conduct and ethical practices of social workers.
6) Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards (EPAS) – Developed by the Council on Social Work Education, the EPAS provides a competency-based framework for accredited schools of social work to implement and assess curricular modalities that integrate knowledge, values, and skills required for social work practice.

Limitations

Limitations are defined as areas that the audience must read cautiously as they are those aspects of a study around which the researcher has little to no control of in the process of an inquiry (Simon, 2011). There are at least three limitations of this research study:

1) Identifying a sufficient sample size for this unique population is likely to be challenging due to the unique characteristics of the targeted participants. Although this may appear to be a limitation, it is more of a delimitation, in that the goal of qualitative research is not to generalize, but rather to gain a deeper appreciation of a unique phenomenon for which we know little about. The

researcher deliberately chose to speak with as many college presidents holding an advanced degree in social work as were available to learn as much as possible, hence this is more of a parameter set around the sample than it is a limitation of the study. Since this is not something that has been studied previously, the goal is to focus on depth rather than breadth.

2) Participants are geographically dispersed. As a result, data collection for this qualitative research study primarily consisted of telephone and video interviews. For this reason, the method of data collection precluded observation of nonverbal aspects of expressive language (queues, body language, distractions, etc.). Since interviews were recorded, I was able to notice verbal gestures, such as long silences, sighs, laughter, and animation in one's voice. All gesticulations of this nature were noted in memos, as it was important to be aware of themes that may engage certain respondents more than others.
3) Participants, particularly current social work presidents, have limited availability in terms of scheduling. As a result, member checking and follow-up presented as a challenge.

Delimitations

Delimitations, according to Simon (2011), bound the scope of a study. The researcher assumes control of these variables and clarifies their use. There are at least three delimitations of this study:

1) This study does not discuss the accomplishments or effectiveness of current or former social work presidents.

2) Institutions of higher education differ in scope. As a result, participants of this study are only drawn from regionally accredited 4-year college and university settings, including public degree granting institutions, private degree granting institutions, Historically Black Colleges and Universities, and Faith-based institutions. For the purposes of this study, community college participants were excluded.
3) This study does not compare or contrast this particular grouping of college and university presidents to another such population (i.e. business, law, higher education administration, etc.).

Summary

The fundamental mission of the social work profession is to create and enhance social change that promotes the well-being of all peoples (National Association of Social Workers, 2017). Similarly, the development and sustainment of a healthy society have traditionally been attributed to higher education and the dynamic roles of its collegiate institutions (The Aspen Institute, 2017). The ethical principles that guide these two sectors are interconnected. Whereas values such as service, social justice, dignity and worth of the person, and integrity are instilled traits of the profession and ultimately a social worker's responsibility to client populations (National Association of Social Workers, 2017); many of these same principles serve to guide the strategic agendas of colleges and universities. Yet, these same institutions struggle to balance preserving social justice with the external threats to their existence. Social workers are uniquely trained to create such a balance in organizations; yet, only a handful of social workers

have moved into the role of college or university president despite having such a tangible skill set that equates to civic leadership.

This study is designed to understand the essence of the unique experiences of college and university presidents with advanced degrees in social work. Utilizing current and former presidents with advanced social work degrees, a phenomenological study was conducted to gain in-depth knowledge of their journey towards the presidency, as well as the lived experience during their tenure.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Empirical literature directly associated to social workers assuming roles as college or university presidents is non-existent at the time of this review. In 2013, Malai wrote an article for the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) monthly newsletter highlighting several social workers that have become college or university presidents. This editorial provided insight on the particular set of skills employed by social work professionals in their day-to-day functions as college or university presidents. Competencies such as advocacy, relationship building, crisis intervention, and empowerment were referenced in this piece. The sample of presidents interviewed for this article briefly highlighted the possible pathways towards a presidency for social workers that aspire to such a leadership role. This trajectory orchestrated a new career path for the profession. This article was the extent of the literature found for college and university presidents that hold advanced degrees in social work. Furthermore, this commentary's purpose served more as an accolade than an empirical study – acknowledging pioneers of the profession that have journeyed beyond the traditional context of social work to assume positions of leadership in institutions of higher education.

The aim of this literature review is to both describe the typical characteristics of a college president based on the most current research available; and to provide a contextual foundation for the research problem as well as set the stage for inquiry. In addition, career pathways towards this position of executive leadership are examined. Providing an overview of the role of college presidents and the contemporary challenges

that these leaders confront inform the need for the present research. This review will also highlight principles of leadership – including attributes and theoretical approaches, ascribed to college presidents, as well as social workers. The section will conclude with a discussion related to the intersectionality between social work and higher education.

The Modern Day College Presidency

> *In the eyes of the public he is responsible for everything about the place, good or bad. The institution is his – the faculty, the grounds and buildings, the football team – and he is held responsible for it. On the campus, his is the responsibility for the food in the dining halls, for the level of salaries, for the elegance of commencement occasions. The spotlight of publicity plays upon him so continuously that it leaves him not even intermittent shadows within which he and his family may make an unmarked move.*
>
> *Harold W. Stoke (1903 – 1982) Former President of Queens College, New York City (1959)*

The American Council on Education's Center for Leadership Development started collecting data profiling sitting college presidents over three decades ago (Green, 1988). Subsequently, reports have become more detailed, providing in-depth information beyond demographic characteristics. Current data also includes role expectations and perceived levels of preparedness for active presidents. The most recent literature includes several national studies - published by the Aspen Institute (2017), Selingo, Chheng, and Clark of the Deloitte Center for Higher Education Excellence in conjunction with Georgia Tech's Center for 21st Century Universities (2017), Song and Hartley III on behalf of the Council of Independent Colleges (2012), and the American Council on Education (2017). Utilizing various research methodologies including surveys and interviews, this collective body of literature provides a consistent typology of the modern day president.

Demographics. The profile of the American college president has historically been that of Caucasian males with doctoral degrees, in their late 50's or early 60's, typically married with children (Gagliardi, Espinosa, Turk, & Taylor, 2017; Bourgeois, 2016). A recent survey by the American Council on Education (2017) continues to support this profile as 83% of college presidents are reportedly white; 70% of surveyed presidents were males; and 58% were reportedly over the age of 60. Although there has been a slight increase over the past 5 years, women continue to be underrepresented in the national higher education presidency – making up 30% of all sitting college presidents (Gagliardi, Espinosa, Turk, & Taylor, 2017). Organizational leadership amongst minority candidates, having increased from 13% in 2011 to 17% in 2016, is also relatively low in comparison to their white counterparts (Gagliardi, Espinosa, Turk, & Taylor, 2017). In terms of educational background, approximately 79% of sitting college presidents hold a doctorate degree (Gagliardi, Espinosa, Turk, & Taylor, 2017). Song and Hartley III (2012) found that the academic disciplines that support their training predominately tend to be in the areas of education, social sciences, and humanities, as well as science, technology, engineering, and math. The preference among governing trustees to hire leaders with considerable experience to manage increasing organizational complexities has resulted in 54% of current presidents having previously assumed the same role at prior institutions (Cook, 2012). The typical tenure of a college president is 7 years, which has decreased from 8.5 years a decade ago (Song & Hartley III, 2012; Selingo, Chheng, & Clark, 2017).

Career Pathways Towards the Presidency. The majority of college presidents spend their entire careers in higher education (Cook, 2012). Those who assume the role

of Chief Academic Officer (CAO), also termed the *provost,* are, often, considered to be on the most traditional path towards a college presidency (Selingo, Chheng, & Clark, 2017; Song & Hartley III, 2012; Wessel & Keim, 1994). Approximately 43% of all sitting presidents have held the position of provost prior to moving into the presidency (Gagliardi, Espinosa, Turk, & Taylor, 2017). Gender does seem to play a role in the career trajectory toward becoming a college president, notably, women (82%) are more likely than men (57%) to become a college president after serving in the capacity of a provost; whereas men (43%) are more likely than women (18%) to hold deanships before directly moving into the presidency (Selingo, Chheng, & Clark, 2017).

Interestingly, although entrenched as the dominant paradigm, two factors impacting the provost's role has begun to lend itself to the increasingly varied pathways towards the college presidency. Hartley and Godin (2009) and the Aspen Institute (2017) have noted that the increasing demands and responsibilities of the presidency have made the role less desirable for provosts. Additionally, Selingo, Chheng, and Clark (2017) identify a shift in the role of the provost in order to diversify efforts that seemingly complement the role of the president as opposed to replicating it. In essence, provosts are increasingly focused on the student experience, which allows presidents to place more attention on external relations. This shift in role raises concern about adequate preparation among provosts for elevation into a presidency (Selingo, Chheng, & Clark, 2017). As a result, academic deans as well as senior-level administrators (Song & Hartley III, 2012), are now bypassing tradition and moving directly into presidencies - most notably at small and mid-sized institutions (Selingo, Chheng, & Clark, 2017). Furthermore, individuals that previously assumed positions outside of higher education in

private sectors of profit and non-profit organizations are filling an increasing number of presidencies (Cook, 2012) – although this trend may have subsided in recent years. According to the American Council on Education (2017), approximately 15% of new college presidents were hired outside of higher education in 2016, as compared to 20% in 2011.

The Role of a University President. The past century has borne witness to several shifts in the roles and functions of college and university presidents. A large literature exists that substantiates increasing complexities among institutions of higher education - resulting in the emergence and evolution of the college presidency (Selingo, Chheng, & Clark, 2017; The Aspen Institute, 2017; Bourgeois, 2016; Cote, 1985; Cowley, 1980; Dodds, 1962; Flawn, 1990; Gross & Grambsch, 1974). Historically, as colleges and universities morphed organizationally and demographically, so did the preferred characteristics of leaders selected to govern these institutions. The literature also suggests that expansion and transformation within colleges and universities has caused increasing confusion and ambiguity surrounding the role of the presidency (Cohen & March, 1974; Cote, 1985; Kauffman, 1982; Fisher, 1984).

Whereas the nineteenth century brought forth organizational leaders more aligned to sharing ministerial duties with teaching responsibilities (Dodds, 1962), the early twentieth century saw the role of the college presidency transform into a profession requiring in-depth administrative and managerial abilities (Flawn, 1990). Beginning with the post-World War II economic expansion, colleges and universities began to exhibit unprecedented growth in enrollment (Cook, 1997). Heightened societal expectations with this surge in attendance collectively reigned in a new era of development resulting in

the need for industrial leaders that specifically focused on expansion (Kauffman, 1982). Through the late 20th century and into the 21st century, institutions of higher education became complex entities. Economically, colleges and universities accrued significant operational expenses-largely due to organizational growth. College presidents were perceived as individuals who needed substantial business acumen to adhere to various fiscal challenges. However, there was a concurrent phenomenon occurring on college and university campuses involving increasing student activism and protests surrounding issues of human rights and social justice. Growing public attention, beginning with the civil rights movement, required college presidents to actively incorporate different skill sets into their work, involving a shift in role-traits from authoritative to resolution-oriented (Cohen & March, 1974). Even now, in the 21st century, the role of the college president continues to evolve amidst newer challenges, such as the implementation of technology, social unrest, issues related to immigration and many more (Selingo, Chheng, & Clark, 2017; The Aspen Institute, 2017). As a result, the college president is now required to become a multi-disciplinarian (The Aspen Institute, 2017).

The rapid evolution that has taken hold of the college presidency has long since created ambiguity in the role (Cote, 1985). In periods leading into the late 20th century, organizational management and educational leadership served as the two principal functions of the presidency. Bornstein (2005) postulates that an ideological imbalance in the role exists between academic leadership and fostering University-Community relationships for the purposes of leveraging important resources. This is consistent with the disparity in perceptions regarding institutional leadership between long-tenured presidents (>15 years) and those that are newer in the role (<10 years) (The Aspen

Institute, 2017). The former group believes that financial and operational acumen serve as the most important function of their role followed by collaboration and academic leadership; whereas the newer generation of presidents subscribe to the notion that collaboration is primary followed by academic leadership and financial and operational acumen (Selingo, Chheng, & Clark, 2017). College presidents surveyed in three recent studies (The Aspen Institute, 2017; Selingo, Chheng, & Clark, 2017; Song & Hartley III, 2012) revealed that among the many layers of responsibility – fundraising, strategic planning, enrollment management, trustee relations, and budgeting were the most important aspects of the position. These intricacies have yielded fewer individuals prepared to assume the presidency (Selingo, Chheng, & Clark, 2017). In their survey of presidents (N=165), Selingo, Chheng, and Clark (2017) found that respondents felt least prepared for fundraising, trustee relations, enrollment management, student affairs, athletics, and federal and state government relations–all of which represent key areas in this leadership role.

Among those presidents surveyed by the Aspen Institute (2017), the areas highlighted for improvement in preparation for the college presidency included familiarity with institutional decision-making processes; acclimation to the culture and climate of the institution; developing a data driven strategic agenda; understanding the evolving factors (political, economic, sociological, technological, demographic) that impact the national landscape; and engaging in the community.

In summary, the functions of the college president often seem monumental and, at times, lack clarity. The literature of surveyed presidents illustrates an overabundance of responsibilities. Additionally, recommendations to manage these tasks have been cited

for future candidates. Although the pathways to the presidency have been progressing, diversity within the demographic shifts of the role have been relatively stagnant. In terms of preparation, there is no favored academic discipline (Moore, Salimbene, Marlier, & Bragg, 1983) or *"discrete body of knowledge"* (Bornstein, 2005, p. 2) that can truly prepare one for the presidency role. Priests, educators, lawyers, doctors, and business executives are among the professions that have garnered the college presidency (Bornstein, 2005). Despite the uncertainties that exist within the roles and functions of the modern-day college president, leadership, decision-making, and governance are relative inevitabilities (Cohen & March, 1974).

Seemingly, success in this role requires: vision, imagination, the ability to think broadly, and to act decisively (Selingo, Chheng, & Clark, 2017). The individual needs to be inclusive and creative while acknowledging abundant untapped resources (The Aspen Institute, 2017). They must think "outside of the box" in order to embrace the multifaceted needs of the communities. Finally, presidential candidates must forge a partnership with the institution rather than simply thinking in terms of the specificity of the job description itself. The next section will discuss various tenets of leadership commonly associated with social work and the college presidency.

Principles of Leadership

Leadership serves as a central construct of this study. Equally critical is the perceived preparedness of social work professionals to meet the challenges of assuming the role of a college or university president**.** Whereas the previous section discussed the roles associated with a college presidency, this section delineates qualities and traits of effective leadership.

The definition of leadership continues to remain equivocal. As a concept, leadership has been the featured premise of a vast body of literature (Birnbaum, 1987; Cohen & March, 1974; Fisher & Tack, 1988; Garrow & Hasenfeld, 2010; Northouse, 2013; Breshears & Volker, 2013; Burns, 1978; Brilliant, 1986). Northouse (2013) defines leadership as "a process whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal" (p.5). In his 1978 book entitled *Leadership*, Burns describes this premise as the ability to persuade followers to act in accordance with a certain set of mutual motives and values. Leadership is commonly examined through the context of innate or learned traits; the multitude of dynamics that exist between leaders and followers; and specific actions and skills that help inform situational decision-making. The literature is replete with models, traits, and attributes commonly associated with leadership.

Trait theories identify specific attributes that promote one's ability for successful leadership. Early trait theorists acknowledged attributes such as initiative, intelligence, insight, self-confidence, influence (Stogdill, 1948, 1974), masculinity and dominance (Lord, Devader, & Alliger, 1986) and cognitive ability and drive (Kirkpatrick & Locke, 1991). More recently, Zaccaro, Kemp, and Bader (2004) identified qualities such as social and emotional intelligence as correlates of trait theory.

Acknowledging the existence of power and authority is essential to understanding the basis of leadership. The level toward which power is exercised reveals the extent of influence on the dyadic relationship between leaders and followers (Birnbaum, 1987). The concept of *position power* derives from a particular organizational rank and stature; and is often the source of authoritative, reciprocal, and reinforcing levels of control

(Northouse, 2013). Various behaviors and traits such as reverence, knowledge, and charisma make up the notion of *personal power*; and can serve as influential proponents within the relationship between leaders and followers (Northouse, 2013).

Whereas traits and power represent natural derivatives of leadership, skill to accomplish a set of goals is also essential in examining one's ability to lead. Katz (1955) identified three essential arenas in which skills are demonstrated in effective leadership: technical, human, and conceptual. Technical skills focus on analytical and applied competencies within a specialized area (Northouse, 2013). Human skill implies the capacity to adapt to particular environments while demonstrating the ability to work with people. Conceptual skill requires aptitude in creating a shared vision and strategic agenda for the organization. Operationally, technical skills do not merit significant attention among the daily routine of executive leaders, as subordinates are key to competently assuming such responsibilities. The latter two concepts, however, are viewed as significant processes that require constant assessment and evaluation among executive leaders (Katz, 1955). Katz's (1955) conceptualization of competency-based skill sets served as the framework for the leadership model developed by Mumford et al. (2000). This skill-based conceptualization of leadership explored the correlation between skills and performance within the context of various leadership approaches (Mumford, Zaccaro, Harding, Jacobs, & Fleishman, 2000).

There is a long history of varying approaches to organizational leadership (Iachini, Cross, & Freedman, 2015). The investigation of these methodologies date as far back as antiquity and continues to evolve into an organizational science (Yammarino, 2013). The past few decades have given rise to two important theoretical frameworks:

transformational and transactional leadership (Bass & Avolio, 1993; Judge & Piccolo, 2004; Bass, 1985; Kezar & Eckel, 2008). The following sections will focus principally on the tenets of these two leadership approaches.

Transformational Leadership

Burns (1978) introduced transformational leadership as a process in which a recognized leader puts aside the notion of authority to engage and motivate others (followers) to collectively achieve a common goal. Burns' (1978) fundamental premise was later enhanced by Bass (1985) who identified a series of important characteristics as part of the construct of transformative leadership. Bass and Avolio (1993) postulate that the characteristics of charisma, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration, each of which are discussed below, are associated to the interactive relations of followers and leaders. Charismatic role modeling seeks to connect leaders and followers on an emotional level (Judge & Piccolo, 2004). Traits such as initiative and persistence (Stogdill, 1948) as well as conviction (Judge & Piccolo, 2004) are essential to charismatic leadership. Inspirational motivation is associated with optimism, goal attainment, and shared vision (Northouse, 2013). In promoting the process of shared decision-making (Northouse, 2013), intellectual stimulation inspires creativity and innovation among followers to challenge assumptions and take risks (Breshears & Volker, 2013; Judge & Piccolo, 2004). Lastly, individualized consideration represents the provision of a supportive, growth-seeking environment that allows followers to maximize their potential for self-invested long-term needs, as well as the immediate needs of the organization (Gardiner, 2006).

Transformational leadership promotes a culture of purpose and mutuality as well as a feeling of acceptance and value among organizational leaders and followers (Bass & Avolio, 1993). Bass (1985) posits that transformational leaders seek to understand organizational priorities prior to posing a realignment of values, and a shift in assumptions, and goals. By positively effecting employee performance, Bass and Avolio (1994) hypothesized that transformational leadership can significantly influence or reshape organizational cultures that are unstable or in transition. Basham (2012) postulates that transformational leaders are able to apply their leadership skills broadly and across disciplines within the context of their organizational environments.

Transactional Leadership

Transactional and transformational leadership, are commonly discussed together in the literature to highlight the differences in their philosophical underpinnings. (Bass, 1987, 1997; Bass & Avolio, 1993; Gardiner, 2006; Judge & Piccolo, 2004; Iachini, Cross, & Freedman, 2015). Transactional leadership is forged on the basis of reciprocity (Breshears & Volker, 2013); and may be more of a commonplace in organizational governance than transformational leadership (Burns, 1978). This approach represents a rigid, hierarchical format that is grounded on the premises of positive and negative reinforcement (Judge & Piccolo, 2004). Correlates of transactional leadership are reward contingencies, active management, and passive management (Hater & Bass, 1988). Gardiner (2006) stipulates that relationships within this model are unilateral in which roles are predetermined. Followers do not influence outcomes nor do they have authority to participate in the decision making process (Gardiner, 2006). Basham (2012) posits that despite expertise in a particular field, transactional leaders lack foresight to recognize

when organizational change is needed. Whereas Burns (1978) believed that transactional and transformational leadership represent opposite ends of a singular spectrum, Bass (1985) recognizes these two approaches as separate concepts but argued that effective leaders utilize both models.

The Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) introduced by Bass in 1985 and revised into the MLQ Form 5X by Avolio, Bass, and Jung (1995) is the most commonly cited instrument for measuring transformational and transactional leadership (Barrows, 2016). The MLQ 5X, a 45-item instrument, has been found to be both a reliable and valid tool for measuring the dimensions of transformational *(idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration)* as well as transactional leadership *(contingent reward, management-by-exception (active) and management-by-exception (passive)* (Gellis, 2001; Tafvelin, Hyvonen, & Westerberg, 2014). In the discussion that follows, the constructs of both transformational and transactional leadership will be applied to the role of the college president.

Constructs of Leadership for College Presidents

In a conversation with Clark Kerr (1911-2003), former president of the University of California Berkeley, Fischer (1984) indicated that the greatest challenge confronting higher education is leadership. With a large wave of impending retirements expected in the next decade (The Aspen Institute, 2017), college and university trustees are expected to encounter numerous challenges in their efforts to hire suitable successors. Lending further support to this notion is the fact that the position, having never been one of glamour (Fisher & Tack, 1988; Kauffman, 1982), is even less of an attraction due to

constraining social and economic factors. For those who assume the position, success or failure of a presidency is often defined through the context of leadership.

College presidencies are situationally prescribed leadership roles within the context of institutional need. Cohen and March's, *Leadership and Ambiguity* (1974) describes several metaphors that equate to the president's leadership role on campus. Conceptually, college presidents are generally accustomed to navigating competitive markets, administration, collective bargaining, democracy, consensus, anarchy, independent judiciary, and autocracy; and as a result are required to model the disposition of an entrepreneur, manager, politician, mediator, chairman, catalyst, judge, and philosopher (Cohen & March, 1974). Kaufmann (1982) later added to this notion by equating the college presidency to that of a mayor, business executive, and crisis manager.

This intricate array of roles and competencies includes the essential framework for a college president's leadership, which is twofold: education and management (Dodds, 1962). Historically, the most basic purpose of leadership in higher education was to ensure the production of a broad intellectual society. With this premise seemingly accomplished, questions of leadership must now shift to ethical issues facing the moral values of American democracy (Butler, 1976). The myriad of complexities facing modern day colleges and universities extend beyond education - requiring leadership to traverse a range of issues including negotiating tuition costs and providing competitive salaries to faculty, staff, and administration. Additionally, college and university presidents are also responsible for promoting access and opportunity that is inclusive of diverse groups, which include students of varied backgrounds, particularly those who

have been systematically excluded from educational opportunities due to various disadvantages in life. Furthermore, presidents are often charged with creating meaningful partnerships with important groups, stakeholders, and community-based organizations, while seeking opportunities to provide civic engagement for students and residents alike.

The leadership attributes associated with college presidents, such as authority (Fisher, 1984), conviction, (Flawn, 1990), guidance and unification (Dodds, 1962), and charisma (Bastedo, Samuels, & Kleinman, 2014) has been well-documented. In a study sponsored by the National Center for Postsecondary Governance and Finance, Birnbaum (1987) surveyed a purposive sample of 32 college presidents from varying institutions regarding their perception of leadership. Participants overwhelmingly identified leadership in terms of roles and behaviors. Although the study did not bring forth a consensus regarding the definition of leadership, surveyed presidents indicated that forging positive relationships and the execution of a transparent, conforming vision were critical to good governance (Birnbaum, 1987). Another emergent factor among a segment of this sample was the belief that leadership was a group phenomenon as opposed to an individual attribute, particularly when identifying goals (Birnbaum, 1987).

Cohen and March (1974) conducted a study of college presidents (n=38) to analyze distribution of authority. Longer-tenured presidents viewed their governance as mediating – assuming an advisory position among subordinates. Shorter tenured presidents adopted a position of authority and chose to take a formal approach with subordinates. The authors cited the small sample size as the reason for the inability to produce any relevant conclusions (Cohen & March, 1974).

In a review of the literature, Birnbaum (1987) found that studies of leader attributes in higher education are infrequently interpreted through the lens of organizational leadership. However, this is substituted by extensive commentary regarding leadership approaches required for successful college presidents (Fisher & Tack, 1988; Stoeckel & Davies, 2007). Whether college presidents employ a charismatic approach (transformational), rigid operationalization (transactional) (Neumann & Bensimon, 1990), or a combination of both - their success is largely contingent on their structural relationships with a variety of groups, including faculty, stakeholders (i.e. funders, community leaders, agencies), alumni, students, and governing trustees as well as the bureaucratic policies that govern the institution.

In a study of transformational leadership characteristics, Basham (2012) conducted a study of college presidents to determine whether adopting this leadership approach is significant to developing strategic agendas aimed at changing the learning environment and enhancing the benefits to stakeholders. Selecting from a random sample of 300 college and university presidents, the researcher utilized a Delphi method to identify and prioritize issues of decision-making and management. Despite a low response rate of 17%, university presidents acknowledged the necessity of possessing the technical, human, and conceptual traits identified in Katz's skills-based model (1955) in order to create a transformational environment. Additionally, participants indicated that the attribute of authenticity is essential to transformational leadership, as it requires a consistent aligning of one's actions with deeply felt values and beliefs. Furthermore, participants identified the importance of developing and providing a concise vision for the institution that is representative of all organizational constituents. Lastly,

transformational leadership was identified as essential to ensure required change at colleges and universities where resistance to change is a variable amongst history and tradition of an institution, tenured faculty and staff, campus climate, and culture.

Donnelly (1995) conducted a qualitative study of long-term college presidents to understand how leadership styles help position higher education institutions for success. Four presidents, each with an average tenure of 15 years, were selected to participate in semi-structured, open-ended interviews. The sample was representative of presidents (2) from private four-year liberal arts colleges and presidents (2) of public two-year colleges. In conjunction with these participants, the researcher also interviewed senior staff, faculty, trustees, and members of the presidential hiring committee of each institution. Referencing Kerr (1984), the researcher postulated that presidents with short tenure focused primarily on short-ranged issues. Donnelly (1995) suggested that longer-tenured presidents adopt a vision of a consistently evolving institution to enhance the operations of the larger organizational system. The presidents selected for this study have seen their universities surpass many of the dense challenges threatening similar institutes of higher education (i.e. enrollment, antiquated facilities, defunct academic programs, and financial constraint). Several themes emerged within the research that were indicative of the shared success of these college presidents. Central themes for each president's approach to leadership consisted of shared governance and adaptability to the institutional mission; increased focus on community-based collective impact and support; academic accountability aimed at increasing retention, enhancing curriculum, developing faculty; and maintaining the institution's physical plant to include state-of-the-art facilities and pristine landscaping. Referencing these themes to summarize research findings,

Donnelly (1995) noted the ability of each president to confidently instill an organizational vision that created impetus and vigor among university constituents. Each president recognized the need to mobilize external communities to create mutual beneficence; and that teaching and learning *as a culture* must constantly evolve in order to remain relevant in competitive markets. Lastly, each president vested significant resources in the physical plant and landscape of the institution, as this exuded immense pride among constituents and created an environment conducive to accomplishing the aforementioned themes of this research study.

A small body of literature dissecting particular aspects of a college president's perceived role within the context of variable leadership approaches has emerged over the past decade (Bastedo, Samuels, & Kleinman, 2014; Kezar & Eckel, 2008; Barrows, 2016). Kezar and Eckel (2008) explored how college presidents utilize transactional and transformational leadership to advance college-wide diversity agendas. In a study sample of Christian college presidents, Barrows (2016) examined the relationship between transformational leadership and fundraising endeavors. Charisma, a significant attribute of transformational leaders, has been studied among a sample of college presidents to determine its influence for advancing alumni donations and increasing enrollment (Bastedo, Samuels, & Kleinman, 2014). To a lesser extent, leadership within the context of establishing community-based partnerships involving institutes of higher education have also been explored through the lens of transformational leadership (Butcher, Bezzina, & Moran, 2011).

To understand presidential leadership approaches for advancing college-wide diversity and inclusion, Kezar and Eckel (2008) conducted a qualitative study for which

participants alluded to adopting both transformational and transactional styles of governance. Conducting elite interviews with 27 experienced leaders - representing different institutional types (public, private, urban, HBCU, etc.), the researchers explored the specific roles presidents play in advancing diversity agendas. An examination of transformational and transactional leadership styles and approaches emerged through inductive coding. Deductive coding was utilized to explore the commonly associated attributes of transformational leadership (intellectual stimulation, individual consideration, motivation, and idealized influence) and transactional leadership (reward contingencies, accountability, and evaluation) and how these concepts contributed to advancing institutional diversity agendas. Participants cited the importance of initially adopting leadership approaches that were consistent with the culture of the institution. Transformational leadership was essential, particularly within the early and middle phases of executing the institutional diversity agenda. However, if the campus culture was predominantly transactional, presidents understood the importance of slowly introducing transformational leadership in an effort to reform the diversity agenda. This further supports Nichols (2004) assumption that leadership on college campuses should be reflective of the environment. According to Kezar and Eckel (2008), participants referenced many ideologies of transformational leadership during the interview process including: being reflective of their own values when engaging in campus dialogues; creating a shared vision that is bound to the university mission; establishing broader ownership of diversity issues; engaging various student groups; and role modeling their own commitment towards diversity. Interestingly, Kezar and Eckel (2008) noted that presidents of color were reluctant to use transformational leadership approaches for fear

that white stakeholders may perceive this approach as one of personal agenda or self-interest. In accordance with this notion, presidents featured in this study understood the need to utilize transactional leadership approaches when appropriating budget, establishing accountability, leveraging resources among community partners, and rewarding sectors of the university that achieve diversity benchmarks. In conclusion, the researchers found that participants subscribed to utilizing both, transformational and transactional styles of leadership when advancing the institutional diversity agenda. However, leadership often emerged within the context of organizational culture, climate, and the developmental phase of the agenda.

To further understand how transformational leadership impacts fundraising initiatives, Barrows (2016) sampled college presidents as well as executive-level administrators of Christian colleges and universities (n=220 / 9% response rate). Utilizing the MLQ 5X to test his hypotheses, the researcher concluded that there were no statistically significant differences in leadership style as measured through fundraising success. However, individualized consideration, which is commonly associated with transformational leadership, was shown to have a positive correlation on fundraising success. Consequently, attributes of transformational leadership – namely individualized influence and inspirational motivation were revealed to have a negative effect on fundraising endeavors. Lastly, the researcher found no statistical correlation associated between the length of tenure of college presidents and impact on fundraising success. Barrows (2016) noted that the poor response rate significantly impacted any discernable data associating the impact of leadership style on fundraising success.

Bastedo, Samuels, and Kleinman (2014) found a positive relationship between charismatic college and university presidents (n=86) and the number of enrollment applications and financial contributions received by these respective institutions. Particular attention was given to leaders of religiously affiliated institutions (n=43/86). As an attribute of transformational leadership, Charisma's (Bass & Avolio, 1993) impact on institutional effectiveness has been debated in industrial and corporate literature (Tosi, Misangyi, Fanelli, Waldman, & Yammarino, 2004; Khurana, 2004). The researchers postulate that charismatic leadership, particularly within religiously affiliated colleges and universities, contributes to enhancing organizational identity and thus increasing stakeholder contributions. Secondly, the utilization of this trait often serves to assemble students around a common institutional mission, which has the potential to increase applications for enrollment. Adopting a series of questions (12) from the MLQ 5X as well as analyzing and rating video recordings of participant commencement, convocation, and inaugural speeches, the researchers isolated and studied the independent variable of charismatic leadership in relation to 3 dependent variables: enrollment applications, financial donations, and organizational performance. Overall this study illustrated that presidents of religious institutions had higher charisma scores than participants of private colleges and universities. Increased applicant pools were also shown to have a positive relationship with charismatic leadership among presidents of religious institutions; whereas presidents of secular private colleges and universities experienced a negative correlation associated with these variables. Traits of charismatic leadership among study participants was also positively associated with increased financial donations to their respective colleges, as illustrated in analyzing contributions received over the

participant's subsequent tenure. In terms of organization performance and charismatic leadership, there was insignificant evidence demonstrating proof of any causal relationship between these two variables.

Constructs of Leadership for Social Workers

Brilliant (1986) deemed leadership to be an omitted element in social work education and training. Shortly after this proclamation, the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) emphasized the need for leadership development as part of its strategic plan (Holosko, 2009). Yet, the inability to incorporate comprehensive leadership training within social work curriculum remains prevalent (Brilliant, 1986; Rank & Hutchison, 2000). The encompassing terminology of leadership is not new to the profession. Holosko (2009), Greenwood (1957), Iachini et al. (2015), Rank and Hutchinson (2000), and Lieberman and Nelson (2013) have all referenced several pioneers of social work such as Jane Addams, Mary Richmond, Julia Lathrop, Grace Abbott, and Paul Kellogg, whose stalwart leadership helped evolve the profession at the turn of the 20th century. However, the profession continues to identify with leaders of the past, rather than developing and promoting the contributions of modern day social workers (Stoesz, 1997). With human services organizations becoming increasingly complex, social work leadership has reached a critical point in its development. Interestingly, the concept of leadership accounts for very little within the professional literature of other occupations, namely medicine and law - largely because of the status and accolades these professions garner within society (Brilliant, 1986). Brilliant (1986) postulates that the prestige of these positions often avails these professionals to higher positions of leadership in various sectors for which social workers are also situated.

Although the literature addresses the need for leadership development within the context of social work curricula (Rank & Hutchison, 2000; Brilliant, 1986; Elpers & Westhuis, 2008), entrance into the profession binds social workers to a set of attributes and core values that are often associated with leadership (Holosko, 2009). Utilizing a content analysis of empirical and conceptual literature, Holosko (2009) cited the following core leadership attributes of the social work profession: 1) vision, 2) influencing others to act, 3) team work/collaboration, 4) problem-solving capacity, and 5) creating positive change. The author also discusses how social workers assimilate these traits in order to develop additional skills (i.e. management, using power and authority, communication, motivation and influence, etc.) that are frequently cited within the relevant literature on leadership.

Rank and Hutchison (2000) utilized a sample of social work leaders (n=150) to investigate the perception of leadership within relevant academic and practice arenas. The five emergent themes that appeared in their exploration to define leadership for the social work profession were as follows: 1) proactive response to anticipated problems, 2) values and ethics, 3) empowerment, 4) vision, and 5) communication. Further exploration (n=116) of how social work leadership differed from other professions revealed five additional themes: 1) commitment to the *NASW Code of Ethics*, 2) social workers utilization of systemic approaches, 3) the implementation of a participatory leadership style, 4) altruism, and 5) concern about the public image of the profession. When discussing the leadership skills required of social workers in the 21st century, nine derivatives emerged: 1) community development, 2) interpersonal, 3) analytic, 4) technological, 5) political, 6) constructing vision, 7) ethical reasoning, 8) risk taking, and

9) cultural competence. Lastly, when surveying participants about their perceived notion for the mission of social work in the 21st century, four commonalities surfaced: 1) political advocacy, 2) professional identity, 3) social reconstruction, and 4) vision.

A small body of literature regarding transformational leadership has emerged in reference to social work administrators and managers (Tafvelin, Hyvonen, & Westerberg, 2014; Gellis, 2001; Fisher, 2005, 2009; Mary, 2005). In a study examining leadership behaviors and organizational performance within social work practice, Gellis (2001) dissected transformational and transactional leadership traits among a sample of clinical practitioners (n=187) employed across five hospitals. Results of a cross-sectional survey revealed that attributes of transformational leadership were positively associated to social workers' task engagement, satisfactory relationship with supervisor, and perceived manager effectiveness. Surveys from this study also indicated that social work managers, who were viewed as transformational, had an innate ability to inspire and motivate a results-oriented environment (Gellis, 2001).

Tafvelin and colleagues (2014) conducted a study examining the impact of transformational leadership of social work managers who aimed to preserve organizational commitment and role continuity among subordinates. MLQ results among surveyed participants (n=158) strengthened the authors' hypothesis that transformational leadership is positively associated to role clarity and organizational commitment. Additionally, the study revealed a correlation between the concept of time and the effect of transformational leadership. In essence, the longevity of a working relationship imposes upon the efficacy that transformational leaders have on employees. Lastly, Tafvelin and associates (2014) aligned pertinent variables (vision, mentorship, and

development), cited by a sample of social work leaders in Rank and Hutchinson's (2000) study, to be compatible with results found in their study, which also allude to the four tenets of transformational leadership. They concluded that the profession and leadership approach are seemingly congruent.

In assessing social workers' perceptions of leadership style and effectiveness among relational supervisors and managers, Mary (2005) utilized the MLQ to survey a sample (n=835) of social workers affiliated with either the National Network for Social Work Managers or the Association of Community Organization and Social Administration (ACOSA). Despite the low response rate (21%), results indicated a positive association between transformational leadership qualities and worker outcomes associated with effectiveness, job satisfaction, and assertiveness. Results from this study were comparative to the research initiated by Gellis (2001), as it relates to the four dimensions of transformational leadership (Mary, 2005). Surveyed participants also equated successful leadership outcomes to democratized human service organizations (Mary, 2005), which theoretically comply with the framework of shared governance and mutuality ascribed to transformational leadership.

In a review of relevant theories related to motivation and leadership, Fisher (2009) acknowledges that despite the limited body of social work literature surrounding transformational leadership, an association exists between the tenets of this theoretical framework and the core values of the profession, particularly dignity and worth of individuals and empowerment. Furthermore, social work's systemic approach to evaluating organizational leadership aligns with the transformational principles of

measuring the efficacy of a leader in combination with the stability of the organization, as well as the needs of group members (Fisher, 2009).

Social Work's Ethical Mandate as a Construct of Leadership. Established by the NASW in 1960, the *Code of Ethics* lends governance, guiding principles, and professionalism to the multi-dynamic practices found within the social work profession. A social workers' practice is rooted and affirmed within the core values found within the *Code of Ethics*. The *Code of Ethics* has undergone several revisions since its inception (Brill, 2001). Yet, the premises found within the document's most recent rendition (2017) continue to reiterate the values and principles of ethical practice albeit for post-modern social work practice. The *Code of Ethics* also offers analogous standards that hold social workers accountable to the profession as well as to society. There is no differentiation in the ordinance of ethical responsibilities and standards of conduct between direct practitioners and administrators found within the social work profession.

Dolgoff, Harrington, and Loewenberg (2012) cite Kupperman's (1999, p. 3) definition of values as referring to traits "worth having or being." Introduced in the foundation year of the social work curriculum, these professional values are as follows: *service, social justice, dignity and worth of the person, importance of human relationships, integrity, and competence*. A challenging aspect of social work is to incorporate these values into practice behaviors, as a means of engaging in ethical decision-making. In this context, social workers often confuse the concepts of values and ethics. Although used interchangeably, values represent "what is good and desirable" whereas ethics stand for what is "right and correct" (Dolgoff, Harrington, & Loewenberg, 2012).

There is a small body of literature regarding ethical conduct for social work administrators, which primarily focuses on risk management (Barsky, 2015; Reamer, 2013), large systems management (Valutis & Rubin, 2016), supervision (Hyde, 2012) and navigating ethical dilemmas (Dolgoff, Harrington, & Loewenberg, 2012; Manning, 2003; Brill, 2001). As a framework for practice, the *NASW Code of Ethics* is commonly cited within the aforementioned literature. Pak, Cheung, and Tsui (2017) discuss value-based leadership for social services administrators as well as how these managers balance the profession's ethical code in conjunction with supervisory responsibilities. Over the course of analyzing 5 decades of text (1965-2014) associated with social services administration, the authors also evaluate how social work values features in the implementation and achievement of organizational goals. As it pertains to balancing social work ethics with managerial responsibilities, Pak and his associates (2017) found that several authors (Aldgate, et al., 2007; Austin, 2002; Coulshed, Mullender, Jones, & Thompson, 2006; Lohmann & Lohmann, 2002) referenced the *NASW Code of Ethics* importance among program managers, particularly when reinforcing operational accountability as well as quality assurance. Austin (2002), in particular, discusses the importance of applying the several prominent core values and ethical principles of the social work profession to an overarching concept coined 'managerial ethics'.

As illustrated in the literature, the context of value-based leadership among social work administrators has evolved from ethical decision-making to the moral principles associated with risk-management (Barsky, 2015; Reamer, 1998; Patti, 2009). Despite this evolving concept, the *NASW Code of Ethics* still serves as the primary entity that reinforces a social workers behavioral conduct when confronted with difficult decisions,

risk management, and ethical dilemmas (Lohmann & Lohmann, 2002). In this context, Smith (2001) discusses how the *Code of Ethics* instills confidence in social work administrators to navigate such issues as well as promote trust among colleagues and subordinates.

One of the major challenges confronting social work administrators is aligning the core values of the profession with the goals of the organization (Pak, Cheung, & Tsui, 2017). The literature acknowledges such challenges; but offers little to solve potential barriers impacting this alignment. In acknowledging administrative advocacy, multiple authors (Hardina, Middleton, Montana, & Simpson, 2007; Perlmutter & Crook, 2004) once again place the social workers' ethical mandate before that of organizational policy or bureaucracy, particularly in lieu of conflict with the ethical values and principles of the profession. In this instance, Gardner (2006) recognizes the need for social work administrators to assess and orient themselves to the existing culture that encapsulates an organization internally and externally. A thorough understanding of the sociopolitical climate of the organization assists the social work administrator in contextually understanding where their values can serve to support and transform the organization, particularly when advocating for social justice (Perlmutter & Crook, 2004).

Understanding College and University Mission Statements and Core Values. Unlike the mutually supporting relationship shared between *NASW's Code of Ethics* and the social work profession, no uniform body exists to establish and regulate the core values and mission statements of colleges and universities across the Nation - with the possible exception of faith-based institutions. The institutional autonomy predicating the development of mission statements largely revolves around the common applications of

teaching, research, and service (Seligsohn, 2015). In this context, colleges and universities also emphasize a commitment to global and community impact, as a further means to help frame the organizational mission statement.

Core values of an institution are derivatives of the college or university mission statement; and represent the method in which the institution executes its mission and vision. In the context of this research, this last segment is important for understanding how the core values of the social work profession align with the mission statements and underlying core values of institutes of higher education.

Intersectionality of Social Work and Higher Education

At the time of this research, no relevant literature existed on understanding the intersectionality between social work and higher education. However, integral associations between these two constructs often exist within multiple platforms. From an occupational standpoint, increases in enrollment coupled with the rise in severity of mental health issues and trauma exposure, particularly for younger adults, has seen an increased number of clinical social workers situate themselves within college counseling centers (Mowbray, et al., 2006; Boyraz, Granda, Baker, Tidwell, & Waits, 2015; Anders, Frazier, & Shallcross, 2012; Read, Ouimette, White, Colder, & Farrow, 2011). Further supporting this professional influx is the evolution of college counseling center modalities. In recent years, there has been an increasing need among counseling centers to recognize the importance of addressing the diverse needs of students through the utilization of a social justice framework that is inclusive of issues such as racism, sexism, and oppression (Smith, Baluch, Bernabei, Robohm, & Sheehy, 2003). Anecdotal evidence also suggests social workers continue to assume positions within other sectors

of student affairs departments. Despite the various avenues for occupation within higher education, this environment comprises of less than 1% (0.8%) of the total social work workforce (Salsberg, et al., 2017). This lack of occupational intersectionality between social work and higher education requires further exploration. However, the evolution of social work education within colleges and universities, the introduction of social work leadership academies, and the newly formatted grand challenges of social work may enhance this intersectionality over the course of the next decade. This latter initiative, introduced by the American Academy of Social Work and Social Welfare, will be elaborated on shortly.

Establishing Social Work Education within Higher Education Institutions. The social work profession's lineage within higher education institutions dates back over a century, beginning with existing affiliations between various training institutes and colleges and universities (Costin, 1983; Lieberman & Nelson, 2013; Wisner, 1958). Prominent examples of such affiliations include the New York School and Columbia University (1905), the Boston School of Social Worker's dual agreement with Harvard University and Simmons College (1904), and the St. Louis School of Philanthropy's association with University of Missouri (1907) (Leighninger, 2000). Several historians (Costin, 1983; Wright, 1954; Taylor, 1977; Kendall, 2002) credit Edith Abbott with citing the necessity to evolve social work education through the enhancement of curriculum (Wisner, 1958), the implementation of field work (Spitzer, et al., 2001), and the importance of differentiating courses in social work from those in other social science disciplines (Leighninger, 2000; Kendall, 2002). More importantly, Abbott advocated for

social work education teaching to move beyond undergraduate programming to that of graduate level training (Wisner, 1958; Leighninger, 2000).

The early twentieth century had also given rise to smaller professional organizations such as the American Association of Schools of Social Work (1919) and the National Association of Schools of Social Administration (1942) (Kendall, 2002). These two organizations represented systems with dissimilar expectations for organizational membership and accreditation protocol among training institutes and graduate schools (Kendall, 2002). As a result of each organizations inability to acquiesce on various policies and protocols, these organizations were disbarred from the educational accreditation process in favor of the National Council on Social Work Education (Leighninger, 2000). Established in 1946 for the purpose of researching and reporting on accreditation issues, the Council produced findings that favored the formation of one organizational body that assumes sole responsibility for the accreditation of social work education programs in the United States (Kendall, 2002). Following recommendations from this report, the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) was established in 1952.

The sociopolitical climate within the United States, shortly after the formation of CSWE, factored into the expansion of social work programs as well as the evolution of social work education. During the 1960's, allocations to support social services were increasing - beginning with John F. Kennedy's presidency and then more so by Lyndon B. Johnson's administration. These appropriations resulted in a need for more frontline social workers to deliver varying direct services, which prompted human services organizations to utilize the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964 to begin recruiting

inexperienced individuals from marginalized communities to become social work assistants (Vigilante, 1974). This particular premise was not supported by CSWE's executive director, Katherine Kendall (1910-2010), whose vision was to maintain professional standards for social work (Armour, 2002). Kendall's position supports Wenocur and Reisch's (1989) premise that the profession was committed to developing, regulating, and legitimizing its place in the social welfare market economy. In responding to the recruitment of social work assistants, the profession's major organizations (CSWE and NASW) mobilized efforts to professionalize the contributions of social workers through a series of proposals including the recognition of the undergraduate social work degree, as a means to prepare students for entry-level social welfare practice (Stuart, Leighninger, & Donahoe, 1993). This prompted CSWE to commission the accreditation of baccalaureate social work programs beginning in 1970 (Gibbs, 1995), which led to the first BSW programs becoming accredited in January of 1974 (Stuart, Leighninger, & Donahoe, 1993). In some respects, this triggered an Amendment to Title VII of the Social Security Act (section 707) in 1968, which created an economic stimulus to further develop, improve, and expand undergraduate and graduate social work programs (Social Security Act, 2018). This expansion included subsidies to attract aspiring social workers to varying areas of micro-level practice. The National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) was one such entity that offered a tuition incentive to attract and train those seeking to specialize in mental health practice (Stuart, Leighninger, & Donahoe, 1993).

Under the auspices of CSWE, the union between higher education and social work has further expanded over the last 65 years with an exceedingly large number of

accredited baccalaureate (521) and graduate-level (262) social work degree programs that are situated across colleges and universities within the United States (Council on Social Work Education, 2018).

CSWE Leadership Institute. The growth of university-based social work education gave CSWE cause to establish the CSWE Leadership Institute in 2008 (Pruitt, 2017). The aim of this initiative is to support aspiring leaders in the fields of social work education, higher education, and social work practice (Council on Social Work Education, 2017). The CSWE Council on Leadership Development, which is a sub-committee of the larger organizational Commission on Membership and Professional Development, is responsible for the oversight and facilitation of programs related to leadership development (Pruitt, 2017). Moving beyond the delivery of social work education, the Council illustrates two key leadership initiatives that demonstrate the plausible relationship between social work professionals and higher education environments: 1) *leadership for building and sustaining inclusive higher education environments* and 2) *leadership development in college or university settings* (Council on Social Work Education, 2017). To meet these challenges, the Leadership Institute developed 3 initial programs, which were launched during the 2008-2009 calendar year: CSWE Leadership Institute in Social Work Education, the CSWE Leadership Scholars in Social Work Education Program, and the CSWE Leadership Networking Reception (Pruitt, 2017). A fourth initiative, the CSWE Program Director Academy was introduced in 2016 (Pruitt, 2017). Although distinct in their target audiences, as well as selection criteria for administrators and educators, each program provides opportunities for aspiring social work leaders to gain leadership competencies through participation in a

variety of workshops and networking opportunities. The CSWE Leadership Institute is still a fairly young initiative. As a result, no relevant literature exists in regards to efficacy of the institute, its programs, and the stated initiatives aimed at forging the social work profession's leadership role in shaping higher education.

The Grand Challenges of Social Work. Further contributing to the potential linkage between social work and higher education is the formation of the Grand Challenges of Social Work (GCSW). Conceptually, the grand challenges initiative has been used over the course of several decades by other professions and organizations to garner momentum towards creating awareness and promoting policy change (Bent-Goodley, 2016). The initial framework for a social work grand challenge was originally conceived in 2012 when a subcommittee of the American Academy of Social Work and Social Welfare (AASWSW) convened to discuss the premise (Uehara, et al., 2014). At the conclusion of their deliberations, the committee agreed that "*the creation of a grand challenges for social work initiative might both galvanize the profession and create transdisciplinary communities of innovators who work together to accomplish shared and compelling societal goals. Grand challenges could capture the interest of the general public while advancing the science and practice of social work"* (Uehara, et al., 2014, p. 3). This committee, which is comprised largely of social work deans, faculty, and scholars, represented the GCSW's first indirect association between social work and higher education.

Formally introduced in 2015 by AASWSW, the grand challenges represent a concentrated, yet collective synergy by the social work profession to exert its efforts on identifying and addressing selected social problems of this modern era (Rodriguez,

Ostrow, & Kemp, 2017). The 12 grand challenges are situated around 3 broad areas: ensuring individual and family well-being, developing a stronger social fabric, and creating a just society. The grand challenge initiatives are as follows: 1) ensure healthy development for all youth, 2) close the health gap, 3) stop family violence, 4) advance long and productive lives, 5) eradicate social isolation, 6) end homelessness, 7) create social responses to a changing environment, 8) harness technology for social good, 9) promote smart decarceration, 10) build financial capability for all, 11) reduce extreme economic inequality, and 12) achieve equal opportunity and justice. As the GCSW is still in an infancy stage, existing literature at the time of this proposal primarily consists of numerous *working papers* (Calvo, et al., 2015; Goldbach, Amaro, Vega, & Walter, 2015; Teasley, et al., 2017; Hawkins J. D., et al., 2015) and *policy recommendations* (McRoy, et al., 2016; Hawkins J. D., et al., 2016) aimed at analyzing as well as developing conceptual strategies to confront the respective grand challenges.

The success of a grand challenge campaign is often evaluated on an organization or groups' ability to create sustainable policy and practice modalities (Bent-Goodley, 2016). In presenting GCSW strategies for a contemporary society, Rodriguez, Ostrow, and Kemp (2017) cite the need to investigate how socio-economics and public perception impact the ability to advance social justice and equity. Although daunting in nature, Williams (2016) acknowledges that the GCSW adherence to innovation and collaboration will further unify and refine the social work profession's commitment to positively transforming society. Presently, the GCSW is supported through sustained sponsorships from 26 universities nationwide (AASWSW, 2017). The emergent support of colleges and universities towards this relatively new initiative may be representative of new fabric

for evaluating the intersectionality between social work and higher education. Relevant to this study is the principal question of how a college or university president with an advanced degree in social work as well as an extensive background in micro or macro level social work practice would mobilize the collective resources of their institution to create large scale interventions aimed at confronting issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Like the GCSW, institutes of higher education also share in the responsibility of creating a stronger social fabric and just society (Dobelle, 2004). Fundamental to these efforts are the tenets of teaching and learning (Barr & Tagg, 1995). There is an increasing body of literature that associates an earned college degree with positive societal attributes such as increased job opportunities (Schafer, Wilkinson, & Ferraro, 2013), healthy lifestyle (Hummer & Lariscy, 2011), achieved personal outcomes (Hummer & Lariscy, 2011; Mirowsky & Ross, 1998), and enhanced socioeconomic status (Hout, 2012). On the contrary, failure to earn a college degree poses distinct disadvantages that are associated with severe consequences that include unemployment (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2013), family instability (Fomby, 2013), poverty (Murray, Berkel, Gaylord-Harden, & Copeland-Linder, 2011), and other maladaptive behaviors (Patrick, Schulenberg, & O'Malley, 2016) resulting in depression (Mendelson, Turner, & Tandon, 2010), alcoholism (Hall, 2010; Patrick, Schulenberg, & O'Malley, 2016), and incarceration (Kirk & Sampson, 2013; McDaniel, Diprete, Buchmann, & Shwed, 2011).

Patterns have long existed that illustrate the unequal distribution of college outcomes among minority groups (Herzog, 2005; Kao & Thompson, 2003; Keels, 2013; McDaniel, Diprete, Buchmann, & Shwed, 2011; Villavicencio, Bhattacharya, & Guidry,

2013; Wood, 2012; Palmer, Davis, & Hilton, 2009). In a review of empirical research, Kao and Thompson (2003) cited multiple factors such as high school preparedness, college transition, and variations in socioeconomic status as causes for disparate outcomes for racial and ethnic minorities. Keels (2013) cited psychological well-being and social environment as causes for poor college outcomes among intersecting racial and ethnic minorities. To this effect, colleges and university presidents often struggle with "balancing excellence in instruction with a need to increase capacity and access" (Dirks, Gilman, & University of California B.E., 2015, p. 5). Efforts to create accessible and inclusive educational environments often require institutions to allocate funds to increase support services and systems aimed at accommodating diverse groups of students and university employees. However, college presidents are constantly struggling with the fiscal and political constraints placed on their institutions, limiting the resources available to support the diverse needs of the university community (The Aspen Institute, 2017; McClean, 1974; Flawn, 1990).

This research seeks to establish a new discussion on the intersectionality of social work and higher education through the context of executive leadership. Focal to this study is the relationship between the college presidency and the ethical mandate that social workers within these positions pledge to uphold. Utilizing the research method of phenomenology, this study further examines the association between social work values and skill sets with executive leadership for 12 current or former university presidents that hold advanced degrees in social work.

CHAPTER III

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Introduction

The purpose of this research is to understand the impact of an advanced degree in social work for college and university presidents. This chapter will discuss the research methodology utilized for this study. More specifically, population sampling, data collection procedures, qualitative analysis methods, interpretative framework, and limitations of this dissertation research will be outlined.

Design of the Study

The aim of this study is to understand the leadership framework most commonly employed by college presidents with advanced training in social work, and to understand the extent to which they perceive their social work degree to have impacted their ability to successfully lead the institution. This will be done through an exploration of the lived experiences of college and university presidents with advanced degrees in social work and the extent to which they attribute meaning to their social work training and professional ethics as preparation for this role. The framework for this research will draw on the foundation of the German philosophy known as phenomenology. Conceptualized by Husserl (1859-1938) as a construct of rigorous science, phenomenology seeks to explore how human beings consciously transform and comprehend a particular experience that has deep meaning to their lives (Patton, 2002). Philosophical approaches to phenomenological inquiry have since expanded beyond Husserl's original connotation. Methods have evolved to include hermeneutic (van Manen, 1990), existential (Spiegelberg, 1972; Heidegger, Macquarrie, & Robinson, 1962), and transcendental

phenomenology (Moustakas, 1994). In this instance, *the meaning* of what it is to be a college president - rooted in the social work profession will be the focus of inquiry. Therefore, I have chosen transcendental phenomenology as the methodology for this study.

Unlike other phenomenological approaches that focus on interpretative assumptions (Laverty, 2008), transcendental phenomenology seeks to textually and structurally describe the lived experiences of a group of individuals that share a particular commonality or phenomenon (Creswell, 2013). Supported by Clark Moustakas (1994), transcendental phenomenology emphasizes the importance of the researcher's initial engagement in a self-reflective process to set aside any conscious preconceptions pertaining to the phenomena being studied (Giorgi, 1997). This practice allows the researcher to gain a renewed focus when approaching the lived experience, as told through the lens of study participants. Data collection in transcendental inquiries is in the form of first person examination, which is often achieved through interviews (Moerer-Urdahl & Creswell, 2004). The interview process, as postulated by Moustakas (1994) should contain two questions that are essential to any phenomenological inquiry: What is the lived experience? And can you describe the context for how it was experienced? Data analysis is a systematic process and focuses on balancing the premises of objectivity and subjectivity (Laverty, 2008). Analysis in transcendental phenomenology begins with identifying significant statements followed by coding and clustering these accounts in an effort to formulate emergent themes that will be used to co-create the essence of the lived experience.

Sampling Method

Selecting participants in a phenomenological study must be attributed to a particular lived experience that is of interest to the researcher. For this study, I utilized purposive sampling to identify individuals that either currently hold positions or have previously held positions as presidents of a college or university. Additionally, inclusion criteria for participation in the study required that all respondents have received an advanced degree in social work from an institution that is accredited by the Council on Social Work Education. In order to locate participants, I utilized public information found on collegiate websites, as well as directories supplied by the Council of Independent Colleges, the American Academic Leadership Institute, and the American Council on Education. I also used the snowball sampling technique for this study. Snowball sampling uses a small pool of initial informants to nominate, through their social networks, other participants who meet the eligibility criteria and could potentially contribute to a specific study (Patton, 2002). This technique is often utilized for research in which members of a population are hard to locate (Creswell, 2013). Participants were contacted via telephone or e-mail when requesting their participation in this study. As the primary investigator, I used a scripted introduction (*appendix 1*) when making initial phone calls or generating preliminary e-mails. This is particularly important as it pertains to current college or university presidents and it was previously anticipated that the primary investigator would have to go through the Office of the President, as opposed to contacting the participant directly.

Data Collection and Analysis

Semi-structured interviews served as the primary method of data collection for this study. Interviews were conducted with 12 current or former college or university presidents that met the criteria of holding either a Master's Degree of Social Work (MSW), a Master of Science in Social Work (MSSW), Artium Magister (AM), Master of Social Service (MSS), a Doctorate Degree in Social Work (DSW), or a Doctorate of Philosophy in Social Work or Social Welfare (PhD). Interviews were conducted in-person, via telephone, or by a video conference platform, such as Adobe Connect or Skype. During scheduled semi-structured interviews, I utilized two primary questions: What was your journey to the presidency like for you? And I would like to hear your perceptions about how having an advanced degree in social work has (or has not) informed your leadership style in your role as a college president, would you share with me some of the things that come to mind as you think about that? Appendix 2 provides the full series of questions utilized for all participants. As respondents made statements, notes were taken, and probes followed as appropriate (for example, if someone responded that: "dignity and respect of all individuals is a core value that I think about a lot." A probe might be "can you talk a little more about that and perhaps give an example of the most recent time you felt you were guided by that core value when you were acting in your leadership position?" In some instances, additional questions were generated at the time of the interview in order to gather clarifying details about a participant's lived experiences.

Prior to data collection, consent from the Barry University Institutional Review Board (IRB) was obtained. Upon IRB approval, the researcher began identifying and

contacting potential study participants utilizing methods previously discussed. Upon agreeing to take part in this study**,** participants received, reviewed, and ultimately returned a signed consent form electronically via e-mail.

Data collection was carried out in the form of semi-structured interviews lasting approximately 60 minutes. In some cases, I managed to schedule a follow up 30-minute opportunity for member-checking with participants once the interviews have been transcribed. Member checking is a strategy implored to establish a rigor of credibility and confirmability in qualitative research (Hays, Wood, Dahl, & Kirk-Jenkins, 2016). This method required ongoing consultation with the participant to ensure accuracy of interpretative statements that were made during the interview. During the interview process, participants were encouraged to talk freely and to tell of their experiences in their own words. A digital voice recorder was utilized to record the interviews. Usage of this device ensured that all interviews were transcribed verbatim. The researcher also asked respondents whether they are comfortable with note taking during the interview process. This possibility was addressed, along with informed consent, and other necessary clarifications with the participants prior to beginning the interviews.

All data was transcribed verbatim and entered into the NVIVO 11 qualitative computer assisted data analysis software, as provided by Barry University in preparation for coding and analysis of themes. NVIVO is a software platform utilized to support qualitative data collection and analysis. Interviews were transcribed shortly after completion, as opposed to waiting until all of the data is collected. This allowed for a full reading of each transcript prior to engaging in subsequent interviews, as well as the preliminary identification of themes and the addition of new probes, if necessary, to

questions asked. Although pseudonyms were used when describing participants either in written or oral discussions to protect their identities, actual quotes and references from the interviews were utilized along with the fictitious names.

Recorded interviews were accessible only to me, as I was solely responsible for all data transcription. These recordings were saved to my computer, which is password protected. Transcriptions of all interviews were also saved on the same password protected computer, which utilizes NVIVO software, and is also password protected. Once an interview was transcribed into NVIVO, it was permanently deleted from the recorder. However, data coded into NVIVO will be kept for a period of 5 years, or indefinitely to allow opportunities for future research studies. Signed consents are stored separately from the transcripts, in a locked file cabinet.

Research Challenges

Although this research topic posed no risks to the participants involved, it has other inherent challenges – namely sample size, identifying a set of participants not easily identifiable, with limited availability and in some cases, a reluctance to participate. The adopted recruitment strategies (snowball sampling and use of public information) were effective in identifying a small number of college or university presidents. However, the biggest challenges were the availability and willingness of the college and university presidents to devote at least 60 minutes of their busy schedule to conduct an interview, as well as another 30 minutes to assist with member-checking after the data is transcribed. Padgett's research experience (2008) with civic leaders called for intricate planning to maximize the time needed to gain perspective on a particular lived experience; and despite this preparation, her research was met with scheduling conflicts, repeated

postponements, and refusal to participate. At the onset of the study, I anticipated scheduling appointments at least a month in advance of the initial interviews. In some cases, interviews were coordinated as far as 6 months in advance.

As it pertains to sample size, a phenomenological qualitative methodology dictates that the ideal sample size emerges during the course of the study when saturation has been achieved (Padgett, 2008). However, I presumed that the sample size for this study was going to be very small given the unique criteria set forth to guide this research. A small sample size for this particular study could impact data quality. Therefore, the justification to include *former* college or university presidents was established to address these concerns regarding adequate sample size. Although Creswell (2013) illustrates phenomenological studies with sample sizes ranging from 1-325, it is recommended that the range of the sample be anywhere from 3 to 10 participants. For this particular study, I was seeking 10-15 individuals to engage in the interviewing process.

Another potential limitation of this research was the inability to conduct all interviews face to face, which assures that communication is synchronous to time and place. Furthermore, I had no knowledge of how each participant situated themselves at the time of the interview, particularly participants whose time is in great demand. It was unclear whether the participant would be in an environment that fostered attention and a full commitment to answering the questions that have been presented. Furthermore, telephone interviews could potentially limit the depth of dialogue as the researcher may have difficulty gaging social cues, such as lapses in answers.

Ethical Standards and Research Considerations

This phenomenology is guided by the ethical principles of confidentiality. However, the sample size of college presidents holding an advanced degree in social work is very distinct, which causes great difficulty in obscuring such principles guiding this research project. A 2013 National Association of Social Workers (NASW) publication identified four individuals that are likely to be engaged to participate in this study. Additionally, those participants that have previously assumed roles as an academic dean within a school of social work are likely to be identified, particularly within the social work education community. Therefore, I have taken great caution in assuring that all interviews are properly coded to protect confidentiality. Due to the uniqueness of this sample population, particularly within certain realms of the social work community, I cannot guarantee total unrecognizability. Participants were informed of this at the time of the interview, as well as prior to signing the consent form to participate in the research study. Participants were able to decline participation in the study and were told that they could withdraw at any time. In such cases, they were assured that their data would be destroyed (shredded or deleted from the computer). No incentives were offered to participants.

Interpretative Framework

My expectation, as the researcher, was to gain insight on the pathways to a college presidency for individuals with advanced degrees in social work, as well as how the profession's attributes progress the governance of institutions of higher education in preserving social justice and human rights for all individuals. As a researcher, I co-created a forum that enabled the research participants to discuss how their individual

experiences were socially constructed. Through this lens, themes around the ways in which the knowledge, values, skills, and ethical standards were embedded in decision-making and thought processes emerged. Collectively, these themes encapsulate what it means to hold and utilize an advanced degree in social work for college and university presidents.

The decision to utilize transcendental phenomenology as the research methodology for this study has required the researcher to engage in epoche or the ideology of *researcher as an instrument*. Epoche is the approach taken by the researcher at the beginning of a study to set aside conscious thoughts and reflective perceptions in order to gain a fresh perspective of the phenomenon being studied (Moerer-Urdahl & Creswell, 2004; Giorgi, 1997).

Researcher Bias

Reflecting on the propositions of this study, I realized the importance of remaining mindful of my own assumptions, biases, and perceptions regarding the topic. This included the need to bracket my thoughts over the course of the research process. With that in mind, I made every attempt to become aware of any assumptions regarding college and university presidents holding advanced degrees in social work and my thoughts about the connection between their social work values and orientation toward social justice. I recognize that each college president has a unique path to his or her presidency, and each lived experience is different. I diligently listened for the familiar, or what I might have expected, but I was particularly attentive to making space for the unexpected responses as well. As I transcribed interviews, I constantly reviewed the data for insights about the phenomenon from the perspective of the participants. One strategy

that serves as a useful tool for qualitative research is memoing, as it helps the researcher formulate a deeper understanding of lived experience of those they are interested in learning more about (Birks, Chapman, & Frances, 2008). Memoing allowed me to separate my thoughts from those of the research participants. I was able to create space for my own reflection about the statements made as well as an interpretation around the repeated sentiments relayed by the participants for which specific themes began to emerge. Chapter V provides an illustration of several memos that were constructed over the course of this research.

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS

Introduction

The findings below describe themes captured from 12 transcribed, semi-structured interviews with participants that are currently serving or have served as a college or university president. There were over 1500 coded statements, grouped together to create five emergent themes, four of which contain associative sub-themes (Table 1). Contextual interpretations and related discussion were generated through reflections and accounts, as told by research participants. In this chapter, I utilize direct quotations obtained from study participants to help organize each section's theme as well as to further frame the lived experience of these *social work presidents*.

Table 1:

Overview of Qualitative Research Themes

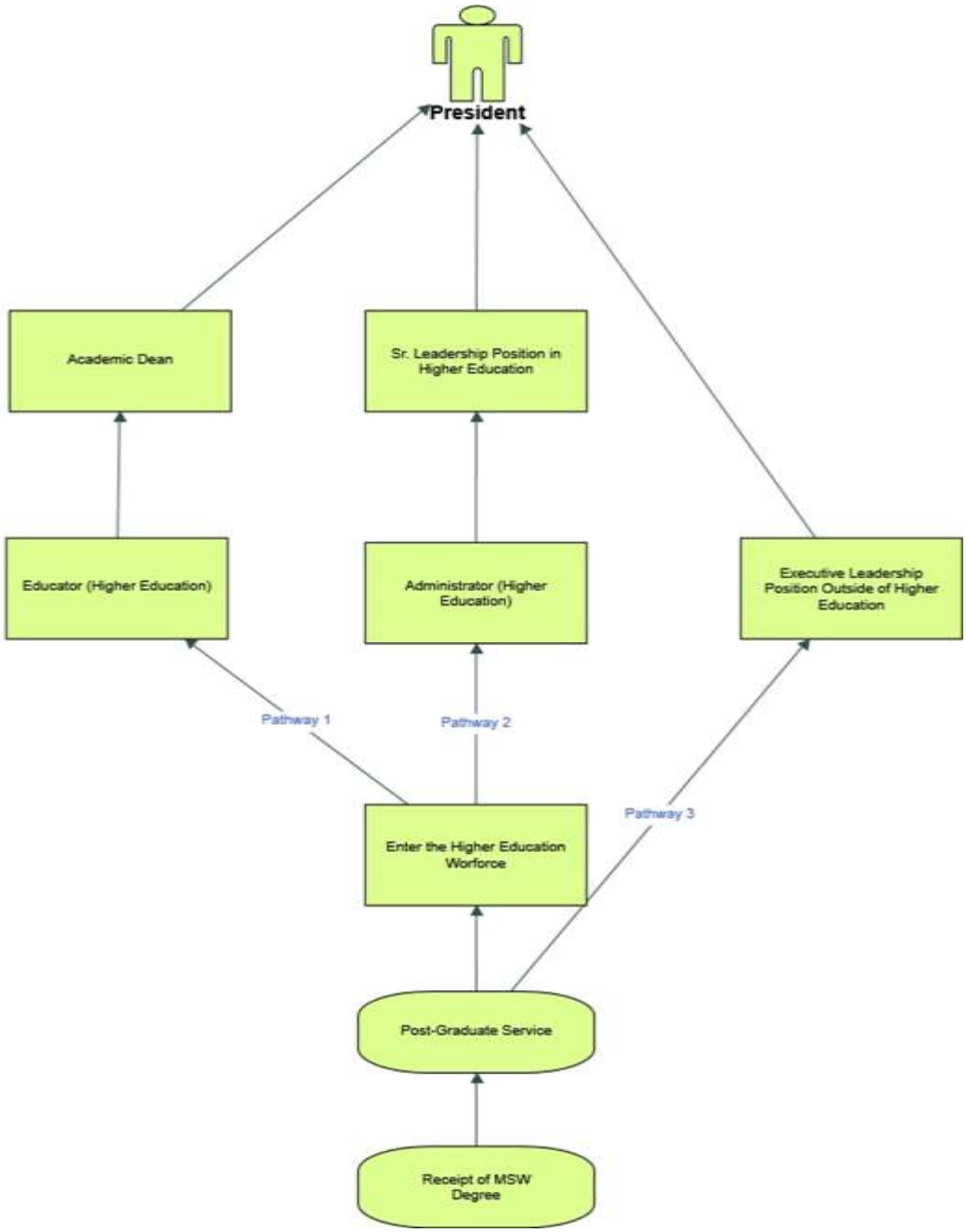
Main Theme	Subthemes
Theme 1: Own the Mission, Share the Vision	Sub-theme 1a: Authentic and Genuine Transformational Leadership
Theme 2: Social Work's Code of Ethics in Service to the College Presidency	Sub-theme 2a: Leading with Integrity Sub-theme 2b: Valuing the Dignity and Worth of the Person Sub-theme 2c: Establishing, Maintaining, and Repairing Relationships Sub-theme 2d: Ethical Responsibility to the Broader Society Sub-theme 2e: Leading with Competence Sub-theme 2f: In Service to the Institution
Theme 3: Making Tough Decisions	

Theme 4: The University in the Environment	
Theme 5: The Tangible Skill Sets for Leading a College or University	Sub-theme 5a: Differing Perceptions Exist Sub-theme 5b: Change Perception by Promoting the Professional Skill Set

The demographic and descriptive characteristics of the study sample signify a rather diverse grouping of individuals. In terms of gender, 55% of the participants are female, whereas 45% are male. As for race/ethnicity, 55% of the participants are identified as Caucasian as compared to 45% who self-identify as persons of color. All study participants have earned a master's level degree in social work from a Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) accredited institution. The post-MSW graduate careers and client systems served by members of this sample varied among the tenants of social work practice. Micro-level or clinical practice initially appealed to 42% of the sample, whereas 58% were interested in macro-level practice, particularly community organization or policy practice. Ninety-one percent (91%) of the sample hold doctoral degrees with 63% of the participants obtaining their doctorate in social work or social welfare. Interestingly 45% of the study participants have held multiple college presidencies. Aside from the reverse gender-based statistic, these characteristics appear to be on par with national trends involving the demographic profile of college and university presidents within the United States, as alluded to in chapter II. However, given the sample size, no statistically significant correlations were made in relation to such trends.

Congruent with national trends concerning college presidents (Cook, 2012); the majority of this research study's participants have spent most of their professional careers in higher education. As illustrated in Figure 1, three presidential pathways have emerged

Figure 1



in this study. These pathways do not deviate from those trends identified in the 2017 national studies by The Aspen Institute and Selingo, Chheng, and Clark. Social workers who have entered the profession's faculty ranks and moved through various administrative positions including academic deanships represent the dominant pathway identified in this study (75% of study participants). Social workers that have had non-tenured faculty positions represent 17% of the study sample. This latter grouping consists of individuals that journeyed through non-academic positions within higher education. The study sample rounds out to include one participant that entered into a presidency after decades of executive leadership within a human service organization.

The institutes of higher education where each participant assumed a presidency are also categorically diverse. As previously indicated, institutions associated with the study sample are 4-year, regionally accredited colleges or universities. The data provided by the study sample revealed that 73% of these presidencies are associated with publicly funded institutions. Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HCBU), a sub-group of these public institutions, represent 36% of the establishments led by college and university presidents with advanced degrees in social work. Private institutions, which are also inclusive of faith-based colleges and universities, round out the sample at 27%.

The title of this dissertation is '*Yes, We Can! A Phenomenological Study of College and University Presidents that hold Advanced Degrees in Social Work.'* This heading became apparent over the course of the research study, which included multiple readings of the interview transcripts. Through this process, I have arrived at the conclusion that social workers are indeed, uniquely equipped to face the challenges confronting the modern-day college presidency given their training, living into the core

values of the profession and using the social work knowledge and skills in their work on an daily basis. In addition, guided by an ethical code that mandates social workers to be cognizant of many of these challenges, it was a powerful revelation to me, as the researcher, to hear how these respondents relied on the tools they gained in their education, having integrated them into their very being. Without question, having a social work education uniquely prepared each of them to face the complex tasks that were built-in to the role of the college president.

The following pages describe the tenure within this lived experience as told by 12 participants. In an effort to maintain principles of confidentiality and given the study sample size, I have chosen not to associate any participants with the number of presidencies assumed. Additionally, I do not reference any particular institution or geographic location associated with participants taking part in this study. Furthermore, this manuscript does not describe intricacies of any specific presidency; nor is judgment rendered on the success or lack thereof for any particular institution during the participant's tenure in this leadership role.

The purpose of this research is to understand how this unique group of study participants experienced their role, whether and how they identified as a social worker within that role, as well as the extent to which they relied on the knowledge, values and skills they gained having had advanced social work education within this uncommon leadership trajectory. I paid particular attention to the extent to which the core values and ethical principles, of the profession of social work, factored into each participant's presidential tenure. The succeeding pages of this narrative discusses emergent themes including the role of a college or university president, social work values and training

within this function - as experienced by these participatory leaders, and the ethical mandates of social work practice that serve to guide executive leadership. Lastly, using the voices of the study participants, I attempted to decipher perceptions espoused by the social work profession in relation to executive leadership. This venture aims to generate discussion about the possibility of further enhancing a novel career trajectory for social workers, particularly in an era when college and university presidents are routinely scrutinized for unethical leadership and governance.

Theme 1: Own the Mission, Share the Vision

The role of a college president has evolved over the past century producing ambiguity and heightened complexity. From academic to administrator, to expansionist and multi-disciplinarian, the shifting functions involved in the responsibilities subsumed under the umbrella of a college presidency begs the question, what does this role actually encompass? When posed with this question, participants offered a myriad of responses. The following discussion highlights two fairly distinct views that emerged. The first underscores the importance of supporting the mission and vision of the institution. The second appears to assume a tactical, transactional approach. Within these overarching views, functions such as relationship building, fundraising, and accessibility become apparent. Prior to depicting the essence of the *'social work president,'* it is helpful to gain insight into the role of a college and university president as told by each study participant.

> **Lilly** offers her broad view to this line of questioning:
>
> Well, (laughs). That is a large question quite frankly. Clearly to be a leader . . . to establish a vision and a strategic plan . . .For the campus to not just articulate values but to model the values that you are articulating and to be a change agent.

> To be decisive. To be an advocate for the institution and the students . . . (pause) . . . and these days to manage crises and raise money.

Benjamin identifies the president as the face of the university.

> The president really lays out a vision for taking that college or university to the next level in its development and getting there involves building relationships in and out of either the university or college.

Abigail views her role as "*being the biggest cheerleader for the mission."* She also acknowledges the necessity of progressive management to ensure that the university evolves and advances. "*Keeping all the parts moving at the same time, keeping your people happy, looking out for their interests, making sure as a community – you're all going in the same direction and being that visionary who can do that."*

Emily's vision upholds the institution's mission and values.

> Those mission and values are things that should be enduring over time and I think one of the important things that a university or college president does is not only uphold those missions and values but connect them in a current day way so that they are relevant to the current experience and current times that the institution is in.

Rose adds to this concept by simply stating: "*you shape the vision. You don't do the vision! You shape it from a collaborative effort."*

Jason candidly and pragmatically states: - "*Public relations and fundraising, PERIOD!"*

His assertion highlights the fact that the university, as a system, is broad and he relies on a team-approach in managing the institution.

> I have a team of people – very strong people that run the day to day of this institution. They know the details. Each of the Vice Presidents, I expect them to know what is going on.

Jason discusses the impact of the size of the institution as it factors into how a college or university functions. He cites varying levels of interpersonal connection and bureaucracy:

> I think when you are at a smaller institution – it is more personable. . . it can be less bureaucratic. I would tend to know more about what students are up to, what faculty are up to. I would have a better knowledge base of the day to day and I would assert myself more regularly. That is not the case here. I think a place like this (sic) is far more complex. I think it is more bureaucratic. I think there is a different level of sophistication. Academically and administratively, that is not a criticism of small institutions. It is just different.

Nevertheless, Jason sees his role as a "*PR Guy, a relationship builder, and eventually a fundraiser."*

Norah views fundraising as a significant role. However, principal in her purview is "*helping the community of scholars and its alumni, and its significant stakeholders to develop an inspirational vision of itself in the 21st century*."

Jasmine discusses collaboration as well as building and nurturing relationships as central to the role of a president.

> Understanding importance of collaboration, through active listening, through respectful conversation. Setting shared priorities. Being what I think are modeling behaviors that are consistent over time and place and constituent group and this sounds so basic that I am certain to you – what many presidents think that they have to do – that you just can't talk about value-based leadership. You actually have to execute it every darn day in the big decisions and in the smaller decisions and sometimes a difficult personnel action, which means terminating people are, you know, value-based decisions and decisions that also honor and understand relationships.

Wendy is emphatic about integrity in the context of her experience regarding the principle role of a president:

> Lead! You got to lead. You got to lead with integrity and you have to lead with principle so that persons, your faculty, your staff, your stakeholders, your students, parents, are going to recognize that they can entrust – you're asking

> people to entrust their loved ones with us. So the first thing they want to know is – I'm not perfect. I can't stop crime. I can't – there is a lot that I can't do but there is more that I can do. That's what I have to be able to demonstrate and sometimes I only have a small way to do that but I have to able to do that with faculty. A president has to be willing to make the difficult decisions... The hardest part is dealing with all the laws, being parts of systems – that's the hardest part – but as long as you know that you are doing what is right and that's all that you can do. It's all about leading with integrity. It is about our principles. The self-worth that we want in others – we got to first have in ourselves.

Adrian, Dylan, and Daniel discussed the role of a college president from a tactical position offering business and educational perspectives. This includes systems management, operational support, and educational philosophies.

Adrian addresses the importance of resources:

> To be someone who understands how an institution should run in terms of resources, access to support, political support, facilities, and being able to understand your basics. One being finances, two being the need and development of services or programs to support access for students, and three making sure that you have community support in those efforts.

Dylan approaches the role as a manager of resources:

> It is being the CEO of the whole operation and of course fundraising is a component but overall supervision and management of the budget.

Daniel discusses accountability with regard to the use of resources to create an optimal educational environment:

> First and foremost, the president's role is to provide the best possible educational environment and services to students so they can become productive and contributing members of their families and to society. This naturally includes developing excellent faculty, providing a safe, inclusive, and nurturing culture and physical space, garnering resources, and engaging personally through leadership to help young people at a critical, formative time.

The depiction of the role of a college president, as told by study participants offers some insight into the leadership styles among the participants. We begin to deduce the tenets of leadership in the next section.

Sub-theme 1a: Authentic and Genuine Transformational Leadership

I think in many ways, there is value in being genuine and authentic and people know when you are, and people know when you're not. – Jason

Chapter II introduces the theories of transformational and transactional leadership. Transformational leadership exemplifies the displacement of authority in effort to engage and motivate constituents to achieve a common goal (Burns, 1978; Bass, 1985, 1997). When reshaping organizational culture, transformational leaders aim to evaluate incumbent structural norms before initiating a realignment of values and goals (Bass & Avolio, 1994). Transformational leadership consists of four central principles: individualized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration. A review of the relevant literature, found in Chapter II, discusses how these constructs of leadership are situated within the context of social work and the college presidency.

The next theme brings out the ways in which participants refer to the tenets of transformational leadership when considering the symbiotic relationship between social work ethics and the college presidency. Rose and Emily reference the importance of integrity and a team approach, related to intellectual stimulation. In this same context, Lilly discusses her "*team-oriented approach*" to decision-making. Wendy, Benjamin, and Abigail respond to the diverse needs of client systems in their characterizations of ensuring the dignity and worth of each individual. The importance of human relationships embodies the need to foster and develop relationships with all of the various stakeholders. Jason, Abigail, and Benjamin discuss the importance of fostering relationships and fundraising initiatives. Jasmine and Norah maintain that intellectual

stimulation garners a collective impact to achieve common goals. Several participants referenced role-modeling behaviors for faculty, staff, and students, which suggests inspirational motivation. Lastly, several participants' accounts of institutional-based social justice actions and initiatives also unveiled the various constructs of transformational leadership.

In this section, participants provide in-depth examples of how they adhere to the premises of transformational leadership in their attempts to affect change. These accounts, as told by participants, exceed the context of social work values and are in direct response to the question: *"How would you describe your leadership style?"* As participants contextually discuss these experiences, connotations to authentic and genuine leadership are inferred, particularly when mobilizing change, inspiring organizational vision, and confronting significant challenges.

Adrian discusses beginning his college presidency at an HBCU that was deprived of resources. He was met with significant challenges in his attempt to effect change. He recalls taking these challenges "*head on – never bended or backed away*." Through authentic and genuine leadership, Adrian began forging relationships with the community leaders - many whom supported his vision.

> When we were really being challenged financially, those ministers went to bat for me with legislatures. Now a couple of those ministers were really powerful. I walked into one church one Sunday morning and they ushered me up to the front of the church. They gave me a check for $10,000. The masons gave me a check for $30,000. This was coming from the community.

Adrian acknowledged a consistent battle for recognition and institutional equality, and he met that challenge with an unapologetic intentional and deliberate appeal, and at times,

confrontation. External perception of him was less important than the needs of the university he was tasked with leading.

> When you are in an HBCU – well my experience was that you had to fight for recognition. You had to fight for your institution and you had to fight to make sure that they respected you as much as I respected them. I respected my colleagues and the institutions that they were at. They didn't respect my institution nor did they respect me until I beat it into 'em. Some people didn't like me. I didn't give a damn. That's the approach I had to use. People on campus loved me because they said that this guy is going to fight until there is no air in me and I was willing to do that.

Adrian entered the political arena and advocated for his institution in order to garner resources that had been non-existent on his campus. In listening to Adrian's account, his pursuit of advocacy was transformational.

> When we had to deal with the political side and that was really tough because we had some real deficits in terms of retention and graduation. We didn't have any real resources for 30 years – how were your retention and graduation rates going to be equal to other institutions in the system. That's a trap… so I had to fight and said LOOK if we've been denied resources and access all those years how are you going to hold us to a standard that you didn't hold us to before because you looked the other way? So, in reality – balance, create your own force of support, which I did. Try to get as much support from the legislature, which I was able to do from some. Some of them, you know, want us to go away but we weren't going anywhere.

Over the course of the interview, Adrian repeatedly refers to the tireless fight with varying constituents to secure resources. In essence, Adrian's charisma or individualized influence correlated with his advocacy of the institution, as students and faculty began to share in the belief that the University, with equal appropriations, could, indeed, thrive in a fair and just society.

Wendy spoke about the importance of modeling behaviors among her constituents. She revealed traits of transformational leadership beginning with

individualized consideration and intellectual stimulation. When asked about her leadership style, Wendy responded:

> I am front and center . . . I'm going to take it to the people and I am going to ask you what you think and I am going to tell you where I am and I am going to tell you almost everything I can without crossing the line. I am going to listen. I am going to be there. I am going to walk the campus and the community and say tell me what you are thinking. I am going to listen to input but I am going to challenge individuals to take responsibility as well.

Advocacy was paramount to her leadership; it served as the root of Wendy's charisma. Wendy exhibits great passion for students and her institution. Wendy prides herself on being the '*voice,*' which was evident by the varying cadences of her tone. "*I just think my voice should be heard. I never hesitate to make sure that the voice - when I speak out and I will raise what I consider injustices I would challenge."* Wendy also seeks opportunities to engage and inspire students.

> Ok, so no plan for who was going to pay for college but I was able to have an opportunity and that's what I am trying to provide for those students here. I am going to come and do whatever it takes to make sure that my students are going to see me in every walk of life. I show up here in my jeans and tee shirt on a Sunday, you know, we are going to do stuff together. Whatever it is. Whatever we have to do to set that example, as someone set the example for me.

Wendy exemplifies the need to take risks when it comes to what is best for the institution.

> You have to lead. You have to be the voice. I have to speak up. What's the worst thing that would happen to me? I am going to lose my job! I can always go and teach at a school of social work. I can always go run an agency. Social work is that lifelong career, and you got to be passionate about it and I am passionate.

As with other participants, Emily also employs a team-centered approach. She believes a large portion of her role as president is to model the institution's vision and expectations. When necessary, Emily immersed herself in the routine operations of the college, which included the role of educator.

> Presidents are educators in the sense that they have to educate all of the constituents whether it's the alums . . . the students, current students, future students. I used to say because I came from a small institution so the president was involved in everything. I was involved in recruiting students. I was involved in, you know, admissions days and talking to parents.

When asked about her approach to leadership, Emily considers autonomy, partnership, and ownership.

> I was a collaborative leader. I believe very much in teams. I believe very much in participatory decision-making. I wasn't afraid to make a decision but I really tried to – because I think if the appropriate people own the decision than it's more likely to be successful. So that was my leadership style. I relished giving people, who were good at their jobs, the authority and the runway to do their job and to work closely with me but, you know, they got to do their thing, which may not be necessarily the way I do it.

Daniel emphasized role modeling as an important trait of his leadership style. He talked about being visible, listening to the concerns and needs of faculty, staff, and students, and modeling behaviors in effort to set standards and establish expectations. Daniel also revealed how he mobilized the institution during a time of crisis. He equates his university's positioning during this time to that of an underfunded, poorly resourced social service agency.

> I felt at times that I was running a small social services store front operation because the college that I inherited was about to lose its regional accreditation. It was about to – we had a high school on the campus that was the most prestigious high school in the [region]. It had the most powerful members on their board of trustees and they were just waiting for my college to bite the dust. They just believed that once we lost accreditation that we would not be able to give financial aid out and thus would close and with closing they would take over our land, they would take over our endowment. They were just trying to wait us out and I was not going to allow that to happen and it did not happen. We got reaffirmed for our regional accreditation and then in the next 6 years we became AACB accredited, which is the most prestigious accreditation of business schools in the world and we were one of the smallest schools in the world that had achieved this.

Upon assuming a college presidency, Jason saw an opportunity for his institution to become transformational by increasing visibility and service to local communities. His commitment to forging relationships further translates in his effort to create a collective impact.

> One of my goals to try and raise the profile of the university is increase those partnerships and this was what was appealing to me, . . . folks didn't turn to [said institution] when they wanted support. Folks didn't naturally think of [said institution]. So this opportunity to raise the profile and reshape and reinvent and in some cases invent for the first time our partnerships with business leaders, community leaders, etc., and various other institutions, I think is an exciting opportunity.

Jason also discusses how his social work values, authenticity and the importance of being genuine, are instilled in his institutional leadership. Jason refers to the impact his identification with the social worker he is effects his leadership and the influence this has on the university.

> Oh, I think I am always a social worker. I often joke when I am in certain meetings. I'll say, well it's time to listen like a social worker and there will be times when folks say well ok, I need you to stop being a social worker for a second and we kind of joke about that but sure that is – being a social worker is the lens by which I lead.

Abigail reflects as well as models care and consideration for all her employees.

> I encourage balance in everybody's life. I love my job, I love what I do but it's not my whole life and it never will be. There has to be a balance in life, I think, in order to be able to do things well and so I tell my people for example - there is no virtue, I see no virtue in not taking your vacation. Do not tell me you're too busy, you can't go. If you can't get away, there's something wrong with the way you're running things okay. So, I set that example and I take time off.

Theme 2: Social Work's Code of Ethics in Service to the College Presidency

> *"I have tried to follow the Social Work Code of Ethics as one would follow the Ten Commandments."* Daniel

This section elaborates on the ethical mandates of social work practice and how they factor into organizational leadership. This section will prominently feature segments of the *NASW Code of Ethics* and the core values that guide the social work profession. The voices of the respondents highlight the emergence of the core values as drivers of ethical practice within the context of each participant's experience as a college president. Among the most commonly cited core values were dignity and worth of every individual, the importance of human relationships, and integrity. However, an analysis of interview transcripts revealed poignant correlations between all of the core values as well as many ethical principles found within the *NASW Code of Ethics* and the experiences shared by participants.

As participants' chronicled their presidencies, the profession's core values became interwoven within their leadership attributes, decision making processes, ethical conduct, handling of internal and external organizational expectations (i.e. fundraising, community engagement, and social welfare, etc.), as well as other ranges of experiences and scenarios that they openly shared in contribution to this research.

When posed with the question: *What values and ethical principles of the social work profession, if any, would you say are incorporated in your day to day activities as a president?* The responses reveal an implicit reliance on the values associated with the profession. Lilly describes the importance of these values for social work as well as for higher education.

> I would say which ones do I not [use]. I mean if you take the Code of Ethics of NASW and you run down that list and then look at what we hope to accomplish as presidents, what I hope to accomplish as president that they are very compatible. In my presidency . . . the mission statement read like a social worker wrote it. Talking about diversity and equity and opportunity and you know, working with underrepresented groups and it was just such a great fit for me.

Table 2 attempts to underscore Lilly's perception that a direct comparative association exists between the core values highlighted within the *NASW Code of Ethics* and those that are produced among institutes of higher education across the United States. As illustrated below, Table 2 provides a subgroup of core value statements for 12 anonymous 4-year institutions randomly selected from the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA) database as well as their alignment to the core values found with the *NASW Code of Ethics*. Geographically dispersed, the institutions illustrated below are governed by varying regional accrediting bodies including the Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE), Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC), New England Commission of Higher Education (NECHE), Higher Learning Commission (HLC), Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (NWCCU), and the WASC Senior College and University Commission. The institutions vary in size and represent publicly and privately funded research institutions, liberal arts colleges, HBCU'S, and faith-based institutions.

Table 2:

A Comparison of Core Values

College or university core value statement	Accrediting body	Social Work Value
We act with integrity and honesty in accordance with the highest academic, professional	MSCHE Large, Public (> 10,000 students)	Integrity
We demand personal responsibility, accountability and integrity in ourselves and in one another	SACSCOC Small, Private (< 5,000 students)	Integrity
Fosters an understanding of respect for the multiplicity of human perspectives and belief systems	NECHE Mid-sized, Private (<10,000 students)	Dignity and Worth of Each Individual
This is a community where individuality is valued, tolerance is cherished, and the things that make each of us unique are seen as invaluable tools in seeking greater knowledge and understanding.	WASC Senior College & University Commission Small, Private (< 5,000 students)	Dignity and Worth of Each Individual
ABC University is intentional about creating a community that encourages involvement, respect, and connection among students, faculty, staff, and administrators regardless of differences of race, gender, ethnicity, national origin, culture, sexual orientation, religion, age, and disability.	MSCHE Mid-sized HBCU (> 5,000 students)	Dignity and Worth of Each Individual Importance of Human Relationships
Care: We put the good of students first.	NWCCU Mid-sized, Private (< 10,000 Students)	Importance of Human Relationships
We strive to build an exemplary educational community characterized by a commitment to social justice and equality.	WASC Senior College & University Commission Mid-sized, Public (< 10,000 students)	Social Justice

College or university core value statement	Accrediting body	Social Work Value
Students obtain a world-class education and become part of a diverse community of leaders committed to improving the human condition in the region and the world.	HLC Large, Public (> 10,000 students)	Social Justice
Social Justice and equity in our community and in our curriculum.	NSCHE Small, Public (< 5,000 students)	Social Justice
We strive for excellence and innovation that solves problems.	NWCCU Large, Public (> 10,000 students)	Competence
We are purposeful in our studies and our work so that we can partner with our communities – both near and far – to bring needed and valued solutions to real-life problems within the pillars of education, healthcare and prosperity.	HLC Large, Public (> 10,000 students)	Competence Service
Cultivating global citizenship through thoughtful (meaningful, purposeful, conscientious, intentional) and engaged public service.	SACSCOC Small, Private (< 5,000 students)	Service

Table 2 elicits evidence that the core values illustrated in the *NASW Code of Ethics* and those that are incorporated by institutes of higher education are not only comparative but also apply to a broader society.

In theme 2, participants discuss various scenarios exemplifying the ways that the core values of social work have emerged over the course of their institutional leadership.

Sub-theme 2a: Leading with Integrity. According to the *NASW Code of Ethics* (2017), the value of integrity refers to the social worker's responsibility to behave in a trustworthy, transparent manner. The following excerpts frequently cite integrity in

terms of building team camaraderie, modeling behavior, and upholding and protecting institutional standards. When referencing these premises, participants demonstrate the principal of authentic and genuine leadership.

Channeling a Team Approach. Like human service organizations, colleges and universities are reliant on teams of managers and administrators to lead within a hierarchical subsystem of governance. Given the dimensions of higher education, college and university presidents are reliant on others to help facilitate organizational operations. Rose explains – *"It was really important to have the right individuals in place for handling issues. It was important to have some key people in place that were people of integrity and trustworthiness."* According to Emily, "*picking the cabinet and working with the cabinet is really an important role of presidents because who you pick to help lead the institution has a huge impact on the ability of that institution to be successful*." Similarly, Abigail discusses the essential requirement of establishing trust when managing through a team approach:

> I also have people who are much better qualified in those [certain] areas and you have to trust that they can do their job too. I am not a micro manager, okay, so I do trust that they are going to do their jobs.

Jason also maintained a similar sentiment when speaking about the role of a college or university president – "*I don't run the day to day in this institution. I have a team of people – very strong people that run the day to day of this institution. They know the details."*

These excerpts point to the intersectionality between the core values of integrity and competence. Recognizing their skill sets, Jason and Abigail convey the necessity of channeling a team approach, as they are cognizant of the importance of trusting others

with specific expertise to manage the day-to-day operations of the institution. Neither Abigail nor Jason attempt to practice outside their areas of competence and often defer to administrators with demonstrated capabilities. This resonates with the *NASW Code of* Ethics, with regard to the importance of social workers practicing "*within their areas of competence"* (p. 6).

Modeling Integrity. Wendy, Jason, and Jasmine each refer to the need to model integrity as a means of promoting institutional transparency and trust. For Wendy, *"Integrity is so important. I have to be that leader and if I don't lead with integrity than I can't expect [such behavior] from everybody else."* Wendy, in particular, places significant value on integrity. *It's about leading with integrity. It is about our principles. The self-worth that we want in others – we got to first have in ourselves.*

Despite the reliance on others to oversee the daily operations of the institution, Jason emphasizes transparent communication.

> My tactic has always been – I am going to be as open and honest as I can be. I think it is important for a leader to own it and be as transparent as possible and not to circumvent the process or the questions.

Jason illustrates the consistent value that he places on communication, particularly when discussing the implementation of a team approach and personal accountability.

When discussing the need to model ethical conduct, Jasmine reflects on her own values around integrity and authenticity. Speaking about her prior observations of college presidents, whose governance appeared grounded in transactional leadership. Jasmine comments on her style of leadership and her ability to remain value-based and authentic.

> I have tried it as a dean and certainly, in my presidency – to have, to be able to have a presidency where there is a lot of authenticity in who I am and what I value and how I act. I was afraid that it would be too much – I take my position very seriously. I do not take myself very seriously so I am equipped to be self-reflective. I am equipped to laugh and have a sense of humor and I thought all of those things would make me less effective as a power figure. I come to realize, at least for me, that is not true so the more authentic, the more value-based, and the other is I am a very direct communicator . . . this is where social work comes in as well – I am direct. I am behaviorally specific – I try to respond to people in as close to real time, obviously in private – I am not talking about publicly throwing people under the bus. One – to model that. The other piece I'd say to people is all of these things I'm saying about how you will experience me, I expect you to reciprocate.

Institutional Integrity. College and university presidents are also responsible for maintaining the institution's integrity. Integrity impacts public opinion, institutional funding, enrollment, and employee retention. Wendy validates this when discussing recruitment and enrollment - *parents are going to recognize that they can entrust – you're asking people to entrust their loved ones with us*. As such, organizational leaders are increasingly under pressure - for failing to address violations surrounding ethical conduct of students and employees – most notably student athletes and college athletic departments.

The egregious incidents pertaining to lapses in ethical conduct that occurred at Penn State University and Baylor University, and more recently, incidents at Michigan State University and the University of Maryland made national headlines and evoked serious reservations about ethical conduct within college athletics. Michigan State University President Lou Anna K. Simon resigned from her post in January 2018, because of mishandling a sex abuse scandal that resulted in a $500 million university settlement for over 300 college female victims (Smith & Hartocollis, 2018). In November, President Wallace Loh of the University of Maryland vacated his post after an

investigation regarding the death of a college athlete found a lack of accountability towards managing a college football program (Stripling, 2018).

Benjamin discusses his dealings with the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA), which resulted in the compromise of his institution's integrity due to employee self-interests.

> I can recall, for example as president of [said institution], we had some major issues with athletics and those issues presented themselves usually at a surprise for the president but I have quickly said that everybody would tell you, particularly the NCAA, that it is the president's responsibility. And the only thing that you can do with that in retrospect is to make sure that you hire the right people. You hire people who are honest. You hire people that will watch your back and they would do these things to a fault. I recall the incident that [said institution] - we had to give up several games because we were playing a player who had been academically ineligible and we could have appropriately addressed [this incident] had we had an athletic director and a coach who were on top of their game. But they can be on the top of their game but also can be unscrupulous and not have the college or university in their best interest but more often than not will have their program as their major concern.

Benjamin was referring to the unethical conduct of employees, who placed their departmental agenda ahead of that of the institutions'. These actions were deemed violations of the NCAA, which resulted in punitive sanctions to the university. In his response, Benjamin acted in a manner consistent with the *NASW Code of Ethics* (section 2.10) by taking remedial action, addressing, and correcting the unethical behaviors of employees.

Lilly also shared an experience in which her institution faced potential NCAA violations. Having significant experience surrounding NCAA rules and regulations, she discussed the lengths to which she worked to protect the integrity of her institution during an infraction involving one of the college's student athletes.

> When that particular incident came to my attention – I knew immediately what we had to do and what we did not want to do. And so – by the end of all of this and these incidents tend to take a couple of years to work through the infraction process and so on – and by the time it was over and they have, you know, issued their report – the NCAA that is – they commended me for my actions. And one of the things you need to do as a president is not try to hide and cover but rather fess up and fix, which is what we did. We self-imposed sanctions – negative consequences of ourselves and the NCAA said great. That is good – it is over. And again commended me for my leadership and my cooperation and what I did to change the campus in order to try and prevent that sort of – it was an academic cheating incident – to try and prevent that from taking place in the future.

Lilly demonstrated the importance of becoming knowledgeable about policies and procedures established by regulatory entities. It was through her knowledge of NCAA regulations that Lilly was able to be responsible, accountable and to lead her institution with integrity.

The data presented truly highlights how essential the core value of integrity is in the professional lives of the study participants. It factors into building a team approach, hiring competent, trustworthy employees, and modeling university-wide conduct. This was evident not only in their leadership within the institutions, but in the transactions with the public as well, including addressing issues that potentially caused controversy for the institutions they lead.

Sub-theme 2b: Valuing the Dignity and Worth of the Person. According to the *NASW Code of Ethics* (2017), *"social workers respect the inherent dignity and worth of the person"* (p.5). As such, social workers promote diversity, equity, and inclusion among a range of client systems. Additionally, social workers seek to instill self-efficacy within their clients as well as empower independent, socially responsible behavior. Emily was very precise when discussing how this social work core value influenced her institutional leadership. In her account, she recalls *respecting the uniqueness of each*

individual and the contribution that they can make whether it is a unit or a department within the college or a program. Emily's statement highlights the ethical responsibility to colleagues (section 2) in the *NASW Code of Ethics*. She underscores the importance of interdisciplinary collaboration and operationalizes section 2.03(a), which promotes responsible practice within the context of diverse groups, teams and committees.

In addition to Emily, six of the 12 study participants discuss the core value of dignity and worth at length, as it pertains to their ethical responsibilities to students, interactions with faculty, and balancing organizational priorities with external political pressure and community expectations. The following pages feature several ethical principles of *NASW's Code of Ethics*, in addition to interdisciplinary collaboration, that are in association to dignity and worth of the person.

After concluding her discussion on the importance of integrity, Wendy immediately highlighted dignity and worth as a behavior that she strives to model in her leadership. "*Dignity and self-worth – no matter how challenging some of the things my students do and some of the things that my 750 employees do, I talk to them about dignity and self-worth."* In this context, Wendy is adamant about listening to all the constituent groups associated with the university including faculty, staff, and students. She emphasizes the importance of "*treating people the way we expect to be treated. Anything I ask you to do, I am going to do [as well]".* The statements showcase Wendy's ethical responsibility to colleagues and the ways in which she embodies section 2.01 (a), which demands fair treatment, cordiality, and respect of colleagues.

Benjamin discusses the importance of recognizing and acting on diverse needs:

> I think the notion of individual worth and dignity is something else that is very [very] critical in university settings and that sometimes it is important that the group not be the last resort – you know. We all contend to make decisions that are important to groups and sometimes that maybe at the expense of personal, individual reasons.

He recalls a time when his office received a request from a student group asking that an area of the campus be adorned with a Christmas tree in preparation for the holiday season. Recognizing the diversity among his faculty and student bodies, Benjamin responded - *go ahead, now, I said - but if you put up a tree, you also have to put up a Menorah.* Benjamin concludes this segment by reflecting on the appreciation he received for his actions. More importantly, he demonstrates cultural awareness and knowledge of social diversity – two premises that feature in section 1.05 of *NASW's Code of Ethics*. In this instance, he demonstrates cultural sensitivity and awareness of the diverse needs of those who use the services provided.

Abigail discusses dignity and worth in terms of having a deep appreciation for open, transparent communication with her teams.

> I mean I am not always right either. I do not know all things and so I think to be open is another thing that I've learned – to look at things from many different perspectives, to respect the dignity of each person.

In this context, Abigail also discusses the seriousness in which she succinctly responds to situations that violate a student group's self-worth. Similar to Benjamin, Abigail felt the need to not only protect the integrity of the institution but also make a statement that epitomizes the dignity and worth of all.

> A couple of years back, I found out that some of our gay students were being harassed. So I put a letter out to the whole community saying that this will not be tolerated. Our gay and lesbian brothers and sisters are part of our community and deserved to be treated with respect like everyone else.

Abigail followed the release of this memo with innovative campus-wide activities organized through the College's Office of Diversity and Inclusion. Based on her experiences, Abigail strongly believes that issues of dignity and worth are addressed through communication and education.

> You have to listen to what people are saying even though sometimes it's hard to hear, Ok. Then you have to decide is that what the whole community is experiencing, is it part of the community? A lot of the times, people will say well everyone feels this way. Well, do they? So you have to discern some of that. Then you have to - I think meet with people, groups of people, see where they are coming from but you also have to learn some things and educate yourself on some things.

Through this series of statements, Abigail focuses on respect, 2.03 (a) interdisciplinary collaboration, and 2.05 (a-b), consultation and the need to seek counsel from colleagues that demonstrate competency in specific areas. Within her excerpts, she also demonstrates an ethical responsibility to her environment. In the context of social work practice, more specifically the *NASW Code of Ethics* (section 3), the term environment is recognized as practice setting. Abigail exemplified a commitment to her students when she acted to eliminate bias and discrimination that surfaced on campus, which is in association with *NASW's Code of Ethics* section 3.09(e).

Dylan cites the importance of communication. Whereas other participants discuss the importance of modeling behaviors, Dylan is transactional in his approach to addressing issues involving self-worth.

> I would say basic number one is the worth of every individual and that is pretty much key. What is important for me as a social worker and things I have been able to do in the areas of race and ethnicity. We have a bias committee that if there are incidents or reports of bias, it might be someone was walking down the street wearing a Hijab and [someone] yell[s] a biased thing. We had people put chalk on the walls when Trump was elected saying build the wall, you know, Mexicans go home or something. So I have that committee reporting directly to

> me. I meet with them once a semester but it is under me. Academic support services for student athletes, I have reporting directly to me and not to the athletic department.

Dylan takes an active approach to managing issues related to race and ethnicity. He indicated that he remains very cognizant of issues affecting higher education, particularly those that have befallen other institutions. Dylan showcases ethical responsibility as a professional, as he aims to remain abreast of emerging and relevant knowledge that is directly associated with governance of his institution – a direct association with *NASW's Code of Ethics* section 4.01 (b) that discusses competence. This knowledge also allows him to assume a proactive approach to establishing systems that protect the dignity and worth of all within the university environment. This is evident in his dealing with student athletes. Echoing Benjamin's inference regarding the dishonest behaviors of coaches and athletic directors, acting in the best interest of their programs rather than in the interest of the university – Dylan responds by formulating a protocol in which *he* directly adjudicates all academic eligibility concerns for student athletes. This personifies his ethical responsibility to his environment; particularly section 3.07(d) of *NASW's Code of Ethics.*

In contrast, Jasmine addresses the value of dignity and worth through the context of preparing a team of managers to navigate the demands of student groups across campus. She prioritizes training and establishes concise boundaries for addressing the needs of the university community.

> I mean I had in one year, you know, demands from the Latino students, demands from the Black students, demands from the Transgendered students, demands from the Dreamers. How you navigate all of them is also because you get a team at the top that has been on-boarded – we had formal on-boarding for all of our

> management people, people who report to me – who we have clear written rules of engagement that talk about principles that I use and behavioral expectations.

Previously reinforced by other study participants, Jasmine relies on organizing a strong team of leaders to help govern the institution's operations. This is in direct association with the core values of integrity, competence, and dignity and worth. Jasmine understands the importance of seeking consultation (section 2.05[a]) when trying to determine a course of action that is beneficial for the institutions diverse student groups. In this context, Jasmine displays a cultural awareness and acceptance of the social diversity that is present on her campus (section 1.05); and she further responds to the demands placed upon the institution through a series of established organizational procedures. This behavior corresponds with section 3.07(b) of *NASW's Code of Ethics*, which discusses the allocation of resources and the procedures associated with this process. Lastly, she prides herself on creating teachable moments that enable her leadership team to grow within their roles and gain a concise understanding of Jasmine's expectations.

> People around me have the opportunity to learn. So I am equipped to say to whether it is my athletic director, my chief diversity officer, or the provost – you know – I really was disappointed in how you made that decision or how you failed to include a process step. Here is what I hope you would have done or I would have hoped you would have talked to me before you made that decision and I do not expect to see that happen again.

It is apparent that Jasmine takes advantage of teachable moments, and staff development is important to Jasmine in order to learn from mistakes. Continuing education and staff development are ethical mandates instilled upon social work administrators (*NASW Code of Ethics,* section 3.08).

In this section, connotations involving the ethical principles of respect, consultation, staff development, commitment to students, and interdisciplinary collaboration were extracted from the accounts of participants – clearly displaying the significance of this core value and its ethical mandate within the lived experiences of each college president.

Sub-theme 2c: Establishing, Maintaining, and Repairing Relationships. According to the *NASW Code of Ethics* (2017), "*social workers recognize the central importance of human relationships"* (p. 6). In the context of higher education, study participants discuss this ethical principle in terms of their transactions with the internal and external university community (i.e. faculty, staff, students, and alumni as well as local, state, and federal stakeholders). Throughout this next section, research participants detail the importance of this core value within the context of fundraising, relationship building, and forging a strategic agenda.

Relationship Building. Integrity as well as dignity and worth is essential components in the establishment of relationships that help drive an institution. Through the delineated accounts from earlier sections within this chapter, we learned the essentials of relationship building on various levels. For recruitment and retention purposes, the university (as a whole) seeks to establish trusting relationships with families and students. Faculty plays an instrumental role in maintaining relationships as well as forging new partnerships through research endeavors. Furthermore, leaders of universities aim to garner community relations in an effort to obtain and provide resources. From a systems perspective, multidirectional associations exist between the university and its transactional entities. However, this relationship is often nonlinear. For example, in a

competitive post-modern society where institutes of higher education are in abundance, colleges and universities need students more than students need any particular university. Similarly, donors do not indiscriminately dole out their funds to every worthy cause or institute of higher learning. As a result, study participants consistently discussed the importance of cultivating meaningful relationships with benefactors as vital to a university's sustainability. Segments of this dialogue were observed in earlier sections of this chapter when highlighting the core values of integrity and dignity and worth of the individual. This was also apparent with regard to ensuring the sustainability of the institution in the discussion of the role of the university president. Jason categorized this role in two aspects – fundraising and public relations. The excerpt below illustrates the centrality of relationship building to Jason's leadership philosophy.

> The truth of the matter is leadership in many respects is really about relationships and I think social work helps you to establish relationships, maintain relationships, helps you build relationships, helps you navigate difficult relationships but also helps you to help others build and navigate relationships. The vast majority of my work has become dealing with people and you know building internal and external relationships.

A social workers' platform for developing relationships are governed by the ethical guidelines found within *NASW's Code of Ethics* (2017) and are situated within the ethical responsibilities to clients, colleagues, and practice settings. Jason repeatedly conveys the importance of relationships within the context of *The Code of Ethics*, as he alludes to seeking counsel (section 2.05), interdisciplinary collaboration (section 2.03), and respect for ones qualifications and contributions (section 2.01).

Benjamin adds to this when discussing the importance of working within a system for which presidents have to navigate internal pressures with external demands: "*Being a*

president requires one to build, establish, and maintain quality relationships of individuals, groups, and organizations that can be supportive of the college or university. Being a president requires building and being able to work within a team." He further elaborates on the concept of relationship building when discussing his approach to soliciting monetary support for his institution. The last sentence within Benjamin's account is associated with social workers that work within interdisciplinary settings. According to *NASW's Code of Ethics* (2017), social workers in these settings have an ethical responsibility to accept the diverse opinions and contributions of team members as well as mediate any conflict or disagreement that may arise. Jasmine discusses the importance of continuously nurturing an abundant number of relationships. She alludes to the constant interaction required among various internal and external constituent groups. Whereas Benjamin talks about the significance of interdisciplinary collaboration, particularly when working within a system, Jasmine discusses the importance of building trusting relationships among various institutional subsystems. She is also quick to point out that relationships are contentious and easily damaged.

> Relationships for me have remained paramount. And understanding that you can build trust with faculty, with students, alumni, doesn't matter what the constituent group - and presidencies have, I don't know at least 8 to 10 of them (laughs) - but trust is something that takes time; relationships can be destroyed by an unintended comment and action. And so, it is never - those relationships are never – it's like social work - those relationships are never finished. Those relationships are always ones that take care. The other piece I learned in both is it doesn't matter that I am here X number of years. I can't forget to interact, to think about what does this mean for our alumni, our untenured faculty, or the political leaders in our region.

Jasmine's account details two important aspects regarding the importance of human relationships, as outlined in *NASW's Code of Ethics* (2017). The first references how

conflicts of interests serve as antagonists for damaging relationships. This is accentuated in section 1.06 of *NASW's Code of Ethics.* Jasmine's statement regarding an *"unintended action or comment"* is more directly associated with 1.06(a) that social workers should be avoidant of conflicts that affect professional judgment and decision-making. Jasmine's second inference indirectly involves the acknowledgment of contributions of organizational constituents in which Jasmine mentions alumni, faculty, community leaders, and politicians for their work on behalf of the university. According to the *NASW Code of Ethics*, social workers have an ethical mandate to acknowledge the contributions of others (4.08).

Norah discusses relationship building through the implementation of programs and activities that she promotes in order to engage, listen, and learn about the various needs, interests, and activities of faculty, staff, and students.

> Well, one is I have to think about this one – was for me to become known. That I was here – that I was here to listen. To learn, I had a listen and learning tour. I created chats. I even had a forum for students to come and talk with me about some of the issues that they were experiencing. I created a lecture and events series that brought from opera to folks who wrote about environmental issues from the New Yorker to campus. Making – trying to make myself available to listen and learn and I sought out different points of view. I met with the custodial workers. I met with the faculty, the students, and I met with donors and business leaders, etc.

Fundraising. College and university presidencies have evolved to include the daunting task of cultivating monetary support and endowments that help maintain the viability of the institution. Research by the American Council on Education revealed that 58% of surveyed college presidents place significant time and dedication on fundraising (Gagliardi, Espinosa, Turk, & Taylor, 2017). Variables such as increasing operational costs, decreased state funding, and low enrollment makes fundraising a critical

requirement of the presidency (Hodson, 2010). Selingo, Chheng, and Clark (2017) deem the college president as a *'fundraiser-in-chief'* due to the immediate expectations of increasing external support the moment one assumes this leadership position. In his article, *Fund Raising and the College Presidency in an Era of Uncertainty*, Cook (1997) provides a series of historical commentaries detailing the emergence of educational fundraising and the challenges that this paradigm shift presents to college and university presidents.

The literature involving transformational leadership depicts characteristics associated with effective fundraising (Barrows, 2016; Bastedo, Samuels, & Kleinman, 2014). In addition to charisma, individualized consideration, a mechanism for relationship building, remains an essential tenet. Abigail alluded to this; "*You're asking people to support you with some monetary gifts. Well you know what – then you got to support them to. It works both ways."* Dylan and Benjamin both talk about the importance of relationship building. When discussing his fundraising ventures, Dylan initially offers practical approaches prior to acknowledging the essential component of establishing relationships:

> I mean you can take courses on fundraising and I've written a book on it but my notion is that any social worker that is good can pick up the technology of fundraising and take a 1-3 day workshop and sort of know the basics. Sure you got to know more about planned giving and other sorts of things where there are more details but the basic part, I think, is harder to teach. The part about relationships. It may be almost impossible – you either kind of can do it or you can't. If you're an a-hole, frankly, people aren't going to give you money.

Benjamin discusses the need to develop in depth interpersonal relationships with potential donors. Establishing mutual relationships often involved the need to understand the environmental context in which donors function.

> I had to go out and build relationships with people who could give and eventually did give. For me, you have to understand the environment in which those people work in and earn their money. First of all, you have to understand that giving is something that people do when they're comfortable. They're comfortable with you, they're comfortable with the school, and they're comfortable with how you operate as a leader.

Social work administrators are ethically responsible for advocating for resources to support the agencies and clients (*NASW Code of Ethics*, 2017). As such, the importance of developing and maintaining relationships is essential to this endeavor. When discussing the importance of relationships, participants reflected on this core value of the social work profession, as one that is essential to their effectiveness as a college president.

Sub-theme 2d: Ethical Responsibility to the Broader Society. According to the *NASW Code of Ethics* (2017), "*social workers challenge social injustice*" (p. 5). Gil (2013) reveals that the characteristics of a socially unjust society lie within oppression, domination, and exploitation of marginalized peoples. There is difficulty in formulating a concrete definition of social justice, as the term is contextually broad resulting in various delineations. In 2018, the International Federation of Social Workers (IFSW) issued a renewed global social work statement of ethical principles that encapsulate the promotion of social justice by *"challenging discrimination and institutional oppression, respecting diversity, providing access to equitable resources, challenging unjust policies and practices, and building solidarity."* As such, social workers are responsible for bringing a level of consciousness to those social norms that yield a false sense of security and shared acceptance within marginalized and oppressed populations. As per the *NASW Code of Ethics* (2017), a social workers ethical responsibility to the broader society

carries four distinct mandates: promote social welfare, facilitate public participation, navigate public emergencies, and engage in social and political action. Analogous to this context and much like broader society, institutes of higher education are seen as oppressive agents when there is unequal distribution of rights, resources, roles, and responsibilities among its constituents (Gil, 2013).

The concept of bringing social justice to college campuses traces over the course of two centuries with a historical focal point on higher education accessibility for minority populations (people of color, women, Native Americans, etc.). An in-depth chronology of oppression and social justice leadership extends far beyond the scope of this dissertation. Prominent to this section are social justice issues, more recently, highlighted by the National Education Association (NEA). The NEA (2018) outlines several social justice platforms pertinent to contemporary higher education, which include the promotion of racial justice as education justice, advancing racial equity in higher education, fostering inclusive and supportive environments for all students, and protecting and supporting educational policies such as the Development, Relief, and Education for Alien Minors (DREAM) Act.

In this section, participants discuss social justice advocacy as it relates to their roles as college presidents. Participants view bringing social justice initiatives to their respective campuses as an obligation and responsibility for which higher education leaders need follow. According to Abigail, "*I think universities need to have more guts* - to *take a lead in some of these areas where some things are just unacceptable."* Benjamin maintains that: *"I think first and foremost – the idea of social justice should permeate what any of us do as presidents and secondly, I think we have to value*

diversity." These powerful statements are consistent with section 6.04(c) of *NASW's Code of Ethics* that sets a mandate for social workers to promote diversity, equity, and inclusion. A succinct exploration of how multiple study participants situate social justice leadership within their role as college and university presidents begins with Adrian.

Situated in a marginalized community, Adrian wanted his institution to be a beacon of support for the community. He discussed the tireless efforts that he put forth to enact improvements to the institution and its surrounding community.

> I had to rebuild the campus and I worked with a Republican governor who got it and when I was getting money [at my institution], I had people . . . who really were not happy, because they said that we did not need an athletic complex . . . I said NO! You are wrong, we need a complex not only like yours but we need a complex that is better than yours because [in this community]– we don't have a pool [here] that is an indoor pool. That is why it is important to have it on the campus of [my institution]. They didn't understand it and nor did they care. But our [social work] profession says why should you have all of that and we have nothing. So advocacy, obviously, is important but it is a FIGHT - and you can only do that for so long. It's a real fight! It wears on you psychologically, physically, morally, and spiritually.

Adrian worked within the context of the social work profession's ethical mandate (section 6.04 [b]) to assist marginalized and oppressed populations. As he worked to raise money and improve the college's facilities, Adrian began to open the campus to the community's youth and families – not only exposing these client systems to higher education but also caring for their personal welfare. At one point in the interview, Adrian discusses feeding groups of children that would come to campus in search of food.

> We had children come to campus who were hungry. I would walk them to the dining room and feed them. And [they] said, you can't do that. I said why not. I am paying for it. They are not eating for free. Somebody said [the children] are going to come back. I said if they are hungry – I am going to feed them. So we did things like that.

Adrian also discussed how he sought to engage youth early and create a forum of accessibility to higher education by offering campus-based activities.

> We did something – we had a reading explosion where the children would come to campus. These were 3rd and 4th graders and they would spend the night. The first time I did that we had 100 children. They didn't want to go home. I had my colleagues get backpacks and all of these things for the children and I walked in and said my God this is Disney World but parents came to me and said President [Adrian] are you going to be here. Are you going to stay here with these children overnight? I said 'Of course I will be here. I'm not going anywhere. I'm scared!' They laughed. They said if you're going to be here then its ok for our children to be here. I was up all night with those children. I was amazed at how they behaved and they were fantastic and I saw some things that I won't go into detail but they just reminded me when I was a kid. They were perfect. What struck me was emotional. They did not want to go home.

When discussing issues pertaining to campus-based social justice initiatives, I sensed this overwhelming passion and emotion in Adrian for which I told him 'I feel that fire in you.' He reemphasized the amount of energy required to achieve some of the most trivial issues such as fixing the facilities and installing fire hydrants.

> My institution did not even have devices that were set up for public safety – blue lights. We did not have any of that on the campus. We also did not have a fire hydrant. We did not have a fire hydrant close to campus. There were basic things that the institution did not have and it was clearly, clearly, clearly, based on race, power, and lack of resources and there is quite a story there. I was able to do some things but it was always a struggle.

This last excerpt epitomizes Adrian's advocacy and commitment to mobilizing his institution by engaging in political action. This serves as a direct correlation to *NASW's Code of Ethics* section 6.04 (a) in which social workers should advocate and promote social justice.

Jasmine ponders her social work training when discussing outside perceptions of her decision to mobilize initiatives aimed at issues of social justice.

> I think many people wouldn't continue to say, you know, this is because we have a social work president - that we put focus on educationally at-risk populations, former foster youth, you referenced EOP students, American Indian students, veterans – you know. We created, with great deal of purpose and strategic priority, a focus on the students who often are underrepresented and we've created structures and pathways and funded positions to here and successfully through here.

Jasmine carries an obligation to engage in social and political action to create opportunities for disadvantaged student groups. However, she proceeds with a distinct knowledge of the diversity as well as encapsulating needs of students on her campus. This is commensurate with section 6.04 (c) of the *NASW Code of Ethics* mandating that social workers demonstrate cultural competence when engaging in social and political action.

Jasmine broaches the subject of social justice as a mechanism for establishing and increasing social mobility.

> We know higher education is, you know, one of the greatest engines for upward social mobility, right. We here, really are trying to say and we are doing it against all odds. We are doing it with the most underrepresented populations. We are going against our system, who says, you know, you need to raise admissions standards because you are now getting too many students who do not come with state funding. And I had said 3 times to the chancellor – not in my lifetime. We are the only public university in this region worrying about and reaching out to those populations and we will figure it out – innovatively, with philanthropy, with grant writing – but I am not going to raise admissions standards because the first groups generally to be disadvantaged by that are those underrepresented populations. You know it. I know it, right!

The aforementioned statement is guided by the mandate in which social workers should act to create equity and inclusivity for all people, particularly marginalized and oppressed students.

Jasmine also discusses the importance of engaging in difficult conversations to ensure that her multi-ethnic campus thrives while consistently addressing widespread

issues of social justice. As such, she recognizes the importance of interacting with faculty, staff, and students on campus.

> If you don't shine the spotlight on all of the issues whether it is in cultural appropriations, whether it is in micro-aggressions, whether it is having – we have series of conversations that matter – kind of bring this now very multi-cultural campus together that it's unlikely you're going to have those marginalized students successful once they leave campus. We felt it was so important – with purpose – to not just say that we are here and we'll show up at your chamber events. We are really engaged in a much more structured way with a variety of communities in addition to the ones I just mentioned to you to bring together people. Whether it's about what our next academic programs should be, whether it's about and around immigration issues - we also believe that we should help create places and spaces for being thought leaders and engaging people.

This reflection correlates with *NASW's Code of Ethics* that stipulates the importance of garnering public participation to help inform and shape organizational policy (section 6.02). We will observe the context for which Jasmine utilizes a university-in-the-environment perspective when discussing other aspects of social justice in a subsequent theme.

As a minority serving institution, Lilly indicates that the majority of her students receive federal PELL grants. She discussed the diversity of her student body and in the same context reflected on current issues affecting immigrants. The policies, more specifically the refuted DREAM Act and the contested Deferred Action on Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program, which were proposed by the Obama presidential administration to protect and support immigrants who are under the heightened threat of a new sociopolitical climate.

> We have close to two thousand DACA students on our campus. So it was incumbent on me to make sure that I expressed immediate support and help to provide resources for these students because of the large number. It affected not just those students but other students and faculty as well. And so we did mobilize around that and we were able to – working with our student government and the

> legal clinic on campus – we of course have a DREAM Center. I set up scholarships for DREAMers that and that was before [the state] permitted them to get state grants. To this day when commencement comes around and I shake everybody's hand when students are walking across – I get the most incredible [notes of] thank you from our undocumented students for their scholarships. It was making a difference whether they were able to complete their education.

Lilly recognized the need to confront this injustice of disallowing the DREAMers to continue with their education. Reacting to the sociopolitical climate, she proactively mobilized a resource center to support this student population. Similar to the other participants featured previously, the aforementioned statement displays how Lilly followed the ethical mandate of engaging in social and political action by promoting diversity, equity, and inclusion for all people (*NASW Code of Ethics*, Section 6.04[c]).

Wendy briefly talks about instances involving student protests.

> Sixty percent of my students at any given time, 53, 55, 57, 62%, are first generation. Why do we have first generation kids in America in 2018? Why are we fighting for some of the rights that they need to have in 2018? So I am going to be that voice for them. When they tell me that they are going to protest, I said YES (emphatically) what are you protesting about. Come and ask me but you can march if you want to. I am ok with it. I don't get all upset about it. That means that they believe in something. I just had that dialogue with a student who is very much – comes with a protest spirit – has some challenges but for me I just stood and I said, you know, we are not always on the same page. It is not what you say. It is how you come at it. When you disrespect other people's rights – when you take the truth out of context that's when I take issue.

This demonstration of social action, engages students in her institution as well as advocating for them. Wendy promotes and encourages students to participate in social justice activities by giving them a platform to '*speak out*'. This is indicative of the ethical mandates illustrated in sections 6.02 and 6.04(b) of *NASW's Code of Ethics* (2017).

Dylan discusses social justice in the context of the Black Lives Matter Movement. He begins by reflecting on a meeting conducted with African American student leaders, who expressed racial concerns. This action elicits an ethical responsibility to student groups on campus – encouraging participation in shaping the infrastructure of the university (*NASW Code of Ethics*, section 6.02). Dylan than charged a taskforce with researching the institutions early historical pretexts surrounding enslavement and disenfranchisement of African Americans. As such, Dylan demonstrated a cultural awareness as well as a further need to understand the pretext of oppression with respect to race that was apparent within the institution's history. This action is in direct relation to the ethical mandates pertaining to a social workers' responsibility to garner a cultural competence of their diverse client systems (*NASW Code of Ethics*, section 1.05[b]). The findings of this committee revealed that several of the institutions early presidents owned slaves. The committee followed with a series of recommendations including re-naming the buildings labeled on behalf of these presidents. Dylan's complete account of what happened after the task force presented their findings is described below.

> This committee came up with a series of recommendations that have to do with building re-naming and other – 14 recommendations – and we are going to implement all of them. The fact that I did that really kept peace on our campus. Then I created a taskforce on diversity and inclusion and community values. We just had a town hall meeting last night with their group and they have a series of recommendations – many of which overlap with the other committee and a number of things that we can do and a number of things that we are already doing. I think that is where being a social worker comes into play – understanding that part of it is community organizing. How do you get people together? In this case, figuring out what are the issues that are sweeping the country and trying to figure out how can we get ahead of them rather than be buffeted by them or battered by them.

The formation of this committee could be seen as recognition of the need to create dialogue amongst university constituents to address findings from an emergent study that illustrated the exploitation and enslavement of African Americans. Dylan realized his ethical responsibility in educating the university community as well as developing forums to address and create change.

Adrian, Jasmine, Lilly, and Dylan describe the value of social justice in fostering meaningful change on campus, in communities, and among diverse groups of students. In summarizing the accounts of the participants featured in this section, an intersectionality between social justice and other previously described core social work values is evident. More importantly, these reflections illustrate a direct correlation between each participant's actions and the ethical mandates found within *NASW's Code of Ethics*. The next section explores how the study participants act with competence to further effect change, mediate conflict, and navigate difficult circumstances.

Sub-theme 2e: Leading with Competence. According to the NASW *Code of Ethics* (2017), "*social workers practice within their areas of competence and develop and enhance their professional expertise*" (p. 6). Up to this point, participants described various scenarios in which they acted from positions of competent, inclusive, and accountable leadership when transferring social work's core values into ethical practice. In an effort to elaborate on the core value of competence, I begin this section with a brief exploration of how study participants utilize their practical social work experiences to stimulate change and reinforce support to various departments or divisions within their respective institutions.

Dylan recalls two aspects of his social work training that have served him when addressing available student services beginning with supporting and preventing sexual assault on campus.

> [This said organization] is coming out with a report that mentions my institution several times in their case examples of the way to approach sexual assault. You have to know that when you do that, then you highlight an issue like sexual assault – immediately after that you're going to have more reports of it – not necessarily more cases. Just as in social work, I learned a long time ago that if you have a big campaign about reporting child abuse - you will have a lot more reports and people could jump to the conclusion that there is more child abuse. No. There is not more child abuse – there are more reports of it and so taking seriously that these are important issues . . . You need to have structures in place. [My institution] has had a sexual assault services program for more than 25 years. Knowing that in the environment that we are living in – we needed to expand staff there.

In further discussing this statement with Dylan, he clearly displayed knowledge of nation-wide institutional procedures involving campus-based sexual assault. Additionally, he exhibits a level of competence that is situated within the ethical mandate of the *NASW Code of Ethics* (section 4.01(b) that discusses the social workers need to engage in professional development and lifelong learning to support continued proficiency.

Dylan then discusses the increasing prevalence of mental health issues among college students.

> I guess another thing where my social work background comes in play – we have a counseling service for psychiatric issues and increasingly a number of students coming to college have psychiatric issues, mental health issues of one sort or another. 12% or more of our students come to college as freshman already on pretty heavy psychotropic medications. That's not just my institution – that is around the country. So knowing that, we need to expand the personnel in the counseling center because these are issues that you can't ignore and when money is tight – you have to make tough decisions. That means money is not going to go to something else because I believe it needs to go to this.

Administratively, Dylan understands the need to allocate resources (*NASW Code of Ethics*, section 3.07[a]) to areas within his institution where the need for student services is prevalent. These decisions are empirically based with a goal of being proactive in response to emergent student mental health trends.

Lilly discusses how her preparation as a social work faculty equipped her with addressing prominent issues found on college campuses.

> When I was a faculty member – I taught human sexuality so that means I'm very well versed with LBGTQ issues as well as sexual assault and sexual assault prevention. I take that issue on from having a knowledge background as well as a value background and that has helped our campus. Our Title IX coordinator – we work hand and hand. We got external laudatory comments about our program and our approach to sexual assault on our campus. I have been involved in training other presidents in how they need to deal with this and why they need to know about it and how they need to respond to it because those who come from different backgrounds – it was kind of like a wakeup call for them. They just didn't have the background to understand the depth and the importance of dealing with these issues on your campus.

Lilly's expertise with Title IX policies and procedures have allowed her institution to excel in addressing campus-based sexual harassment where so many other institutions have seemingly struggled. Lilly facilitates trainings for other collegiate presidents and in essence provides continuing education to address the emergent issues surrounding Title IX policies and procedures. A correlation can be inferred between Lilly's actions and the ethical mandate set forth in the *NASW Code of Ethics, section 3.08* that requires social workers to facilitate or arrange professional development for all staff for whom they are responsible. In Lilly's case, she may feel an added responsibility to train the next generation of college presidents regarding Title IX protocols.

Sub-theme 2f: In Service to the Institution. According to the *NASW Code of Ethics* (2017), "*Social workers' primary goal is to help people in need and to address*

social problems" (p. 5). The concepts of service and obligation are also interconnected to the role that these study participants have forged for themselves within the constructs of leading a college or university. This is evident from Abigail's statement regarding her purpose for assuming a presidency – "*I just wanted to be of service."* Adrian similarly references his sole purpose to the institution – "*I am only here to serve. I don't want anything from you but what I want you to do is to support this campus any way you can."* Adrian also demonstrated how he modeled this behavior.

> I go out at 5:00 am in the morning. I'd swing in and I have my gloves and the guys that worked in maintenance said you don't need to do this. I said – don't worry about it. I got this. I wanted them to see that I was not better than they were. That I was willing – it was change through practice, change through behavior.

Aside from leading by example, Adrian also displays a thorough commitment to the institution. The *NASW Code of Ethics* posits that social workers should honor their commitments to their organizations (section 3.09[a]) as well as evolve the infrastructure aimed at supporting organizational efficacy (section 3.09[b]). During the interview, Adrian consistently discussed the importance of constructing, restoring, and maintaining facilities as a mechanism to safeguard the institution and attract prospective students. Adrian's commitment to the restoration and the beautification of his institution's campus was resolute.

Daniel also discusses the concept of service by establishing and maintaining presence by being visible and engaging in various action behaviors. This was a significant aspect found within his leadership style.

> I am a big believer of getting to your job early. You leave your job late. You role model for your employees what your expectations are. I walked around campus two or three times a day. I was always in the cafeteria. I always went to as many

> events as I could. There was always a presence of me there. I got up in the morning. I walked to campus. I picked up garbage. I talked to the maintenance people as they arrived in the morning. I went over to my office and did my e-mails. I got everything ready – I turned the lights on. Then I went home and took a shower and came back at the start of business. But everyone knew that I was there and I had a presence. I think that really instilled values from the top with: 'this is what my expectations were about hard work.' Students were the center of everything that I was about and providing student services and support 24 hours a day is an activity that we all participated in.

Daniel utilizes the concept of service as a grounding aspect of his leadership style. He prides himself on being visible and leading by example. His service to the campus community primarily focused on his obligation to students. Daniel's efforts to create a presence on campus refers to section 5.01(c), in the *NASW Code of Ethics*, in which social workers are reminded of the importance of their own contributions in supporting their organizations.

Jason concludes this segment by discussing the importance of maintaining a level of self-awareness when assuming a college presidency and it is essentially one of service.

> At the end of the day, if you take a presidency – you understand that it is never about you and it is never about keeping your job. It's always about the institution, what's best for the institution, and what's best for the students – even if you have to fall on your sword.

Jason's statement also infers the responsibility that he has in maintaining the integrity of the social work profession. Jason contextually alludes to section 5.01(a) and 5.01(b) of the *NASW Code of Ethics*. Whereas section 5.01(a) refers to an altruistic personification for "*high standards of practice"* (p. 27); section 5.01(b) elicits the need for social workers to uphold the values, ethics, and integrity of the social work profession.

Summary

This section discussed how social work values and ethical principles illustrated in the *NASW Code of Ethics* (2017) contribute to the experiences found in each research participant's presidency. As each college or university president discussed their lived experience, it became evident that the core values of the social work profession were interconnected to their institutional leadership. In organizing the contents of this theme, I found that there were many instances where scenarios involving integrity, dignity and worth of the person, importance of human relationships, social justice, competence, and service as well as the ethical principles illustrated in *NASW's Code of Ethics* (2017) intersected within each participant's experience and the stories that they shared. I began this section with a quotation from Lilly, who discusses how the core values of the social work profession and those of higher education are seemingly compatible. I conclude this section with a quotation from Norah, who sums up the totality of the core values when discussing her college presidency.

> The whole notion of self-determination, empowerment, individualism, and social justice. Be accountable. All of those principals are important in guiding what I do in building community, community pride, recognizing differences and similarities. All of those values have helped to guide my work and who I am.

Theme 3: Making Tough Decisions

Over the course of this research study, participants recalled instances when they had to make very difficult decisions. Several participants allude to decision-making as a process, which requires council from trusted associates, obtaining a depth of necessary information, and a singular, bold, self-responsibility. In some instances, the process for making and ultimately rendering decisions revolved around employee termination,

managing crises, deliberating strategic actions, and dividing or eliminating resources. Nevertheless, participants continue to draw from the *NASW Code of Ethics* when discussing scenarios when facing difficult decisions.

Wendy acknowledges the pressures involved when making difficult but necessary decisions for which she views as being always for the betterment of the university. She shares her process in the excerpt below.

> A president has to be willing to make the difficult decisions. You have to be able to do that without even blinking your eye sometime knowing that it can cost you. Some people have 2000 or 3000 employees but none of them could be your best friend because you have to be able to put any of them on leave or terminate them just based on something – an allegation, a charge from a student or, you know, another colleague. When I have to make those difficult decisions – I am a very prayerful person so I pray and I call folks and say this is going to be hard but I am going to have to do what is in the best interest. I will then bounce it off – there is about 3 or 4 people in my cabinet that I am very comfortable with that they will say we had a feeling that you were going to go in that direction.

Wendy draws directly from the ethical mandate found within the *NASW Code of Ethics* (section 1.04[c]) involving a social workers competence. This guideline postulates that "*when generally recognized standards do not exist with respect to an emerging area of practice, social workers should exercise careful judgment and take responsible steps to ensure the competence of their work and to protect clients from harm*" (p. 9).

The responses among participants were very similar in terms of navigating the decision making process. Many of the participants concur with Wendy when discussing the usage of an initial team-action process. Participants once again emphasized the importance of channeling a team approach when seeking directional consensus. They recognized that the role of a college president comes with a singular responsibility to

assume accountability for all critical decisions rendered by the university. Here are a few instances in which participants discuss decision-making.

> **Lilly.** I have a very team-oriented style. Ultimately, at the end of the day – I am going to have to make a decision but I would rather make decisions that are consensus-based with my senior leadership team and so they know that I am going to consult with them. I am going to appreciate their feedback. I am not always going to agree with it but generally speaking, we really try to come to decisions on a team consensual basis.

Lilly discusses a dependence on the ethical principle of interdisciplinary collaboration, as posited in the *NASW Code of Ethics* (section 2.03[a].

> **Jason.** When these issues come up and when you need to navigate them, I tend to be one that takes a lot of counsel. I am not inclined to turn it over to somebody else or let someone else speak on my behalf of the university. I think that it sends a better message when you as a leader of the university are sharing that message, particularly if that message has to do with something controversial or bad news.

Jason recognizes the need for consultation. The *NASW Code of Ethics* recognizes this premise as an ethical mandate in which "*social workers should seek the advice and counsel of colleagues whenever such consultation is in the best interests of clients*" (section 2.05[a], p. 19).

> **Emily.** I was a collaborative leader. I was a leader that, you know, I believe very much in teams. I believe very much in participatory decision-making. I wasn't afraid to make a decision but I really tried to – because I think if the appropriate people own the decision than it's more likely to be successful. So that was my leadership style. I relished giving people, who were good at their jobs, the authority and the runway to do their job and to work closely with me but, you know, they got to do their thing, which may not be necessarily the way I do it.

Through this account, Emily also empathizes the importance of interdisciplinary collaboration in terms of executing decisions consistent with the ethical mandate found in section 2.03(a) of the *Code of Ethics.*

> **Jasmine.** We never make a decision here without saying is this flash point. Does this need to be communicated? To whom, by whom, what are the talking points and do we all have the same talking points?

Jasmine created a procedure to ensure communications are consistently structured and appropriately disseminated. This correlates to the ethical principles governing the social work administrator (section 3.07[b]) that infers to the development and application of a non-discriminate allocation procedure (*NASW Code of Ethics*, 2017).

Decisions are a necessary function of organizational leadership. When confronted with difficult decisions, many participants shared feelings of uneasiness and empathy. Wendy previously discussed prayer as a means of support when making difficult decisions.

> When you're communicating hard decisions I think to understand why, to recognize the possible disappointment or the emotions that may be surrounding the decision that others may be feeling um and my own disappointment you know that I'm sorry that we can't do this because I really want to. And then, you know, it's hard to swallow sometimes - I think people understand that you genuinely care about them you just can't do it. So the care part has to always be there, I think, so that it's not seen as a cold act - you know.

Despite the emotions involved in the decision making process, Wendy understands the need to set distinct, transparent boundaries. Yet again, a correlation can be made to the ethical mandate set forth in the *NASW Code of Ethics*, section 3.01(b) that involves supervision and consultation.

Norah describes the need to make tough decisions as a painful act for which ultimately comes with some criticism.

> I have made decisions - not unilaterally. The Board made decisions, I implemented those decisions, and I got whiplashed by a small group of faculty who felt that those were administrative decisions.

As she discussed the decision-making process, Norah reflected on advice that she received from a mentor.

> The longer you're in those positions, you're going to accumulate decisions and whether or not you worked with a committee and you consulted every sub-committee you know on the campus - at the end of the day – they're going to hold you responsible for that decision.

Competent decision-making is a necessary function of leadership and essential to the college presidency. Aside from the empathy participants shared several scenarios in which they understood the responsibility associated with all decisions; and in these scenarios, they did not exhibit any regret for any of the decisions that they have made on behalf of the university. In most cases, participants derived at perspectives associated with the ethical principles found within the *NASW Code of Ethics*.

Norah's account was difficult to decipher with the amount of information available to me. I did not have the opportunity to delve into specific scenarios with Norah nor could it be determined whether a conflict of interest existed between herself and the Board of Trustees. However, it felt like she was placed in a very difficult situation making it tough to appease any particular party. In revisiting her experience, I asked Norah if she would assume the positions of the past. She responded very candidly: *Absolutely and I would make the same decisions! Absolutely.*

Theme 4: The University in the Environment

In the previous section, Benjamin introduced the theoretical construct of person-in-environment when discussing the competencies gained from the social work profession. As theoretical construct, the person-in-environment attributes the actions and responses associated with human behavior to be a product of one's physical environment

(Green & McDermott, 2010). The ecological centrality of this premise in relation to the social work profession has diminished in recent years - shifting from determining structural causation to evaluating evidence-based interventions (Reisch & Andrews, 2002).

Critiques of the literature suggest that colleges and universities have a responsibility to support and serve their surrounding communities (Baber & Lindsay, 2007; Maurrase, 2001; Freeman, 2005). Several participants previously discussed how they engaged the internal and external university environments when enacting the core value of social justice. As such, participants discussed their familiarity with the demographics and socioeconomic needs associated with the surrounding communities. In this section, participants discuss how they analogously utilize the concept of person-in-environment when discussing their institutions' transactions within local communities.

Emily discusses how her experience as the executive director of a human services organization helped provide a lens for what her institution's obligation to the community should be. In her previous role, Emily recalls the local community's expectations in terms of receiving support from her social services agency. She utilized this experience to mobilize her university to help support its local communities.

> I also brought a different perspective around what, you know, our college should be doing as a vital member of the community in our role to live our mission so I think, you know, one of the biggest challenges has to do with faculty. Both faculty relations and faculty understanding of the shifts and changes in higher education – the importance of, you know, being apart – higher education having a different place and a different role …communities are expecting that.

During our interview, Emily reflected on a time in which she had to mobilize her institution to prevent the closing of a local community center. Emily further references

the challenges presented by faculty when she essentially mobilized resources to carry out the institution's mission.

> The mayor was closing community centers around the city and he called us up and asked us would we do something- would we pilot a unique program and take over a community center and run it. So we did – I'm simplifying a process cause it took a very long time because a lot of people said that this isn't the role of academia – to be running community programs – um but we basically said that this is [said institution's] mission – to improve the lives of children and families and it's very much tied to the mission. So eventually the faculty bought into it and so we, you know, we comprised.

Emily's adherence to the institutional mission eventually served as the inspirational platform for creating momentum among university constituents.

Jason acknowledges the mutually supportive relationship between the university and the community. Whereas the surrounding communities are reliant on the university economically, particularly as a channel for residential employment, the university seeks to establish reciprocal partnerships that seek to support the community while simultaneously bolstering institutional enrollment and monetary donations.

> I think the relationship with the community is critical to the success of the institution. [My institution] was considered an economic driver of the community and sort of critical to the survival of the community. So, the partnerships between the elementary and middle schools and the local business, and local leaders are pretty critical.

Abigail discusses how she mobilizes her institution to assist those in need. She gave inferences to several crises in which her institution's resources were tantamount to helping alleviate community distress. However, Abigail also shares that her institution is very active in supporting the local communities through employment as well as numerous institutional initiatives.

> So those kinds of things we are constantly doing – reaching out to the community. One of the local food banks depends on us big time to fill the pantry every

> November to last somewhat a good portion through the winter. You know, we collect tons of food. So I don't know if it answers your question but we see our community as not just here on campus but our local community as well.

Adrian discusses the challenges confronting the community surrounding his institution. He recognized the need to improve as well as add to his institution's facilities so that community residents would have access the varying resources. Adrian discusses what is involved in accessing these resources as he further depicts the university's importance to the community. Nevertheless, he maintains a belief in the institution's vital importance to the community – even when (in his estimation) most believed that his conjectures were exaggerated.

> I had to rebuild the campus and I worked with a Republican governor who got it and when I was getting money in ABC, I had people, who really weren't happy, and because they said that we didn't need an athletic complex . . . I said NO. You are wrong, we need a complex not only like yours but we need a complex that is better than yours because on the west side of X – we don't have a pool on the west side of X that is an indoor pool. That is why it is important to have it on the campus. They didn't understand it and nor did they care.

Theme 5: Social Work's Tangible Skill Sets for Leading a College or University

The framework for social work education is situated into two components: a generalist practice curriculum followed by a practice-focused concentration. The generalist curriculum introduces a series of basic core competencies that are rooted in the profession's historical underpinnings, theoretical constructs and practice methods, understanding of human behaviors across the lifespan, and integration of social work's core values and ethical practices (Robbins, 2014). The practice focused education aims to advance these skills and translate them into clinical and policy practices including assessment, evaluation, research, and treatment (Anderson, 1986).

The frameworks for generalist and practiced-focused social work education continue to evolve, as evidenced by CSWE's recent revisions of its Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards (EPAS). Until recently, educational competence in social work was largely the byproduct of curriculum design - emphasizing content and structure as a determinant for professional aptitude (Council on Social Work Education, 2015). CSWE's introduction of the 2015 EPAS has shifted this focus away from curriculum to a competency-based education that is indicative of student learning outcomes (Council on Social Work Education, 2015). Table 3 illustrates the nine EPAS competencies as designated by CSWE's Commission on Accreditation (COA) and the Commission on Educational Policy (COEP). These competencies represent a contingent of measurable skill sets that social work students must demonstrate within the classroom and field education experiences. A series of practice behaviors, outlined by the COA and COEP, serve to guide social work education's curricular delivery.

Table 3:

2015 EPAS Social Work Competencies

Competency	Practice Behavior
Competency 1	Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior
Competency 2	Engage Diversity and Difference in Practice
Competency 3	Advance Human Rights and Social, Economic, and Environmental Justice
Competency 4	Engage in Practice-informed Research and Research-informed Practice

Competency 5	Engage in Policy Practice
Competency 6	Engage with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities
Competency 7	Assess Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities
Competency 8	Intervene with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities
Competency 9	Evaluate Practice with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities

Whereas the previous section discusses how study participants utilized the core values and ethical principles of the social work profession within their roles as college or university presidents; this next theme references the skill sets and social work training associated with this lived experience. The era for which these study participants engaged in social work education dates back several decades; and given the advancement of CSWE's EPAS over these past decades (Anderson, 1986; Robbins, 2014), it is presumed that the mandated competencies for professional social work aptitude has invariably evolved since each participant's educational journey. Nevertheless, an opportunity exists to see how those educational skill sets translate into today's modern competency-based social work education, as illustrated in the 2015 EPAS. The excerpts below reveal how several participants utilize their social work training in the context of the presidency. These skill sets will be analyzed in accordance with the aforementioned competencies listed in Table 3 as well as their associated practice behaviors. In many cases, participants highlight a common thread of essential skills, particularly diversity practices, which they deem imperative as organizational leaders.

> **Lilly.** When it gets down below the level of values, I think, you need to talk about skill set. And one question was how is your social work training utilized? I use it every day. Every day. Examples – listening. Being empathetic. Problem Solving. Crisis intervention. Community organizing. Policy. I mean – there is not an area that I learned about in terms of social work that I don't use today. In fact, I made the comment to some of my colleagues – you need a social work background these days because it is very helpful quite frankly.

In her excerpt above, Lilly is discussing skill sets that are related to various competencies. Her reference to policy can be a direct interpretation of the practice behaviors found in *Competency 5: Engage in Policy Practice.* The expected practice behaviors consist of "*identifying social policy at the local, state, and federal level that impacts well-being, service delivery, and access to social services; assessing how social welfare and economic policies impact the delivery of and access to social services; and the application of critical thinking to analyze, formulate, and advocate for policies that advance human rights and social, economic, and environmental justice"* (Council on Social Work Education, 2015, p. 8). In the previous section, Lilly referenced her support of immigrant populations (DREAMers) that are currently impacted by retracted federal policies as well as the incumbent sociopolitical climate that threatens this population's status. Her position was supported by understanding the policies directly associated to this particular client system.

> **Emily.** It's about people and it's about trust. And that's where the social work training comes in really handy because social work training teaches you about people. It teaches you how people work together, how people connect, how you respect.

Aside from reiterating the practice value of integrity, Emily's response coincides with her ability to engage diverse client systems (Competency 2). The practice behaviors associated with this competency include "*applying and communicating an understanding*

of the importance of diversity and difference in shaping life experiences in practice at the micro, mezzo, and, macro levels" (Council on Social Work Education, 2015, p. 7).

> **Abigail.** I only remember the first principal of social work ever learned and that is to meet the client where they are at and not impose on them where you are or where you like them to be and I use that every day. You know, I might see something differently but that's not where people are at or whatever and if I have to be able to respond to where they are and either help them to see something differently or adjust my own position to where they are.

Abigail's connotation also refers to social work education practice behaviors that are under the auspices of Competency 2; specifically presenting oneself as a learner and engaging clients as "*experts of their own experience*" (Council on Social Work Education, 2015, p. 7) and applying self-awareness and self-regulation to one's own person biases, particularly when working with different client systems.

> **Norah.** Oh my goodness. One, starting where the client is, right! Start where the institution is. I can work across different populations. I… whether individuals are from the Muslim community, the African American community, the Jewish community, the Latino community. What I am saying to you is that it has been an advantage. The LBGTQ – I've gotten honorific awards from that community so I used my social work training, my understanding of people and organizations – to use what I have as assets – follow me?

Norah also concurs with Abigail in terms of understanding the circumstances affecting various client systems. When referencing advantage, Norah is referring to various skill sets seen in competencies 7 and 8, which include developing mutually agreed upon goals, inter-professional collaboration, negotiation, and mediation. She refers to some of these skill sets in the next section when discussing the university-in-environment.

> **Benjamin.** Being a president requires working with diverse thinking, diverse attitudes, and all of these things, - I think were fundamental to what you get in social work and social work education. You know - the focus on diversity, the focus on relationships, the focus on person-in-environment and the importance of taking that within the context of the person-in-environment.

Benjamin's reference to understanding persons-in-environment in a direct reference to practice behaviors associated with Competencies 6-9 of the 2015 EPAS, which accentuate the engagement, assessment, intervention, and evaluation of practice with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. As such, the practice behaviors associated with these competencies discuss the "*application of knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in-environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks in interventions with clients and constituencies*" (Council on Social Work Education, 2015, p. 9).

> **Daniel.** Without a doubt, my being a good listener derived from the values of the profession including social justice, and advocacy for the underserved – the poor and disadvantaged. Social work taught me how to effectively help others and improve their circumstances.

Daniel's account of advancing social justice is in direct relation to Competency 3. He references the practice behavior of "*understanding the impact of social, economic, and environmental justice in effort to advocate for human rights at the individual and systems levels*" (Council on Social Work Education, 2015, p. 8) within the context of this excerpt. Daniel makes further reference to his preparation as a social worker on two additional occasions during the interview. This next excerpt alludes to Benjamin's inference regarding diversity within the context of Competency 2.

> Learning from social work about the value of diversity enabled me to consistently hire highly skilled faculty, including women and faculty of color, at every institution served. It was through my social work experience that I saw the wastefulness and sadness caused by exclusion.

Lastly, I add an interesting take from Daniel about the ability to work with inadequate resources while working to increase his institutions external endowments.

> As social workers learn to work with limited means, I always have been aware of resources needed to carry out a mission.

Jason. In his discussion of social work training, Jason adds, "*I think that my social work background, you know, prepared me well for the emotions and the politics that come with the presidency*." However, he quickly adds that being a social worker was not necessarily going to help him accelerate in the role. Jason also adds a different perspective for 'meeting an institution where it is at' that is not associated with his training as a social worker.

> I don't think being a social worker makes me a better president. Having been an ACE Fellow has certainly made me a better president. But not every college or university needs a social worker as president. I think it depends on where the institution is. I think my timing at [said institution] – I think I was the right person at the right time.

This aspect of Jason's account may not necessarily be associated within any of the practice competencies illustrated in Table 4. However, within the context of his entire interview, Jason showcases the skill set directly related to Competency 1: the Demonstration of Ethical and Professional Behavior. Over the course of his interview, Jason alludes to practice behaviors associated with professional demeanor, ethical decision-making, and the willingness to seek counsel when navigating difficult circumstances.

Rose. In concluding this section, Rose recalls the importance of social work's core values and discusses practices among the various different client systems as a skill set that served her greatly in the presidency.

> The dignity and worth of individuals, the importance of relationships, the importance of social justice, and you know, transparency, service, integrity and the importance of competence; but the skill set then was probably the ability to take apart and dissect that very complex context and social workers, I think are

> really good at that whether they are coming out of a framework where they, you know, move more toward being a clinician with the dynamics of families, groups, and communities, or whatever they've done. They are really good at unmasking and pulling that apart and seeing where the strengths are, where the issues are, and then putting it back together in a different way. So I think that's what I was doing every single day, every day.

The practice skills that Rose is referring to are also in relation to competencies 6-9 and consist of the integration of human behavior and the social environment and engaging client systems at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels.

Summary

Over the course of this section, participants discussed how the competencies gained from social work training translate into a value-based, ethical practice that is conducive for effective organizational leadership. Participants discuss varying competencies including advocacy, crisis intervention, diversity, equity, and inclusion as well as multi-level systems practice. The practice behaviors associated with these tangible skills were discussed in the context of the modern EPAS, as established by CSWE. In Theme 5, an exploration of how the varying skill sets gained from the social work profession equates to preparation for the college presidency.

Sub-theme 5a: Differing Perceptions Exist. Prior to the conclusion of each interview, I posed on final question to all study participants. *Why do so few social workers pursue collegiate presidencies?*

The responses were a testament not only to their experiences as college or university presidents but also to their tenure as academic deans and university administrators, particularly as it relates to the perceptions of social work skill sets. Norah discussed the biases levied on the social work profession as compared to other

disciplines. *"There is an explicit bias in some of the sub groups within higher education about whether or not social work is a profession and a discipline that can add value," says* Norah. As she continued to discuss the perceived limitations of the profession, Norah laments on the where social work fits into the spectrum of institutional need.

> Let me talk about the respectability. Intellectual respectability. For some reason or another the academy values medicine, law, and business. I think the academy goes through phases. At one point in time, you had to be a lawyer almost to be a president and then there was a shift. You had to be a dean of a business college – a super business college or you had to be a dean of an L S & A (liberal science and arts) to even think about a chancellorship or presidency because those disciplines seemingly have one reach. L S & A deans have a huge portfolio generally and the business piece. It is a business; higher education is a business so the bottom line becomes important. So having someone who has been a dean of a college of business might meet that set of criteria. And then law – there were a lot of legal issues facing higher education at one point in time – freedom of speech, etc. so think about where social work might fit in. Sometimes it's hard – I've had donors that said well gee – you were trained as a social worker – what do you know about higher education? You follow me?

At one point in the interview, Norah mentioned several social work deans and administrators that were seemingly passed over at one point or another for college presidency. Norah's account also supports the literature in chapter 2 that discusses the evolution of the college presidency from a disciplinary perspective. With the evolution of college presidency shifting to the multi-disciplinarian (Selingo, Chheng, & Clark, 2017), the need to revisit perceptions of social work's stature from an interdisciplinary perspective is critical.

Daniel questions this possible bias as well. *"I have wondered if there might be a hiring bias because social workers may not be perceived as business-savvy or as part of a traditional academic discipline for executive-level leadership in higher education."* However, he contemplates whether there are actually fewer social workers in higher

education that are interested in pursuing these positions as compared with people in other disciplines. "*On the other hand, many highly educated social workers might be more interested in advocacy and direct delivery of social services, time for which takes precedence over other pursuits*."

Adrian and Rose reference the perceptions relating to capability and preparedness, as to reasons social work deans and senior administrators are not considered strong candidates for the presidency. According to Adrian, *I don't think that social work deans are seen as someone who has the capability or skills or preparation to be a president because they look at others: business, public health but not social work.* Rose adds to this by sharing a belief that social work professionals are not viewed as individuals that can make the necessary decisions required in organizational leadership. She posits, "*A person with a social work degree really doesn't have the hard knowledge and skill to navigate. We're fuzzy headed. We're fuzzy thinking and we're indecisive and we think everything is bread and roses and we just cannot make the tough decisions."*

Dylan reflects on his time as a social work dean when making an interesting observation as to why social workers are not perceived as viable candidates.

> The problem with going into those kinds of things as a social worker is that many universities did not have a school of social work so they did not know where you fit. And in some of the others – the social work school is the bottom of the barrel at that university so that doesn't help you either.

When asked to elaborate on 'bottom of the barrel,' Dylan begins by citing revenue sharing as being lacking in comparison to other colleges and schools (i.e. business, medicine, law, etc.) under the auspices of the university-at-large. He also references the

lack of alumni donations and endowed funding received by schools or departments of social work, as factors from a business perspective that impede one's candidacy.

Sub-theme 5b: Change Perception by Promoting the Professional Skill Set.

In 2016, the American Association of State Colleges and Universities (AASCU) introduced a presidential competency model that illustrates skill sets required to meet the needs of the evolving college presidency. The AASCU model features four main competencies or traits – each with various underlying, associative skill sets. Several of the competencies listed in Table 4 are congruent to the values (servant leader, integrity, importance of human relationships) and skills (problem solving, communication, etc.) discussed in previous themes. Whereas this chapter's previous themes discuss the intrinsic values and skill sets shared by these social work presidents, this section experientially positions participants to respond to the levels of preparation required for social workers aspiring to the presidency. In several instances, participants reference several of the constructs situated in the AASCU's Presidential Competency Model because they align with the core values and skill sets of the social work profession.

Table 4:

AASCU Presidential Competency Model

Competencies & Characteristics	Descriptive Traits
Management Competencies	Knowledge of the Academic Enterprise Business Enterprise Management Resource Development and Stewardship
Interpersonal Competencies	Formal and Informal Communication Positively Engaged Relationship Development and Maintenance Climate Creation and Maintenance

Personal Characteristics	Integrity Servant Leader Continuous Self-Development Resilience
Leadership Competencies	Problem Solving People and Team Development Strategic Vision Adversity Leadership

Daniel's immediate recommendation to the aspiring social work president directly aligns with the management competencies outlined in the AASCU's model. He also discusses the need to increase one's portfolio through evidence-based commitment to students and scholarly contribution.

> Make sure you learn the financial and political ropes of higher education by serving on departmental, campus, and community committees and task forces. Start programs that serve the needs of the community and bring in the funding to support them. Collaborate with colleagues to publish relevant, profession-advancing research and presenting at conferences. Work your way up the ladder by serving students first. Act as a collegial team member and gain 'buy-in' by incorporating team members' ideas into your plans. Be kind, respectful, and true to yourself.

Adrian's response also aligns with the management competencies of the AACSU's model. He elaborates on the need to understand the academic environment as well as enhancing resources through local, state, and federal levels.

> I would say that the most important thing is to link up with someone who knows what they're doing. Who understands the academy, which understands the importance of academic rigor, understands the network and the systems that take place, finance – you got to understand finance. You have to understand the core in terms of student support and, you better, understand facility development. Those are the keys and I think, by virtue, by being in social work and being a part of the profession that you have an appreciation of community politics at the state level; and to the best of your ability the local municipality level; and understanding if you can get some resources at the federal level because unfortunately some universities struggle with getting money at the federal level because they are small and they don't have the network, they don't have the system, and they don't have the infrastructure in place to support those dollars.

Jason offers a plethora of recommendations aimed at preparing an aspiring social worker for a college presidency.

> First response would be to get a doctorate. Second, secure mentors that are doing what you want to do. Third, make sure that you get into the classroom and teach. Fourth, establish good relationships with senior leaders in other areas that are not your expertise – you know, provost or academic deans, faculty, institutional advancement, budget personnel, etc. I think it is very important to become connected to those folks and begin to get an understanding of their view of higher education and if an opportunity for a prestigious fellowship presents itself – that is something that I would advise one to explore.

Jason's response was clearly a reflection of the mentorship that he received as well as his experience as an ACE Fellow. His emphasis on teaching is reflective of his direct approach to understanding the evolving dynamics of student needs. Jason's answers are also consistent with his philosophy of establishing relationships and channeling a team approach.

Rose recommends developing a strong network beyond the confines of social work education. She mentions the importance of pursuing American Council on Education (ACE) Fellowship as well as attending leadership institutes to prepare social workers for the demands of the college presidency. Interestingly, Rose talks about the need to 'fill in the gaps' in which social workers may have inadequate preparation.

> I think they [aspiring social workers] got to expand their network dramatically beyond social work education. You want to go to ACE meetings. You want to become a fellow. You want to expand your network in that way. – I think my advice would be identify where your strengths are but identify also where the gaps are and there are plenty of gaps around financial management, grant procurement, fund raising – some social workers do a lot of fund raising. Most pass and let someone else do it. And we need to strengthen our skills in advocacy, I believe but determine where the gaps are and then look for programs that are going to help you fill those gaps with substantive knowledge that you can take then with you into the presidency.

Norah discusses preparation for individuals that are much more in line with schools of social work.

> Take on roles that are more central to the campus. I served on the Chancellor's committee on the status of women for the entire XYZ campus. The campus invested in me. I went to Harvard to learn about leadership and management. I took additional certificates. Take them – if you can afford them. Some of them are costly and require release time. That helps. Then move out of your college or school to take on campus-wide initiatives.

Lilly provides a very elaborate assessment of the preparation needed when assuming the role of a college or university president.

> I will give you the same advice that I give anybody who asks me that question, which is a common question and that is look at your current skills set. Look at your portfolio of experiences and do an assessment. I mean you can do this through leadership institutes at ACE or Askew or APLU. I mean there are many different leadership institutes but basically the message is this: do a very careful, honest – either on your own or with help – an assessment of your current skill set and experiences and then map that against the skill set and experiences that being a provost or president needs and where you have gaps. If you don't know anything about fundraising – you need to volunteer – put yourself in positions or in roles where you can get that experience. If you have no experience in athletics put yourself in a position to get some of that. If you have not worked in student affairs put yourself in a position where you can have some of those experiences. Some of the leadership institutes . . . literally structure those experiences either on your own campus or somebody else's. It is really filling in the gaps so if a search committee says, "tell us about your fundraising experience," you can say you have some and here they are. If they ask about something else – you understand it. If they ask about how you handle crises, you know, media flare ups on social media (whatever it is that you don't have) - make it your job and your point to get those kinds of experiences so that your portfolio - if you will, your vita, your resume – what you done really shows that you, might not have done it full-time, but you done something that you are familiar with and I would say, as well – keep up with the issues and trends in higher education in general.

Seeking Mentorship. When discussing the acquisition of skill sets, participants often alluded to two key factors in their preparation: mentorship and leadership training. Every stage of career advancement had required a level of adjustment for the study

population. This section provides commentary on the impact of these two attributes for participants either during their journey or while situated in the presidency.

The literature regarding the importance of mentorship for leadership development in higher education consistently illustrates its value and necessity in terms of career advancement (Brown, 2005; Cullen & Luna, 1993). All participants in this study cited mentorship as being instrumental in their careers. As detailed in prior sections of this chapter, direct mentorship resonated throughout various stages of each participant's journey - from early in their social work careers on thru the pursuit of doctoral education and ultimately as they entered leadership positions within higher education. All alluded to having multiple mentors who were influential in their careers. In a study involving the impact of mentorship for female college presidents, Brown (2005) highlighted studies by Queralt (1982) and Scanlon (1997) that discuss the value of multiple mentorships for female career advancement in higher education. Norah's testimony involving her tutelage of multiple mentors supports this finding. *I still have mentors so I had at least 3 male mentors and then I had a female mentor. Even when I was dean and when I became chancellor – I have mentors today whom I look to for advice.*

When asked about her experience with mentors, Rose provides more depth regarding her experience with multiple mentors.

> First, I had a strong female mentor that was a clinician - a woman that would never take no for anything and gave me the courage to, over time, do what I did but within the academy. The president of the university allowed me to stay at the institution and do the ACE fellowship. The Chancellor of the University system was a very – both men (President and Chancellor) were very, very strong mentors to me. You have to have people that you can trust to give you good advice or help you think through the issues really clearly.

When posed with the question surrounding the importance of mentorship, Lilly emphatically states "*HUGELY IMPORTANT! HUGELY IMPORTANT"!* Similarly, all participants equated mentorship with various traits – observation, guidance, experiential learning, public speaking, and navigating systems. Mentors generally came in the form of a social work dean, provost, or president, particularly as participants began to assume positions of leadership. An analysis of research transcripts revealed that these individuals had encouraged participants to move forward in their pursuit of a presidency. In his role as Vice President of Student Affairs, Jason recalls the guidance he received by the president of his institution - *I mean John Maine* (Pseudonym) *was key to my being a college & university president because he encouraged me to do so.*

Adrian cited two social work deans that were influential to his growth and in his estimation had the traits and leadership skills required for a presidency. The first was briefly introduced in an earlier segment when Adrian discussed his inspiration for pursuing a PhD. He adds insight here on the value of his first mentor.

> Dan Edwards (pseudonym) really had a tremendous influence on me. Just watching him, being around him, and having access to somebody like him. Now the principals and standards of what our profession stands for as far as working with populations at risk, the needs of people who are poor – those are all very important but however, you have to understand how to operationalize that and just saying that [it] is important means nothing if you don't know how to work the system politically. So I learned from some of the best people how to work the legislature.

Interestingly, Adrian then discusses another social work dean, Mary Jane (pseudonym) that had intersected Norah's career as well. Adrian served previously as her associate dean.

> Mary Jane, she clocked some hell. She never backed down. She was strong and she was not afraid to take a hit. She was not a president but when you are a dean

> – it is like being a president of a campus and she was well received by some and not by others. It was no secret that some of those men were not ready for Mary Jane. They were not ready and she picked me out to be her associate dean. I was honored but I learned a lot from Mary Jane by keeping my big mouth shut and just watching her. I watched Mary Jane work and – I do not know if you ever heard her speak but she is a tremendous speaker. She is one of the greatest speakers that I have ever heard in my life and I heard a lot. She is right up there.

In a cross-section of Norah's interview, she comparatively discusses Mary Jane's influence. When discussing potential gender bias in her presidency, she reflected on Mary Jane's observations of her.

> I did encounter individuals who wondered – 'how did she get here,' and I am not a tall person. I am often looking at the belts of men. When Mary Jane walked in the room, she said [Norah] – I intimidate people. When you walk in a room, you do not intimidate people but you do have presence. So (Norah continues) I had to use my presence.

As Wendy's career in higher education was escalating, she was encouraged to take an indirect approach to mentorship. Raines and Alberg (2003) assert that an effective method of mentorship is simply being in the company of individuals that you hold in high esteem, from whom you want to learn. Adrian previously alludes to this. Wendy discusses her experience with indirect mentorship at length

> I said I don't want to be a provost and he said go back to the university because you're going to be on the President's Cabinet. Watch everything that that president does. Now he may not mentor you but you can be mentored by him and that's where I [Wendy] learned that somebody can mentor you and not know they're mentoring you. Watch what he does, watch the leadership but if you can be on the cabinet at the flagship – you'll be ready to lead and I did that for about 3-4 years and then there was an opportunity and I applied for a position.

Leadership Institute Training. While mentorship was integral in preparing participants for executive leadership in higher education, other mechanisms were equally important for participants in terms of preparedness, expanding their network, and providing exemplary requisites required for a presidential candidacy.

Prior to assuming the presidency, several participants had discussed the importance of leadership training in preparation for the presidency. While a few participants attended the ACE (American Council on Education) Fellowship training, others participated in leadership institutes at Harvard University, Askew Millennium Leadership Institute, and University of Pennsylvania, etc. Those that participated in the ACE Fellowship, in particular, recall nominations by mentors that supported and ultimately invested in the participant's professional development. Jason directly associates his ACE Fellowship with the opportunity to become a college president as well as his preparedness and efficacy within the role. *The turning point for me to becoming a university president was the ACE fellowship experience… having been an ACE Fellow has certainly made me a better president.*

Rose, also supported by her then university president to become an ACE Fellow, highlights the Fellowship's value in terms of networking.

> When I had the ACE fellowship – that year was really instrumental in networking with a different group of people and it's one of the things that I would highlight as to what people need to do in social work. They need to network not just with social workers but they need to network outside of that circle. So the ACE fellowship was really important and people in that program – there were about 32-35 of us - were all intent on becoming provosts or presidents.

Established in 1965, the ACE Fellowship remains a costly investment and requires the Fellow to do a one-year internship in which they shadow an experienced president. Wendy had been nominated to become an ACE Fellow multiple times but could not secure the commitment from her university. She ultimately obtained consent and serendipitously found a mentor in Benjamin. She talks about her experience under

Benjamin's mentorship and alludes to this concept of networking through the ACE Fellowship as well.

> You have to shadow a president and I picked him (Benjamin). I got to shadow Benjamin. He wanted me to see - and he was in troubled waters there. It was a difficult one. He wanted me to see all of that and he explained that, you know, to me. I got to spend time talking to him and when I got the call about the job I called (Benjamin) – so I developed a network.

Participants also engaged in leadership institutes of lesser commitment, which were firmly committed to preparing new presidents. Adrian lends commentary to this fact – *"I had gone through the Harvard Program. I have gone through all kinds of trainings."* Abigail similarly participated in multiple leadership academies including Harvard's Institute for Management and Leadership in Education. Lilly and Dylan, both of whom never pursued institute training, acknowledged its value in preparing new presidents so much that in their roles as mentors they have encouraged individuals to pursue such training.

In addition to mentoring and leadership training, the literature also encourages participation in university-wide committees and taskforces so that candidates can gain a working knowledge of central administration (Raines & Alberg, 2003). Daniel and Norah, each, provide commentary on this strategy when discussing preparatory recommendations for aspiring social work presidents. These recommendations will be explored when discussing the perceptions and preparation of the *social work presidency.*

Summary

Through the basis of lived experiences of several study participants, this section provides a series on recommendations to assist social workers that aspire to become college or university presidents. The majority of participants empathized the importance of leadership training to assist with the development of management competencies.

CHAPTER V

IMPLICATIONS, LIMITATIONS, AND DISCUSSION

The Social Work Presidency

This qualitative inquiry sought to understand the lived experiences for social workers that have journeyed into higher education administration; and ultimately risen to the rank of college or university president. By conducting this research study, I aimed to impart a plausible and potentially *radical*, change affecting, career trajectory for aspiring social work leaders. This bold proclamation takes hold of several premises discussed in this study including the acquisition of skills, leadership variables, the Nation's current sociopolitical impact on higher education, and the synergistic core values that guide the social work profession and a large number of U.S. institutes of higher education. This research topic is unique and to my knowledge, no such study with similar prefaces has been conducted prior to the publication of this manuscript.

In effort to capture this experience qualitatively, I utilized the interpretative method of phenomenology. This process aims to enact human consciousness into the actual experience as well as reconstruct perceptions and actions within a particular episode of one's life (Gubrium & Holstein, 2000). In selecting this methodology, I utilized the process of interviewing as the primary technique for data collection for this unique population. Padgett (2008) offers varying synopses for interviewing a sample that consists of high-profile public figures. For instance, the researcher must account for factors such as time constraints and availability when utilizing this method for populations such as the one featured in this study. The section entitled *Limitations* captures a discussion of these variables. Each study participant was exposed to series of

sequential open-ended questions. This method creates a semi-structured arena that allows for various follow up questions and additional probes (Padgett, 2008). Semi-structured interviews served as the primary technique to capture the thematic data captured in this research. However, given the limitation of time, unbroken narratives often took hold and became one of the prescribed methods utilized, particularly when participants were discussing the journey to the presidency. This method provides a level of interpretation through active storytelling with minimal probes or interruptions (Corbin & Strauss, 2008; Padgett, 2008). Using these interpretative interviewing frameworks, I strived to ensure that the contextual experiences shared by the participants originated from the purity of their own words.

In accordance with Barry University's institutional guidelines for this research study, I audio-recorded each interview then transcribed each recording shortly after the conclusion of the dialogue. Utilizing NVIVO 11, I constructed a multi-layered schematic to assist with data interpretation. In combination with Saldaña's (2013) modes of exploratory coding and techniques for data and bracketing analysis, NVIVO 11 helped to uncover five central themes as well as other idiosyncrasies that are directly associated with the lived experience of *social work presidents*.

Discussion

Institutes of higher education have garnered intense scrutiny for the negligent and unscrupulous handling of violations of human rights and social justice among campus-based constituent groups. As discussed in Chapter 1, the national attention surrounding several prominent institutions created an initial foundation for this research involving the lived experiences of college and university presidents with advanced degrees in social

work. More precisely, a portion of this research served to underscore how the social work profession's ethical mandate guided the leadership practices of this unique group of executives. Since the start of this research, several new incidents involving Title IX procedural violations, admissions biases, institutional racism, and domestic violence were published among various media outlets to further highlight the trials and tribulations of the college presidency.

The emerging data captured from this phenomenological study demonstrated the multi-disciplinary skill set, level of preparedness, and ethical conditioning among these social work professionals to address the complex challenges facing college and university presidents. Over the course of this research, these social work presidents discussed how they utilized the core values and ethical principles of the social work profession when making difficult decisions, engaging university constituents, and confronting issues of social justice. In each scenario, participants discussed the importance of relationships, maintaining dignity and respect, acting with integrity, being of service, and proceeding with competence.

In summary, these social work presidents exemplified how the ethical mandates of the social work profession guided their actions and leadership. The nation's sociopolitical landscape coupled with the fact that colleges and universities are becoming increasingly complex human service organizations uniquely poised for administratively-train social workers to move into positions of executive leadership within higher education.

Implications

For social work education. In the attempt to understand the lived experiences of *social work presidents,* the tenet of preparedness and practice interests among social work students emerged. A review of the 2015 Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards (EPAS), authored by CSWE's Joint Commissions on Accreditation and Educational Policy details a series of instructional learning outcomes for social work students. These nine competencies guide CSWE accredited BSW and MSW programs in their development of the curriculum. Through measures of evaluation and assessment, the EPAS also ensure that BSW and MSW programs are preparing students for competent social work practice. The 2015 EPAS represent a shift from its 2008 predecessor by redirecting the application of social work instruction to evaluating curricular learning as opposed to focusing on curriculum design (Council on Social Work Education, 2015). The nine competencies illustrated in the 2015 EPAS provide an outline of the practice behaviors required for the development of competent social work professionals. However, the 2015 EPAS do not refer to the development of leadership for social workers within its implicit and explicit curriculum. The assumption that these competencies imply leadership would be **mistaken** given the existing literature on leadership development for social workers. As evidenced by the 2015 EPAS, the application of leadership competencies is not a CSWE directive. "*Programs may add competencies that are consistent with their mission and goals and respond to their context*" (Council on Social Work Education, 2015, p. 7). At the time of this manuscript, it is unknown as to how many CSWE accredited social work programs offer leadership preparation for macro-level and global systems practice. For those social work programs

that provide this instructional component, the efficacy regarding their designs on leadership preparation must be evaluated. The literature cites very few studies (Wilson & Lau, 2011; Bliss, Pecukonis, & Synder-Vogel, 2014) that discuss the relevance and evaluation of courses designed to prepare students for leadership. Gummer (1987) discusses how other disciplines such as business, public administration, and public health offer courses in management as a mechanism to prepare students for leadership and executive positions. In recent years, dual degree enrollment programs, particularly social work in combination with public health (MSW/MPH) and public administration (MSW/MPA) have managed the satiety of aspiring social work administrators albeit as a subservient to other disciplines. As a point of reference, a brief review of the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB) *Eligibility Procedures and Accreditation Standards for Business School Accreditation* (2017) specifically states the curricular competencies of "*leading in organizational situations"* (p. 35.) and *managing in diverse global contexts* (p. 35.), as part of the general business master's degree programs.

The increasing numbers of students interested in clinical practice is also directing the formation and refinement of curricular activities within schools of social work (Ezell, Chernesky, & Healy, 2004). The literature cites an imbalance between micro and macro social work curriculum where the course offerings for the latter are diminishing – further creating a trickle-down effect in the number of macro-level field education placements (McClendon, Kagotho, & Lane, 2016). When asked why so few social workers pursue executive positions in higher education, study participants made an assertion to the literature (Choi, Urbanski, Fortune, & Rogers, 2015; Specht & Courtney, 1994) involving

increased interest in mental health practice. As a result, these trends have significantly played a role in reducing macro-level or administrative course offerings (Wilson & Lau, 2011) as well as inadequately prepare students for leadership roles (Brilliant, 1986). Thus creating a systemic impact on inadequate leadership preparedness for increasing numbers of recent graduates, who are finding immediate management opportunities (Bliss, Pecukonis, & Synder-Vogel, 2014).

In social work education, the implementation of a curricular leadership course inclusive of designated competencies should be a requisite for advanced degree completion (MSW, PhD, DSW) within all accredited programs of social work. It is within this context that a re-examination of the profession's core values, as illustrated in the *Code of Ethics*, are emphasized as a valued asset for social work leadership. Watson and Hoefer (2014) posit that social work values should contribute to the underpinnings of administrative skills developed within MSW curricula and when accentuated – these core values serve as favorable traits for executive employment. In essence, this dissertation contributed to Watson and Hoefer's premise by analyzing how social work's professional values guided the leadership experiences for these college presidents.

Additionally, Field internships, recognized as the signature pedagogy in social work, must also play a role in exposing and supporting students for leadership development. Experiential learning, primarily through applied training, serves as an effective mechanism in preparing social work students for leadership roles (McClendon, Kagotho, & Lane, 2016; Hunter & Ford, 2010). Utilizing the college or university setting, students have an opportunity to develop the skills and core values gained from the explicit and implicit social work curriculum for leadership practice.

In conclusion, the recommitment from schools of social work to teaching leadership from the context of the professions core values is required to better prepare social workers for leadership positions. However, this does not necessarily equip a social worker with the skills to become a college president. To revisit the words of Rita Bornstein (2005, p. 2.), there is currently "no discrete body of knowledge" that can truly prepare one for the role of a college president. However, the social work profession needs to change the realities (Bliss, Pecukonis, & Synder-Vogel, 2014) and perceptions especially among board chairs and trustees (Watson & Hoefer, 2014) regarding a social workers capacity to lead by reaffirming leadership development within its educational curriculums and signature pedagogy.

For social work educators. This study details the need for social workers within academia to pursue established leadership trainings in effort to better prepare for executive leadership. In posing the question, what advice would you give aspiring social workers interested in pursuing a presidency – several participants indicated participation in leadership trainings, more specifically – the ACE Fellowship. CSWE's Leadership Institute has emerged in recent years as a mechanism to serve new social work program directors and deans. However, its efficacy for leadership preparedness remains unknown – further adding an implication for social work research, as discussed in the next section. Finally, social work educators also need to consider leaving the auspices of their respective schools of social work and venture into centralized administrative roles to become acclimated to the operations and functional processes within higher education.

For social work research. This is the first study to discuss the lived experiences of college presidents with advanced degrees in social work. It readily contributes to the

existing literature regarding the leadership attributes of social workers (Holosko, 2009; Breshears & Volker, 2013; Watson & Hoefer, 2014). The study also supports the relevant findings regarding the perceptions of social workers as leaders (Brilliant, 1986; Lawler, 2007; Rank & Hutchison, 2000). However, this research study provides a foundation for further heuristic inquiry. First, conducting comparative studies between social work presidents and other collegiate presidents trained in multiple disciplines can inform how attributes, training, and core values compare and contrast between social work and other professions such as business and law. Second, this study adds to the necessity of evaluating social work leadership academies and networks to measure the efficacy of preparation and the outcomes of its participants. Evaluation of these entities would assist in establishing professional relevancy pertaining to a social worker's ability to lead.

For social work practice. Understanding the lived experiences for college and university presidents with advanced degrees in social work should lend itself to the establishment of a viable career trajectory in executive leadership for social workers. This study introduced divergent pathways for which social workers have transcended into a college presidency. The tangible skill sets possessed by social workers, as purveyed in this study are tantamount to the modern dynamics required to lead institutes of higher education. Although this research was conducted solely with college presidents, the intersectionality of the social work profession and higher education organizations is practical. Throughout the course of this study, the versatility of possible executive leadership positions in higher education emerged as the respondents discussed their unique paths to their presidencies. As the stories of the respondents in this study

revealed, social workers hold prominent, organizationally centralized positions of influence within their respective colleges or universities, whether or not these positions ultimately result in a college or university presidency. . Thus, the perception of "whom" and "what" a social worker *can be* must be reaffirmed among the profession's internal ranks. Gil (2013) cites this reaffirmation for social workers by refocusing on the bigger picture and understanding the context in which individuals exist, as part of systems. The inclination to want to be an agent of change is powerful, and there are many viable avenues to social work including using a trauma informed lens and reclaiming our historical tradition of systemic social change. Social workers are uniquely trained to assess and address the issues impacting individuals, groups, and communities within an environmental context. In the context of education, social workers are keenly aware of the internal and external challenges facing educational institutions as human service organizations. This premise further highlights the need to add opportunities for exposure to less conventional venues of social work practice. As a profession, we can, and must re-vision ourselves in our own image, in the tradition of our pioneers. We have the opportunity and capacity to lead with integrity within our communities, our agencies, and yes, our universities. In essence, the social work profession must be proactive in promoting the tangible knowledge, values and skills sets that prepare graduates with advanced social work degrees to practice in a leadership capacity. The perception that social work is ill suited for certain professional roles is not new; however, it is unfounded (Flexner, 2001; Greenwood, 1957; Healy & Meagher, 2004; Specht, 1972; Randall & Kindiak, 2008).

Trauma-Informed Practice. In terms of skill set, having a trauma informed lens with regard to organizational practice only serves to increase market value for becoming a college or university president. Increasingly, students are entering college having experienced multiple traumatic events (Krupnick, et al., 2004; Watkins, Green, Goodson, Guidry, & Stanley, 2007; Frazier, et al., 2009; Anders, Frazier, & Shallcross, 2012; O'Bryan, McLeish, Kraemer, & Fleming, 2015). This has significant implications for retention, academic achievement, and graduation (Boyraz, Horne, Owens, & Armstrong, 2013; Fomby, 2013; Hall, 2010).

History of trauma exposure among college students is very common with estimated prevalence rates ranging between 67% and 84% (Read, Ouimette, White, Colder, & Farrow, 2011; Boyraz, Granda, Baker, Tidwell, & Waits, 2015). A majority of undergraduate students report having at least one traumatic event in their lifetime with peak exposure ranging between 16-20 years of age (Anders, Frazier, & Shallcross, 2012). In accordance with research utilizing community samples, Read et al. (2011) found that the most commonly reported adversities among college students are life-threatening illness, sudden death of a loved one, accident, physical violence, sexual assault, and combat. In addition to these variables, Frazier et al. (2009) found that witnessing family violence was also significantly reported.

The social work profession's organizational practice methods are increasingly becoming trauma-informed in an effort to shape responses and supports of their client systems. The previous section illustrated the prevalence of trauma found among college students. The traumatogenic effects of these incidents can lead to significant mental health and substance use disorders (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services

Administration, 2014) that can significantly impact retention, academic achievement, and graduation. As a result, institutes of higher education need to become trauma-informed systems of care. It is within the scope of a college presidency that social workers can identify this institutional need, create a strategic agenda, and implement transformational, trauma-informed practices within the context of the university system.

For social work policy. I entered into this research with the notion that understanding the lived experiences of social work presidents would essentially illustrate how this leadership pathway can serve as a political driver for social justice initiatives such as those illustrated in the Grand Challenges of Social Work. As previously discussed, the Grand Challenges of Social Work were introduced by the American Academy of Social Work and Social Welfare in 2015. To this effect, the aim of the Grand Challenges was to solve a set of specific systemic problems by incorporating social work practice with the tenet of scientific research (Bent-Goodley, 2016). There may be some validity to this statement. However, as I began to interview participants, many of whom never heard of the Grand Challenges of Social Work, I realized that my assumptions of the political implications pertaining to such a study initiative was in essence a microcosm of the larger sociopolitical climate that these social work presidents had to adapt to in order to affect change.

In the previous chapter, study participants discussed the need to challenge the sociopolitical climate in order to promote issues of social justice. Yielding a position of power and influence has presumably supported these efforts; but more importantly and what cannot be overlooked is how participants entered political arenas to advocate for human rights as well as to confront societal injustices challenging their institutions.

Understanding the journey to the presidency had uncovered the premise of radical social work. To be a radical social worker, one must be versed in the historical context of a social issue and then apply unconventional practices in their attempts to curtail, challenge, or solve a particular problem (De Maria, 1992; Bailey & Brake, 1975; Leonard, 1975). According to Reisch and Jani (2012), radical social workers cannot be apolitical. Social workers seeking to influence policy as well as advance social justice and human rights must recognize the need to find positions of power and influence. The college presidency provides a platform to effect policy and create transformational change. Campuses are often surrounded by disenfranchised communities in which poverty and lack of equity, racism and classism impact the lives of those living just five minutes from campus.

For Social Justice. On few occasions, participants commented on the issue of gender, as a barrier, within the college presidency. Despite minor increases in hiring, women in this arena have been historically underrepresented. In 2016, women encompassed 30% of all sitting college presidents (Gagliardi, Espinosa, Turk, & Taylor, 2017). According to the ACE American College President Study (2017), the length of tenure within the presidency is typically shorter for women than their male counterparts. Statistically, women tend to occupy presidencies within higher education's public sector; however, their positioning within doctoral degree granting institutions remains underrepresented (Gagliardi, Espinosa, Turk, & Taylor, 2017). *The Chronicle of Higher Education* (2018) presented an article featuring gender-based challenges, as detailed by nine female presidents of varying institutions (size, accrediting body, public, private, etc.) across the United States. The commonalities associated with each female presidents'

account involve gender stereotypes, implicit and explicit biases, questions of competence, and blatant double standards found between the sexes (The Chronicle of Higher Education, 2018).

The commentaries provided by study participants regarding gender-based challenges are not overly in-depth. Nevertheless, it was part of the social work presidencies, as experienced by Lilly, Norah, and Abigail; and further support the testimonies of the presidents interviewed for the aforementioned article found within *The Chronicle of Higher Education*.

From Lilly's experiences, the issues involving women presidents are longstanding. Yet, she is witness to a phenomenon at her institution.

> Gender has always been an issue and it continues to be an issue. University presidents are still sitting between 25 – 30 % any given year for woman presidents and you know as you go up the ranks of Carnegie classifications of the universities they become fewer and fewer. So gender continues to be an issue. It just is. I am in a little bit of an unusual situation. I am the 3rd woman president here in a row. That never happens. Never, ever, ever happens.

On advice from a mentor, Lilly worked diligently to establish credibility as a faculty member, researcher, and administrator. When attempting to gain candidacy for a presidency, Lilly believes that establishing a record of accomplishment (giving the example of funded research) mitigates some of the challenges related to gender and social work (as a discipline for organizational leadership).

Norah did not allow gender or race to be a hindrance in her pursuit of a presidency. However, having to deal with the perception among others in relation to these traits is something that she needed to overcome.

> My race, my gender, sometimes viewed by others – not by me – were liabilities because there were individuals that thought well is she going to be at the country club talking with so and so as they played golf making deals.

In citing her short stature, Norah discussed the importance of having to work harder in an attempt to 'own the room.' She also heeded the advice of a mentor that taught her to be interpersonal as well as authoritative when carrying a presence among various constituents.

In her presidency, Abigail sits on various community and organizational boards. In many cases, she has to confront the biases and gender-based double standards that are explicit during these meetings.

> There is also a gender thing that goes, that is in play here. I can say something ten minutes before, sometimes a man will say it, but when a man says it everybody listens and I will say, I said that ten minutes ago. I have confronted groups already on this. It is the good old boys club, when are you going to let the women in?

Limitations

I originally identified sample size as a potential limitation of this study. I am now retracting that statement for two reasons. First, Padgett (2008) illustrates reasons of uniformity as well as intensity and depth of interviews for why smaller sample sizes are devoid of being a limitation. The sentiment for this research was to achieve depth of the lived experience over breadth of participants. Additionally, the social work occupation was never one to attract significant numbers of professionals into executive leadership positions within higher education. Aspirations for executive leadership including a college presidency were never social work's intended mission and purpose. There was always an assumption that this unique sample would be small. I had originally identified 17 social workers that assumed a collegiate presidency. Twelve participants consented to

participate in the study; one individual declined participation; one individual is deceased; two were community college presidents and as a result were excluded from participating in the study; and lastly I was unsuccessful in my attempts to contact the last individual. The second reason has to do with venturing into the unknown. Aside from my having personal knowledge of two presidents, my connection to the rest of the sample was through investigative research and snowball sampling. In an attempt to expand the sample through various social work networks and venues using the latter technique, I was able to identify 10 additional research prospects. Interestingly, each inquiry among deans and directors of social work programs across the country yielded the same participants – all seemingly connected to a school of social work, albeit a deanship or faculty line. The unknown remains in the potential number of individuals that graduated with an advanced degree in social work – yet they are no longer affiliated with a school of social work. There are over 4,000 institutes of higher education in the United States. These colleges and universities comprise of two and four year institutes consisting of public, private, Historically Black, and faith-based institutions of varying accreditations. As a result, there may be cause to hypothesize that the dimensions of the sample are unknown. Social work presidents advancing their careers through student affairs or choosing to pursue a different discipline (such as higher education administration) for doctoral study are not easily identifiable. If there is validity in this statement, then the question that bares asking is how many executives leave social work *behind* to gain traction in their careers as leaders.

The limitations of this study consisted of three logistical premises and one emergent theme involving social work leadership. First, participants were not

geographically isolated. With the exception of two participants that granted face-to-face meetings, data collection was limited to one Skype interview and nine telephone interviews. Therefore, I was unable to observe most participants during the interview process, which resulted in the inability to assess various aspects of expressive language (queues, body language, distractions, etc.). It is for this reason that the latter approach is less robust and remains as an alternative to in-person interviews. The second premise involved availability and significant time constraints. Participants were not readily accessible and in some cases, interviews were scheduled months in advance. Cognizant of this dilemma and in an effort to maximize the experience, I applied a didactic interview approach consisting of semi-structured questions and unbroken narratives. In some cases, participants were very brief in their answers to a few questions and subsequent time constraints limited my ability to probe certain responses. Time constraints and participant availability also limited my ability to member check excerpts derived from the initial interview. In some cases, the limits placed on probing and member checking inhibited my ability for interpretative analysis. However, it is important to note that former presidents participating in this study did contribute the necessary time and member checking required - lending rigor to the study. Lastly, due to the uniqueness of this sample population, particularly within certain realms of the social work community, I could not guarantee full anonymity. I discussed this factor with each participant prior to the start of each interview reinforcing my intentions to abide by the ethical research principles of confidentiality (which included the use of pseudonyms and nondisclosure of university affiliation). Nevertheless, the distinctiveness of each participant's journey and their positioning as college presidents, which potentially

includes existing artifacts, may serve as methods to identify members of the research sample.

The combination of geographic location, time constraints, and availability served as the three factors that prohibited the facilitation of the focus group. It was hopeful that such a method would assist in triangulating data related to the lived experience as well as associated perceptions and opinions (Krueger, 1988). Interestingly, a few participants expressed interest in conducting a forum surrounding this research topic at one of the major social work venues in the future. The dates and times for such entities are established a couple of years in advance. Therefore, coordinating such commitments among the varying individuals may not be as difficult compared to the logistical coordination of a focus group. Such a forum would potentially add value to the study and more importantly serve as an immense contribution to the body of knowledge surrounding the attributes of social work leadership.

The final limitation involves the consistency in which social work leaders uphold the profession's core values and ethical practices. Up to this point, much of this dissertation references the value of social work leadership within colleges and universities. However, consistently incorporating the core values of the profession is not an easy proposition for social workers much less those in leadership roles. In the previous section, I highlighted how college presidents are ultimately accountable for their actions and the actions of others within the organization. Social work leaders are also prone to human error and poor judgment. Examples of such behavior made national headlines in 2018 – resulting in the resignation and suspension of two social work deans. The events resulting in these actions are not discussed here and although a resolution for

each case remains undetermined at the time of this dissertation, it is important to recognize that social workers also engage in behaviors that deviate from ethical practice – making social work leadership far from perfect. Variables contributing to this divergent behavior may be attributed to a misuse of power or as previously stated – a simple act of human error or poor judgment. Dylan briefly summed up the context of this limitation when discussing challenges within the presidency.

> There is a saying that it is a short ride from the good times to the blues and you can be doing fine one minute but if you sort of have your head in the sand - you can go and find your career disgraced or even worse – going to jail. That stuff has to be thought through and you know where the buck stops.

Researcher as Student

Understanding the lived experience for *social work presidents* began merely as a trivial idea. However, I believe the story that transported me to this research is worth telling so that at the conclusion of this chapter, I would have brought the reader full circle in understanding why the social work profession needs to build upon this research, as a means to promote increased entrance into the realms of executive leadership, particularly the college presidency. I entered the PhD Program at Barry University School of Social Work with a firm commitment to study the impact of adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) on college outcomes for males of color residing in marginalized communities. This original topic stemmed from my previous experience and true passion for working within the higher education opportunities programs at the City University of New York. Ironically, I reluctantly entered the PhD program in social work (after a 9-year educational hiatus) because I believed the degree would assist in my abounding desire for career advancement in higher education administration, not necessarily a college

presidency but at minimal an executive leadership position. I was sitting in my Social Work Practice: Theory Analysis and Development course one evening during my very first semester when I found myself in a random conversation with colleagues regarding the Penn State child abuse scandal. The discussion grew leaps and bounds and ultimately spread to the incident at University of Missouri with then president Tim Wolfe and then on to the atrocities proliferating at Baylor University, which was led by former Clinton investigator turned college president and chancellor, Kenneth Starr. Prior to concluding this discussion, I posed a question to my colleagues in reference to these transgressions: *how do you think a president with a social work background would have handled these situations?* My professor, Dr. Mark Smith, posed two questions in return – how many presidents of this elk exist and why do you think they would have handled it differently? And so the seed for this research had been planted. However, I was inclined to pursue the topic because I believed that this sort of research lacked the scientific knowledge and rigor that some would say postmodern social work scholarship requires. For me, this notion revolved around social work's investment in the *Grand Challenges* and its *"groundbreaking initiative to champion social progress powered by science"* (American Academy of Social Work & Social Welfare, 2018). Therefore, I continued with my course work as well as research on ACEs and college outcomes for academically and economically disadvantaged students all the while pondering the *'so what question'* of this ever growing interest in *social work presidents*. Despite the research on this topic being desolate, I found myself unable to stop talking about the impact social workers could make as executive leaders in such settings. This hypothesis was further justified through a series of events that continue to impact institutes of higher education as

illustrated in numerous references found for this dissertation amongst a variable number of news sources. Finally, Dr. Heidi Heft LaPorte, who ultimately became my dissertation chair, approached me one day with a question and an observation. In her questioning, she wanted me to reflect on why I chose to pursue a PhD. As for her observation, Dr. LaPorte explained how she could see the excitement in my face and the appropriate adjustment in my notoriously poor posture every time I began preaching on the topic. Therefore, I decided to postpone my research involving ACEs, college outcomes, and higher education opportunities programs so that I commit to this posture-correcting venture. It was at this juncture that the actual qualitative research process began.

Memo Review

The fact that I developed a subsequent hypothesis (*social workers can emerge as effective leaders of colleges and universities*) prior to engaging in the research created an immediate need to bracket my feelings because I recognized my resolute investment in trying to prove that social work professionals have the required skill set to be successful college or university presidents. However, that was never the original intent of this research. Therefore, engaging in epoche prior to beginning the research served to focus the intent of allowing the lived experience to morph into its purest form. Memoing throughout the process was also extraordinarily valuable. This mechanism provided insight towards the identification of themes. In addition to the surplus of over 1500 coded statements, memos assisted in the identification of the five themes found in this dissertation – *own the mission; share the vision, social work's code of ethics in service to the college presidency, making tough decisions, the university in the environment, and the tangible skill sets for leading a college or university.* Memoing also assisted in the

reflective processing of title of this dissertation – *Yes, We Can!* Lastly and equally as important, memoing provided a platform to channel my thoughts, biases, and emotions after each interview. My early memos had more to do with my personal anxieties of conducting this research. However, I was also very concerned about how many in the social work profession would initially perceive my topic. Excerpts from a few of my memos, as found in the next section, are interpretatively entitled to describe contextual derivatives of this research process.

Surprise, Surprise. As I embarked on my research after successful IRB approval, my first inclination was to utilize my professional network to trigger a snowball sample, which proved successful early on in identifying a few potential study participants. This point in the research was still purely investigative in hopes of deducing a sample size. I approached many social work educators during major conference venues with hopes of increasing the sample size. As I began to introduce my research topic to various social work deans and program directors, the inevitable question of *how many social work presidents are there* followed my inquiries. The apparent disbelief from my answer (yielded from the early snowball sample) always evoked the response of "*I am surprised there are that many."* In my very first memo, I wrote the following:

> *I understand that the pursuit of a college presidency is not typical of a social worker's career trajectory. I get that - but it is a trajectory as proven by these few individuals. Secondly, anyone (regardless of discipline) that aspires and is ambitious enough to become a leader will seek such opportunities – social workers included! Social work, as we are taught, offers a tangible skill set that gives us the ability to crossover into various disciplines – so why the shock? What*

> *is it about the perception of the role of a social worker, particularly in executive and organizational leadership? My perception before taking on this project is that WE can lead with the best of them but we are rarely given that platform – maybe as a result of perception.*

This memo served as a contextual guide in developing the study's literature review on leadership attributes for social workers and college presidents. This process yielded a robust literature on the tenets of leadership for college and university presidents. Contrarily, the literature involving the principles and preparedness for leadership among social workers was nominal.

Have No Fear. Admittedly, I was nervous prior to every single interview. I had written a memo prior to my first interview, which was with Abigail reminding myself to b*reathe, talk slow, and just follow the questions. Let us see where it goes.* This would serve to ground my thoughts before each interview. Interestingly, when I reflected on this memo (my 3rd) shortly after data collection – I began to analyze the power differential in my overall interview process. The literature on qualitative research acknowledges the dynamics that exist between the interviewer and the participant (Corbin & Strauss, 2008; Padgett, 2008; Patton, 2002). There had been some apprehension on the part of several participants. Time constraints always factored into this study but the unknown line of questioning may have caused some initial hesitancy. An excerpt of the following memo describes such an instance of what I perceived as ambivalence.

> *I really needed to process the beginning of the interview. As I was awaiting the president, her legal counsel very politely introduced herself and had questions*

regarding the consent form. In introducing myself, I told the president that we had one educational commonality. She indicated that we had another community-based commonality. I was taken back because I wondered how she knew that about me; and then it dawned on me – she must have had me investigated (maybe a background check). Funny thing is – as the interview went on, I really believe she embraced it and found it very intriguing.

The Journey Counts for Half the Experience. This research set forth to understand the lived experience for college or university presidents with advanced degrees in social work. My singular inclination was to focus on this window in time for each participant in effort to find potential compatibility between the social work skill set and actual functions of a collegiate president. However, one of the goals of this research was to inform aspiring social work leaders of the unique potential for a radical career trajectory. This also includes how early career endeavors in social work situationally prepares individuals for executive leadership. Therefore, the journey was equally as important as the actual experience. I recalled this early on in a memo (prior to the identification of Emily):

After facilitating my initial interviews, I began to ponder a social worker's path towards a presidency. There are two avenues: student affairs and academia. Interestingly enough, after interviewing two presidents that came from the student affairs side – it appears (from a superficial perspective) and speaking with them, that they may be better prepared for the role of a president based on experience. I am curious as to the preparedness and exposure to broad functioning higher

education administration of an academic dean that aspires to be a college president.

The decision to analyze the journey to the presidency allowed for a reflection of the historical context and the sociopolitical climates facing social work and higher education over several decades. As a result, I began to find symmetry within a number of areas that could champion the call for increased intersectionality between the social work profession and institutes of higher education.

A Conscious Rediscovery. I found myself still struggling with the *'so what'* question halfway into the data collection. A part of me felt that I needed to go beyond the initial underpinnings of the study: *How would a social work president respond to issues that plagued institutes like Penn State, University of Missouri, and Baylor University*. This was an opportunity to show case the social work degree within the context of leadership but it was missing an ingredient. Below is the memo that I wrote to help me regroup:

I believe more than ever that I have established the 'so what' question/answer of this study. There is no question in my mind. Here it is:

The social work degree is extremely valuable in delivering a tangible skill set. In order to increase the value of the degree – we need to boldly step into leadership positions and have management and policy instruction strengthened within our curriculums. Failure to be bold and not implement such skills along with the encompassing ethics and values will continue to make us subservient to other professions, particularly when it comes to obtaining senior leadership roles.

The above is why we should care and we need pioneers to help inform us! I need to regroup and focus on how social work values, ethics, and leadership tools move an organization of higher education. Be Bold! What are these values? Are they coming out in your interviews? If not, what is coming out?

In reexamining the data and once again listening to each recorded interview, I realized the answer rested within the core values of the profession. There were several instances where my line of questioning assisted in the conscious rediscovery of these values among participants as well as myself. The process of interviewing for this study forced participants to recall and reflect on the core values of the profession. In doing this exercise, the centrality of these values such as dignity and worth of the person, integrity, and importance of human relationships became more apparent within each participant's governance of a college or university. Additionally, the data also revealed how participants mobilized various social justice initiatives within the context of service and competence.

To systematic. Throughout the research process, I was always intrigued as to why imminent social work educators, particularly academic deans, chose never to pursue the college presidency. Under the guise concerning the ethical principles of confidentiality, I convey the conversations that I had with two prominent scholars. Each individual indicated multiple opportunities to assume executive leadership positions in higher education. Interestingly, the first scholar unknowingly reiterated a response seemingly provided by Lilly during our interview together. In her response to my questioning of why so few social work academics pursue the presidency, Lilly stated *I think some of it - I would say people enjoy what they do in social work*. This is an

understandable premise. The second social worker also referenced a particular enjoyment in their current role. However, they also proceeded to say that the role of a president is "*too systematic*." Elaborating further, this individual believed that collegiate presidents tend to blame the system for their inability to accomplish their strategic goals. Excerpts of this memo portray my thoughts and feelings on this interesting premise.

> *Are college presidents a hostage of a system? I had the opportunity to sit with a social worker. I asked why this individual had never chosen to pursue a presidency. They had the pedigree. Answer: I was offered opportunities but decided not to pursue because 1) "I like being a social worker fighting for social justice and 2) presidents have a tendency to blame the system for their inability to get things done". I had never thought of that. It makes me want to read additional literature on systems theory. Interestingly enough, this conversation took place the day before I interviewed my 11th participant for the study. This interview lasted almost 3 hours. It was a phenomenal interview but I stopped and pondered her positioning with in "the system." I had a sense that she understood the bureaucracy of the system prior to taking the job. She wanted to be a leader! She has the charisma for it. The position does not eat at her but then I look at Norah, who in her conversations regarding decision-making seemingly struggled to balance the pressures rendered by the system, particularly the Board of Trustees and faculty demands.*

25 Hours a Day/8 Days a Week/366 Days a Year. One pertinent assumption that I had made over the course of this research study is that collegiate presidents are always working. In my interview with Benjamin, he referenced this notion of being on

call 25 hours a day, 8 days a week when asked how much of his personnel life this role demanded. His response:

> *25 hours a day, 8 days a week. And I say that tongue and cheek because – the best example of that is my wife. Even now, my wife feels that I can't go out anywhere looking any kind of way. Whether I'm [here] or whether I'm [there] because she says I'm always representing. And Phil, in that sense you are always on call. You know what I mean? So in that sense that is why I say 25/8.*

Norah described the role as *consuming*. In discussing responsibilities and time commitments, Lilly states that *it is truly 24/7/365 and that is something that most new presidents have to adjust to [in the role]*. Wendy adds *No matter where I travel. No matter where I go, I am asked am I [the president of XYZ] – and it is overwhelming at times. It is overwhelming.* Each study participant accepts this responsibility because of the necessity of immersing themselves into the surrounding community in order to engage community stakeholders. Several study participants acknowledged their multitude of service on organizational committees across their respective communities. Accordingly, it is how they build relationships that can help support their university-wide strategic agenda.

Early in my research, I had the opportunity to meet with Abigail in person to conduct a second (member-checking) interview. After the interview, I wrote a memo that somewhat contests this notion of *24/7/365.*

> *It is a cold Friday and I am in the middle of a rural area. I am sitting in the student lounge with an array of emotions. The president was so welcoming and appreciative. It feels right. We interviewed in her office. The executive assistant*

> *offered me a cup of coffee and the president gave me a hug! We sat at her little table and I had her full attention. Facing her window, I noticed that snow started falling and it was beautiful. The interview took place right before the holidays so it felt very relaxed. In fact, I said to myself "what problems do you have here"? I could see myself at that desk with a cup of coffee staring out into the snow hoping to see a deer. It felt perfect. Even the interview felt perfect.*

Despite this experience, I have no doubt that the life of a college president is consuming and that you must always 'stay in character' because of the seemingly constant transactions. Internally, the president assumes the numerous responsibilities of leading an organization. Externally, the goal is to engage stakeholders, push a strategic agenda, and as Abigail would say, "*be the biggest cheerleader of the university's mission*". Upon my exiting the interview, I recall Abigail asking her executive assistant "Who's next". The feeling and mental image associated with this memo is analogous with the phrase 'eye of the hurricane' because this research (and the events responsible for this research) alludes to the ever-present, errant possibilities looming for these leaders. This picturesque moment that I created in Abigail's office needed reframing because I had no direct knowledge of the climate on that particular campus or the items associated with that day's agenda.

This phrase 25 hours a day, 8 days a week, 366 days a year is also attributed to the role social workers play when working with their client systems. It is within this context that the variables of burnout and employment retention apply. Burnout, in the context of the occupational environment, is defined as the culmination of exhaustive physical and emotional effects that lead to lack of motivation, depersonalization, and inadequacy

(Wagman, Geiger, Shockley, & Segal, 2015). A body of literature exists that associates burnout and employment intention to contingencies including stress, job autonomy and satisfaction, and social support (Kim & Stoner, 2008; Kim, Juye, & Kao, 2011; Font, 2012). In serving vulnerable and oppressed populations, social workers are often situated in stressful environments with minimal resources, overwhelming responsibilities, and no self-care contingency plan. Prolonged within this context, social workers risk exposure to secondary and vicarious trauma. The implementation of a self-care plan is important to the longevity of a social worker. It reduces the risk of burnout and exposure to secondary trauma. Conclusively, social workers should not always be working because such a premise carries physical and psychological consequences. Earlier in this section, I alluded to the notion that study participants were always working. Given that their lives are to some extent public, they feel a constant sense of obligation to uphold their image and serve as an extension of the institution even during times of respite. How that impacts ones physical and mental health as well as family life is context for future studies. Interestingly, Abigail supports this notion in a statement that is reflective of the importance of self-care.

> I encourage balance in everybody's life. I love my job, I love what I do but it's not my whole life and it never will be. There has to be a balance in life, I think, in order to be able to do things well and so I tell my people for example - there is no virtue, I see no virtue in not taking your vacation. Do not tell me you're too busy, you can't go. If you can't get away, there's something wrong with the way you're running things okay. So, I set that example and I take time off.

Never Forget Where You Came From. I will be forever thankful for the individuals that participated in this research study. Taking time out of their schedules did not come easy for many, which resulted in long gaps between the request to participate in

the study and the actual interview. There were few instances where I received initial notices declining my request to interview for the study. Given the limited sample size, I remained persistent in my efforts and was able to produce this dissertation. However, one president, who met criteria for the study, refused my invitation to participate – citing scheduling conflicts despite my willingness to schedule the interview several months in advance. During these times, I maintained a disbelief about the refusal to participate. Asking no one in particular, "*here is an opportunity to contribute to the potential advancement of the social work profession, to shed light on a plausible trajectory. I don't understand the hesitancy*." At one point, I penned this memo*:*

> *It is the individuals that do not respond or say no because they have no time! I get angry. Why don't they see the importance? I introduce it in the initial e-mail – it [this study] has never been done before. They are social workers or did they forget?*

It is the last sentence of this memo (in every way a plea for help) that lent itself to the development of a hypothesis pertaining to identifying a sample for this study. When discussing the dimension associated with sample size, I questioned whether many executives leave social work behind to gain traction in their careers as leaders. As this research concludes, I reflect on how the study may have created a conscious rediscovery among participants when connecting the grounding effects of the profession's core values and skill set to all of the acquired traits found within their leadership. Social workers, regardless of whether they pursue doctorate degrees in other disciplines, should honor the value of social work training within the context of leadership. Social workers seeking

leadership roles should never diminish where they come from. Full conviction in these skill sets is imperative to advance social works necessary leadership agenda.

A Radical (but Pragmatic) Thought

> *"To transcend conventional social work practice and function as agents of social change, social workers require theoretical and philosophical perspectives and practice principles different from those now dominant in the profession." – David G. Gil*

The evolving political paradigms confronting the Nation's sociopolitical, technological, and economic landscapes will continue to influence higher education governance. The trickle-down affect created by such paradigm shifts can unjustly segregate traditional and non-traditional student bodies (i.e. DREAMers, LBGTQ, military, adult-learners, disabled, and academically and economically disadvantaged, etc.). Since the onset of this research, the Nation has endured changes to its sociopolitical climate that has manifested into social injustices for multiple student bodies that are reliant on the opportunities created through the obtainment of a college or university degree.

Aside from the Nation's sociopolitical issues, higher education has also been intensely embroiled in its fair share of controversy. In addition to the scandals that seemingly launched this dissertation research, colleges and universities have found their presidents enmeshed in numerous controversies that threaten not only their integrity to lead but also the institutions in their charge. Intense scrutiny for injustices found on college campuses have increasingly found its way onto college campuses in 2018. These incidents include biases in student admissions (Gluckman, 2018), mishandling of Title IV policies and procedures (Mangan, 2018; Kolowich & Thomason, 2018), inability to

prevent race and gender-based hate crimes (Yancy, 2018) and unscrupulous and incentivized oversight of athletic teams (Stripling, 2018).

This dissertation introduced the lived experience of social workers within the leadership context of a college or university presidency. Although unique among the social work profession's career and leadership trajectories, the college presidency is a viable pathway to affect societal change, potentially stabilize the increasing social injustices found on college campuses, enhance social mobility among underserved and marginalized populations, and challenge social injustices on a global scale through platforms inclusive of scholarship, collective impact, and influence.

"Valuable absolutely! Valued not so much", echoed Dylan when discussing how the social work skill set serves to inform the presidency; but continues to be degraded as compared to other professions that are perceived to better serve in this leadership role. Herein shapes the radical nature of this career trajectory, which is to use this leadership forum to affect change and further advance the social work profession. The college presidents found in this dissertation represents a group that had departed the traditional professional career pathways to assume leadership in non-traditional settings that were once uncommon for social workers. The lived experiences offered in this dissertation provides glimpses of how these social work presidents mobilized communities and affected change for the purposes of social justice. This pathway among social workers may indeed be radical but it is absolutely possible!

Recommendations for Future Research

Several research opportunities, directly associated with understanding the lived experiences of college and university presidents with advanced degrees in social work,

have emerged within the context of this study. First, a comparative examination of leadership styles between *social work presidents* and those from other disciplines should be considered to understand the connotations between leadership and ethics within the college presidency. Second, further examination of the lived experience for female social work presidents, through the lens of social work empowerment and advocacy, would add to a growing body of literature involving the challenges confronting female leadership. Lastly, research on how the *NASW Code of Ethics* is utilized in the context of leadership for social work administrators, managers, and executive leaders would further support Watson and Hoefer's (2014) position that the profession's core values can serve as the framework for social work leadership efficacy and preparedness.

References

Aldgate, J., Healy, L., Malcolm, B., Pine, B., Rose, W., & Seden, J. (2007). *Enhancing social work management: Theory and best practice from the UK and USA.* London, UK: Jessica Kingsley.

American Academy of Social Work & Social Welfare. (2017, October 22). *Sustaining sponsors*. Retrieved from American Academy of Social Work & Social Welfare Website: http://aaswsw.org/grand-challenges-initiative/about/sustaining-sponsors/

American Academy of Social Work & Social Welfare. (2018, August 30). *Grand Challenges of Social Work*. Retrieved from American Academy of Social Work & Social Welfare: http://aaswsw.org/grand-challenges-initiative/

Anders, S. L., Frazier, P. A., & Shallcross, S. L. (2012). Prevalence and effects of life event exposure among undergraduate and community college students. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, *59*(3), 449-457. doi: 10.1037/a0027753.

Anderson, R. J. (1986). The CSWE accrediting standards for social work education. *Social Work in Education*, *4*, 121-133.

Armour, M. P. (2002). Alternative routes to professional status: Social work and new careers program under the Office of Economic Opportunity. *Social Service Review*, *76*(2), 229-255.

Austin, D. M. (2002). *Human services management: Organizational leadership in social work practice.* New York, NY: Columbia University Press.

Avolio, B. J., Bass, B. M., & Jung, D. I. (1995). *Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire technical report.* Redwood City, CA: Mind Garden.

Baber, L., & Lindsay, B. (2007). American and English universities: Illuminating modes for effective relations with local metropolitan communities. *American Sociological Association Conference*, (pp. 1-24).

Bailey, R., & Brake, M. (1975). *Radical social work.* New York: Pantheon Books.

Barr, R., & Tagg, J. T. (1995, November/December). From teaching to learning: A new paradigm for undergraduate education. *Change: The Magazine of Higher Learning*, pp. 12-25.

Barrows, K. O. (2016). Transformational christian college and university presidents: An examination of fundraising success. (Doctoral Dissertation) Retrieved from ProQuest Dissertations and Theses Database.

Barsky, A. E. (2015, Spring). Ethics alive! Risks of risk management. *The New Social Worker*, pp. 4-5.

Basham, L. M. (2012). Transformational leadeship characteristics necessary for today's leaders in higher education. *Journal of International Education Research*, *8*(4), 343-347.

Bass, B. M. (1985). *Leadership and performance beyond expectations.* New York: Free Press.

Bass, B. M. (1997). Does the transactional-transformational paradigm transcend organizational and national boundaries? *American Psychologist*, *22*, 130-142.

Bass, B. M., & Avolio, B. J. (1993). Transformational leadership and organizational culture. *Public Administration Quarterly*, *17*(1), 112-121.

Bass, B. M., & Avolio, B. J. (1994). *Improving organization effectiveness through transformational leadership.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.

Bastedo, M., Samuels, E., & Kleinman, M. (2014). Do charasmatic presidents influence college applications and alumni donations? Organizational identity and performance in US higher education. *Higher Education, 68*(3), 397-414. doi 10.1007/s10734-014-9719-z.

Bent-Goodley, T. B. (2016). Social work's grand challenges: Mobilizing the profession. *National Association of Social Workers*, 197-198.

Billups, J. O. (2002). *Faithful angels: Portraits of international social work notables.* Washington, DC: NASW Press.

Birks, M., Chapman, Y., & Frances, K. (2008). Memoing in qualitative research: Probing data processes. *Journal of Research in Nursing*, *13*, 68-75.

Birnbaum, R. (1987). *The implicit leadership theories of college and university presidents.* Washington, DC: Office of Educational Research and Improvement.

Bliss, D. L., Pecukonis, E., & Synder-Vogel, M. (2014). Principled leadership development model for aspiring social work managers and administrators: Development and application. *Human Services Organizations: Management, Leadership, and Governance*, *38*, 5-15.

Bornstein, R. (2005, November 5). *The nature and nurture of presidents.* Retrieved from *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, *52*(5): http://go.galegroup.com/ps/i.do?p=PPAG&sw=w&u=miam50083&v=2.1&it=r&id=GALE%7CA147067597&asid=c26c8612b3ca8d49e2e20209f6ab5493

Bourgeois, S. (2016). The presidency in higher education. *Journal of Business and Management, 22*(2), 11-22.

Bowie, S. L., & Hancock, H. (2000). African Americans and graduate school social work education: A study of career choice influences and strategies to reverse enrollment decline. *Journal of Social Work Education*, *36*(3), 429-448.

Boyraz, G., Granda, R., Baker, C. N., Tidwell, L. L., & Waits, J. B. (2015). Posttraumatic stress, effort regulation, and academic outcomes among college students; A longitudinal study. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, *63*(4), 475-486. doi:10.1037/cou0000102.

Boyraz, G., Horne, S. G., Owens, A. C., & Armstrong, A. P. (2013). Academic achievement and college persistence of African American students with trauma exposure. *Journal of Counseling Psychology, 60*(4), 582-592.

Breshears, E. M., & Volker, R. D. (2013). *Facilitative leadership.* New York, NY: Springer Publishing Company.

Brill, C. K. (2001). Looking at the social work profession through the eye of the NASW Code of Ethics. *Research on Social Work Practice*, *11*(2), 223–234. doi.org/10.1177/104973150101100209.

Brilliant, E. (1986). Social work leadership: A missing ingredient? *Social Work, 31*(5), 325-331.

Brown, T. M. (2005). Mentorship and the female college president. *Sex Roles, 52* (9-10), 659-666. doi:10.1007/s11199-005-3733-7.

Bureau of Labor Statistics. (2013). *College enrollment and work activity of 2011 high school graduates.* Retrieved from http://www.bls.gov/news.release/pdf/hsgec.pdf

Burns, J. M. (1978). *Leadership.* New York, NY: Harper & Row.

Butcher, J., Bezzina, M., & Moran, W. (2011). Transformational partnerships: A new agenda for higher education. *Innovative Higher Education, 36,* 29-40.

Butler, B. N. (1976). Higher education leadership in the Nation's third century. *Journal of the National Medical Association, 68*(5), 353-367.

Calvo, R., Ortiz, L., Padilla, Y. C., Waters, M. C., Lubben, J., Egmont, W., . . . Villa, P. (2015). *Achieving equal opportunity and justice: the integration of Latino/a immigrants into American society (Grand Challenges for Social Work Initiative Working Paper No. 20).* Cleveland, OH: American Academy of Social Work and Social Welfare.

Choi, M., Urbanski, P., Fortune, A. E., & Rogers, C. (2015). Early career patterns for social work graduates. *Journal of Social Work Education, 51,* 475-493.

CNN Library. (2017, June 28). *Penn State scandal fast facts*. Retrieved from CNN: http://www.cnn.com/2013/10/28/us/penn-state-scandal-fast-facts/index.html

Cohen, M. D., & March, J. G. (1974). *Leadership and ambiguity.* New York, NY: McGraw-Hill.

Cook, B. J. (2012). *The American college president study: Key findings and takeaways.* Retrieved from American Council on Education website: http://www.acenet.edu/ the-presidency/columns-and-features/Pages/The-American-College-President-Study. aspx

Cook, W. B. (1997). Fund raising and the college presidency in an era of uncertainity. *The Journal of Higher Education*, *68*(1), 53-86.

Corbin, J., & Strauss, A. (2008). *Basics of qualitative research 3e.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.

Costin, L. B. (1983). *Two sisters for social justice: A biography of Grace and Edith Abbott.* Chicago: University of Illinois Press.

Cote, L. S. (1985). The relative importance of presidential roles. *The Journal of Higher Education, 56* (6), 664-676.

Coulshed, V., Mullender, A., Jones, D. N., & Thompson, N. (2006). *Management in social work.* New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan.

Council on Social Work Education. (2015). *Educational policy and accreditation standards for baccalaureate and master's social work programs*. Retrieved from http://www.cswe.org/File.aspx?id=81660.

Council on Social Work Education. (2017, October 19). *CSWE Leadership Institute*. Retrieved from Council on Social Work Education Website: https://www.cswe.org/Centers-Initiatives/Centers/Leadership-Institute.aspx

Council on Social Work Education. (2018, November 26). *Directory of Accredited Programs*. Retrieved from https://www.cswe.org/Accreditation/Directory-of-Accredited-Programs.aspx

Cowley, W. H. (1980). *Presidents, professors, and trustees.* San Francisco, California: Jossey-Bass Inc.

Creswell, J. W. (2013). *Qualitative inquiry & research design: Choosing among five approaches.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.

Cullen, D. L., & Luna, G. (1993). Women mentoring in academe: Addressing the gender gap in higher education. *Gender & Education*, *5*(2), 125.

D'Aprix, A. S., Dunlap, K. M., Abel, E., & Edwards, R. L. (2004). Goodness of fit: career goals of MSW students and the aims of the social work profession in the United States. *Social Work Education, 23*(3), 265-280.

De Maria, W. (1992). On the trail of a radical pedagogy for social work education. *British Journal of Social Work , 22*(3), 231-252.

Dirks, N. B., Gilman, N., & University of California B.E. (2015). Berkeley's new approach to global engagement: Early and current efforts to become more international. *Research & Occasional Paper Series: CSHE.*, 12.15.

Dobelle, E. S. (2004). Hope and glory: The job of a college president. *Presidency, 7*(1), 18-22.

Dodds, H. W. (1962). *The academic president-educator or caretaker?* New York, NY: McGraw-Hill.

Dolgoff, R., Harrington, D., & Loewenberg, F. M. (2012). *Ethical decisions for social work practice.* Belmont, CA: Brooks /Cole.

Donnelly, J. C. (1995). Successful long-term college presidents and the positioning of their institutions. *Leadership 2000 Conference*, (pp. 1-24). San Francisco, CA.

Elpers, K., & Westhuis, D. J. (2008). Organizational leadership and its impact on social workers' job satisfaction: A national study. *Administration in Social Work, 32*(3), 26-43.

Ezell, M., Chernesky, R. H., & Healy, L. M. (2004). The learning climate for administration students. *Administration in Social Work, 28*(1), 57-76. doi:10.1300/J147v28n01_05.

Fischer, E. A. (2005). Facing the challenges of outcome measurement: The role of transformational leadership. *Administration in Social Work, 29*(4), 35-49.

Fisher, E. A. (2009). Motivation and leadership in social work management: A review of theories and related studies. *Administration in Social Work, 33*, 347-367.

Fisher, J. L. (1984). *Power of the presidency.* New York, NY: Macmillan Publishing Company.

Fisher, J. L., & Tack, M. W. (1988). *Leaders on leadership: The college presidency.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, Inc.

Flawn, P. T. (1990). *A primer for university presidents: Managing the modern university.* Austin, TX: University of Texas Press.

Flexner, A. (2001). Is social work a profession? *Research on Social Work Practice*, *11*(2), 152-165. doi.org/10.1177/104973150101100202.

Fomby, P. (2013). Family instability and college enrollment. *Population Research & Policy Review, 32*(4) 469-494.

Font, S. (2012). Burnout in child welfare: The role of employment characteristics and workplace opportunities. *Social Service Review*, *86*(4), 636-659.

Frazier, P., Anders, S., Perera, S., Tomich, P., Tennen, H., Park, C., & Tashiro, T. (2009). Traumatic events among undergraduate students: Prevalence and associated symptoms. *Journal of Counseling Psychology, 56*(3), 450-460. doi: 10.1037/a0016412.

Freeman, R. M. (2005, May 13). Universities and cities need to rethink their relationships. *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, pp. *51*(36), B20.

Gagliardi, J. S., Espinosa, L. L., Turk, J. M., & Taylor, M. (2017). *The American college president study*. Retrieved from American Council on Education website: http://www.acenet.edu/the-presidency/columns-and-features/Pages/The-American-College-President-

Gardiner, J. J. (2006). Transactional, transformational, and transcendent leadership: Metaphors mapping the evolution of the theory and practice of governance. *Kravis Leadership Institute Leadership Review*, *6*, 62-76.

Gardner, F. (2006). Working with human service organizations: Creating connections for practice.

New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

Garrow, E., & Hasenfeld, Y. (2010). Theoretical approaches to human service organizations. In Y. Hasenfeld (Eds.), *Human services as complex organizations* (pp. 33-59). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.

Gellis, Z. D. (2001). Social work perceptions of transformational and transactional leadership in health care. *Social Work Research*, *25*(1), 17-25.

Gibbs, P. (1995). Accreditation of BSW programs. *Journal of Social Work Education*, *31*(1), 4-16.

Gil, D. G. (2013). *Confronting injustice and oppression: Concepts and strategies for social workers.* New York: Columbia University Press.

Giorgi, A. (1997). The theory, practice, and evaluation of the phenomenological method as a qualitative procedure. *Journal of Phenomenological Psychology*, *28*(2), 234-260.

Gluckman, N. (2018, October 26). Harvard's race-conscious admissions policy is on trial, with lasting implications for colleges. *The Chronicle on Higher Education*, pp. A20-A21.

Goldbach, J. T., Amaro, H., Vega, W. A., & Walter, M. D. (2015). *The grand challenge of promoting equality by addressing social stigma (Grand Challenges for Social Work Initiative Working Paper No. 18).* Cleveland, OH: American Academy of Social Work and Social Welfare.

Green, D., & McDermott, F. (2010). Social work from inside and between complex systems: Perspectives on person-in-environment for today's social work. *British Journal of Social Work, 40,* 2414-2430. doi: 10.1093/bjsw/bcq056.

Green, M. F. (1988). *The American college president: A contemporary profile.* Washington, DC: American Council on Education.

Greenwood, E. (1957). Attributes of a profession. *Social Work*, 45-55.

Gross, E., & Grambsch, P. V. (1974). *Changes in university organization, 1964-1971.* New York, NY: McGraw-Hill.

Gubrium, J. F., & Holstein, J. A. (2000). Analying interpretive practice. In N. Denzin, & Y. S. Lincoln, *Handbook of qualitative research (2nd ed.)* (pp. 487-505). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.

Gummer, B. (1987). Are administrators social workers? The politics of interprofessional rivalry. *Administration in Social Work, 11*(2), 19-32.

Haag, M., & Tracy, M. (2018, January 24). Michigan State president Lou Anna Simon resigns amid Nassar fallout. *New York Times*, p. A20.

Hall, J. (2010). Childhood perceptions of family, social support, parental alcoholism, and later alcohol use among African American college students. *Journal of Substance Use, 15*(3): 157-165.

Hardina, D., Middleton, J., Montana, S., & Simpson, R. A. (2007). *An empowering approach to managing social service organizations.* New York, NY: Springer.

Hartley III, H. V., & Godin, E. E. (2009). *A study of career patterns of the presidents of independent college and universities.* Washington, DC: The Council of Independent Colleges.

Hater, J., & Bass, B. M. (1988). Superior's evaluation and subordinate's perceptions of transformational and transactional leadership. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 73,* 695-702.

Hawkins, J. D., Jensen, J. M., Catalano, R. F., Fraser, M. W., Botvin, G. J., Shapiro, V., . . . The Coalition of Behavioral Health. (2015). *Unleashing the power of prevention (Grand Challenge for Social Work Initiative Working Paper No. 10).* Cleveland, OH: American Academy of Social Work and Social Welfare.

Hawkins, J. D., Jensen, J. M., DeVylder, J., Catalano, R. F., Botvin, G. J., Fraser, M., . . . Bumbarger, B. (2016, September). *Policy recommendations for meeting the Grand Challenge to ensure healthy development for all youth (Grand Challenges for Social Work Initiative Policy Brief No. 1).* Cleveland, OH: American Academy of Social Work & Social Welfare.

Haynes, K. S., & Mickelson, J. S. (2006). *Reflecting change: Social workers in the political arena.* Boston: Pearson.

Hays, D. G., Wood, C., Dahl, H., & Kirk-Jenkins, A. (2016). Methodological rigor in journal of counseling & development qualitative research articles: A 15-year review. *Journal of Counseling & Development, 94*(2), 172-183.

Healy, K., & Meagher, G. (2004). The reprofessionalization of social work: Collaborative approaches for achieving professional recognition. *British Journal of Social Work, 34*(2), 243-260. doi:10.1093/bjsw/bch024.

Heidegger, M., Macquarrie, J., & Robinson, E. (1962). *Being and time.* Malden, MA: Blackwell.

Herzog, S. (2005). Measuring determinants of student return vs. dropout/stopout vs. transfer: A first-to-second year analysis of new freshman. *Research in Higher Education, 46*, 883-928.

Hodson, J. (2010). Leading the way: The role of presidents and academic deans in fundraising. *New Directions for Higher Education, 149*, 21-22.

Holosko, M. J. (2009). Social work leadership: Identifying care attributes. *Journal of Human Behavior in the Social Environment, 19*, 448-459.

Hout, M. (2012). Social and economic returns to college education in the United States. *Annual Review of Sociology*, 379-400.

Hummer, R. A., & Lariscy, J. T. (2011). *Educational attainment and adult mortality.* Netherlands: Springer.

Hunter, C., & Ford, K. (2010). Discomfort with a false dichotomy: The field director's dilemma with micro-macro placements. *Journal of Baccalaurette Social Work, 15*(1), 15-29.

Hyde, C. A. (2012). Ethical dilemmas in human services management: Identifying and resolving the challenges. *Ethics and Social Welfare*, *6*(4), 351-367.

Iachini, A. L., Cross, T. P., & Freedman, D. A. (2015). Leadership in social work education and the social change model of leadership. *Social Work Education*, *34*(6), 650-665.

International Federation of Social Workers. (2018, October 10). *Global Social Work Statement of Ethical Principles*. Retrieved from https://www.ifsw.org/global-social-work-statement-of-ethical-principles/

Judge, T. A., & Piccolo, R. F. (2004). Transformational and transactional leadership: A meta-analytic test of their relative validity. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, *89*(5), 755-768.

Kao, G., & Thompson, J. (2003). Racial and ethnic stratification in educational achievement and attainment. *Annual Review of Sociology*, *29*, 417-442.

Katz, R. L. (1955). Skills of an effective administrator. *Harvard Business Review*, *33*(1), 33-42.

Kauffman, J. F. (1982). The college presidency yesterday and today. *Change: The Magazine of Higher Learning*, *14*(4), 12-19. doi: 10.1080/00091383.1982.10569877.

Keels, M. (2013). Getting them enrolled is only half the battle: College success as a function of race or ethnicity, gender, and class. *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry*, *83*(2,3), 310-322.

Kendall, K. A. (2002). *Council on Social Work Education: Its antecedents and first twenty years.* Alexandria: CSWE.

Kerr, C. (1984). *Presidents make a difference: Strengthening leadership in colleges and universities: A report of the commission on strengthening presidential leadership.* Washington, DC: Association of Governing Boards.

Kezar, A., & Eckel, P. (2008). Advancing diversity agendas on campus: Examining transactional and transformational presidential leadership styles. *International Journal of Leadership in Education*, *11*(4), 379-405.

Khurana, R. (2004). *Searching for a corporate savior. The irrational quest for charismatic CEOs.* Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Kim, H., & Stoner, M. (2008). Burnout and turnover intention among social workers: Effects of role stress, job autonomy and social support. *Administration in Social Work, 32*(3), 5-25. doi:10.1080/03643100801922357.

Kim, H., Juye, J., & Kao, D. (2011). Burnout and physical health among social workers: A three-year longitudinal study. *Social Work, 56*(3), 258-268.

Kirk, D. S., & Sampson, R. J. (2013). Juvenile arrest and collateral educational damage in transition to adulthood. *Sociology of Education, 86*(1), 36-62.

Kirkpatrick, S. A., & Locke, E. A. (1991). Leadership: Do traits matter? *The Executive*, 5, 48-60.

Kolowich, S., & Thomason, A. (2018, February 2). An army of survivors topples a president. *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, pp. A14-A19.

Krueger, R. A. (1988). *Focus groups: A practical guide for applied research.* Beverly Hills, CA: Sage Publications Inc.

Krupnick, J. L., Green, B. L., Stockton, P., Goodman, L., Corcoran, C., & Petty, R. (2004). Mental health effects of adolescent trauma exposure in a female college

sample: Exploring differential outcomes based on experiences of unique trauma types and dimensions. *Psychiatry, 67*(3), 264-279.

Kupperman, J. J. (1999). *Value. . . and what follows.* New York: Oxford University Press.

Laverty, S. M. (2008). Hermeneutic phenomenology and phenomenology: A comparision of historical and methodological considerations. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods, 2*(3), 21-35. doi: 10.1016/S0742-051X(00)00023-8.

Lawler, J. (2007). Leadership in social work: A case of caveat emptor? *British Journal of Social Work, 37*, 123-141.

Leighninger, L. (2000). *Creating a new profession: The beginnings of social work education in the United States.* Alexandria, VA: CSWE.

Lemons, J. (2015). College presidency: A position with no equal: leadership advice for new college presidents. *University Business,* 12(96). Retrieved from www.universitybusiness.com

Leonard, P. (1975). Towards a paradigm for radical practice. In R. Bailey, & M. Brake, *Radical social work* (pp. 46-61). New York: Pantheon Books.

Lieberman, A., & Nelson, K. (2013). *Women & children first: The contribution of the Children's Bureau to social work education.* Alexandria: CSWE Press.

Lohmann, R. A., & Lohmann, N. (2002). *Social administration.* New York, NY: Columbia University Press.

Lord, R. G., Devader, C. L., & Alliger, G. M. (1986). A meta-analysis of the relation between personality traits and leadership perceptions: An application of validity generalization procedures. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 71*, 402-410.

Malai, R. (2013, March 28). *NASW news.* Retrieved from NASW: http://www.socialworkers.org/pubs/news/2013/06/higher-ed.asp

Mangan, K. (2018, March 16). How a harassment controversy tore a university apart . *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, pp. A14-A18.

Manning, S. (2003). *Ethical leadership in human services.* Boston: Allyn & Bacon.

Mary, N. L. (2005). Transformational leadership in human service organizations. *Administration in Social Work, 29*(2), 105-118.

Maurrase, D. J. (2001). *Beyond the campus: How colleges and universities form partnerships with their communities.* New York: Routledge.

McClean, S. (1974). *The changing role of the college presidency: Essays on governance.* Washington, DC: American Association of State Colleges and Universities.

McClendon, J., Kagotho, N., & Lane, S. R. (2016). Preparing social work students for leadership in human services organizations through philanthropy. *Human Services Organizations: Management, Leadership, and Governance*, *40*(5), 500-507. doi.org/10.1080/23303131.2016.1173159.

McDaniel, A., Diprete, T. A., Buchmann, C., & Shwed, U. (2011). The black gender gap in educational attainment: Historical trends and racial comparisons. *Demography, 48*(3), 889-914. doi: 10.1007/s13524-011-0037-0.

McRoy, R. G., Padilla, Y. C., Calvo, R., Goldbach, J. T., Teasley, M. L., Amaro, H., . . . Waters, M. C. (2016, September). *Policy recommendations for meeting the Grand Challenge to achieve equal opportunity and justice (Grand Challenges for Social Work Initiative Policy Brief No. 12).* Cleveland, OH: American Academy of Social Work & Social Welfare.

Mendelson, T., Turner, A. K., & Tandon, S. D. (2010). Violence exposure and depressive symptoms among adolescents and young adults disconnected from school and work. *Journal of Community Psychology*, *38*(5): 607-621.

Mirowsky, J., & Ross, C. E. (1998). Education, personal control, lifestyle, and health. *Research on Aging*, *20*, 415-449.

Moerer-Urdahl, T., & Creswell, J. (2004). Using transcendental phenomenology to explore the "ripple effect" in a leadership mentoring program. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods, 3(2),*, Article 2. Retrieved 11/3/17 from http://www.ualberta.ca/iiqm/backissues/3_2/pdf/moerercreswell.pdf.

Moore, K. M., Salimbene, A. M., Marlier, J. D., & Bragg, S. M. (1983). The structure of presidents' and deans' careers. *The Journal of Higher Education*, *54*(5), 500-515.

Moustakas, C. (1994). *Phenomenological research methods.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.

Mowbray, C. T., Megivern, D., Mandiberg, J. M., Strauss, S., Stein, C. H., Collins, K., . . . Lett, R. (2006). Campus mental health services: Recommendations for change. *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry*, *76*(2), 226-237.

Mumford, M. D., Zaccaro, S. J., Harding, F. D., Jacobs, T. O., & Fleishman, E. A. (2000). Leadership skills for a changing world: Solving complex social problems. *Leadership Quarterly*, *11*(1), 11-35.

Murray, V. M., Berkel, C., Gaylord-Harden, N. K., & Copeland-Linder, N. (2011). Neighborhood poverty and adolescent development. *Journal of Research on Adolescence*, *21*(1), 114-128. doi: 10.1111/j.1532-7795.2010.00718x.

National Association of Social Workers. (2017). *Code of ethics* . Washington, DC: Author.

National Education Association. (2018, 11 2). *Social Justice Issues*. Retrieved from edjustice Web site: www.neaedjustice.org

Neumann, A., & Bensimon, E. M. (1990). Constructing the presidency: College presidents' images of their leadership roles, a comparative study. *The Journal of Higher Education*, *61*(6), 678-701. doi:10.2307/1981990.

Nichols, J. C. (2004). Unique characteristics, leadership styles, and management of Historically Black Colleges and Universities. *Innovative Higher Education*, *28*(3), 219-229.

Northouse, P. G. (2013). *Leadership, 6th Ed.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.

O'Bryan, E. M., McLeish, A. C., Kraemer, K. M., & Fleming, J. B. (2015). Emotion regulation difficulties and posttraumatic stress disorder symptom cluster severity among trauma-exposed college students. *Psychological Trauma: Theory, Research, Practice, and Policy*, *7*(2), 131-137.

Padgett, D. K. (2008). *Qualitative methods in social work research (2nd ed.).* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.

Pak, C.-M., Cheung, J.-S., & Tsui, M.-S. (2017). Looking for social work values and ethics in the textbooks of social services administration over the past 50 years (1965-2014). *Human Service Organizations: Management, Leadership, & Governance*, *41*(2), 147-161. doi:10.1080/23303131.2016.1231151.

Palmer, R. T., Davis, R. J., & Hilton, A. A. (2009). Exploring challenges that threaten to impede the academic success of academically underprepared African American male collegians at HBCU. *Journal of College Student Development, 50*(4), 429-445.

Patrick, M. E., Schulenberg, J. E., & O'Malley, P. M. (2016). High school substance use as a predictor of college attendance, completion, and dropout: A national multicohort longitudinal study. *Youth & Society, 48*(3) 425-447.

Patti, R. (2009). Reflections of the state of management in social work. *Administration in Social Work, 27*(2), 1-11. doi:10.1300/J147v27n02_01.

Patton, M. Q. (2002). *Qualitative research and evaluation methods, 3rd Edition.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications Inc.

Perlmutter, F. D., & Crook, W. P. (2004). *Changing hats while managing change: From social work practice to administrations.* Washington, DC: NASW Press.

Pruitt, A. (2017, October 27). Manager, member engagement and professional development for the Council on Social Work Education. (P. Giarraffa, Interviewer)

Queralt, M. (1982, April). The role of the mentor in the career development of university faculty members and academic administrators. *Paper Presented at the annual meeting of the National Association for Women Deans, Administrators, and Counselors*. Indianapolis, IN: ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED216614.

Raines, S. C., & Alberg, M. S. (2003). The role of professional development in preparing academic leaders. *New Directions for Higher Education, 124,* 33-39.

Randall, G. E., & Kindiak, D. H. (2008). Deprofessionalization or postprofessionalization? Reflections on the state of social work as a profession. *Social Work in Health Care, 47*(4), 341-354. doi: 10.1080/00981380802173855.

Rank, M. G., & Hutchison, W. S. (2000). An analysis of leadership within the social work profession. *Journal of Social Work Education, 36*(3), 487-502.

Read, J. P., Ouimette, P., White, J., Colder, C., & Farrow, S. (2011). Rates of DSM-IV-TR trauma exposure and posttraumatic stress disorder among newly matriculated college students. *Psychological Trauma: Theory, Research, Practice, and Policy, 3*, 148-156. doi: 10.1037/a0021260.

Reamer, F. G. (1998). The evolution of social work ethics. *Social Work, 43*(6), 488-500. doi:10.1093/sw/43.6.488.

Reamer, F. G. (2013). Social work in a digital age: Ethical and risk management challenges. *Social Work, 58*(2), 163-172. doi: 10.1093/sw/swt003.

Reisch, M., & Andrews, J. (2002). *The road not taken: A history of radical social work in the United States.* New York: Brunner-Routledge.

Reisch, M., & Jani, J. S. (2012). The new politics of social work practice: Understanding context to promote change. *British Journal of Social Work*, 42(6), 1132-1150. doi.org/10.1093/bjsw/bcs072.

Robbins, S. P. (2014). From the editor - accreditation, competency-based education, and EPAS revisions. *Journal of Social Work Education, 50*(4), 581-586. doi: 10.1080/10437797.2014.947893.

Rodriguez, M. Y., Ostrow, L., & Kemp, S. P. (2017). Scaling up social problems: Strategies for solving social work's grand challenges. *Research on Social Work Practice, 27*(2), 139-149.

Rupp, D. E., Batz, C., Keith, M., Ng, V., Saef, R., & Howland, A. (2016). *Competencies for State College and University Presidents.* Washington, DC.: American Association of State Colleges and Universities.

Saldana, J. (2013). *The coding manual for qualitative researchers.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications Inc.

Salsberg, E., Quigley, L., Mehfoud, N., Acquaviva, K., Wyche, K., & Sliwa, S. (2017). *Profile of the social work workforce.* Washington, D.C.: The George Washington University Health Workforce Institute.

Scanlon, K. C. (1997). Mentoring women administrators: Breaking through the glass ceiling. *Initiatives*, *58*(2), 39-59.

Schafer, M. H., Wilkinson, L. R., & Ferraro, K. F. (2013). Childhood (mis)fortune, educational attainment, and adult health: Contingent benefits of a college degree. *Social Forces*, *91*(3), 1007-1034.

Seligsohn, A. (2015, April 29). *An observation about the mission of higher education.* Retrieved from Campus Compact: https://compact.org/an-observation-about-the-mission-of-higher-education/

Selingo, J. J., Chheng, S., & Clark, C. (2017). *Pathways to the university presidency: The future of higher education leadership.* Deloitte University Press.

Simon, M. K. (2011). *Dissertation and scholarly research: Recipes for success (2011 Ed.).* Seattle, WA: Dissertation Success, LLC.

Smith, C. (2001). Trust and confidence: Possibilities for social work in "high modernity." *British Journal for Social Work, 31*(2), 287-305. doi: 10.1093/bjsw/31.2.287.

Smith, L., Baluch, S., Bernabei, S., Robohm, J., & Sheehy, J. (2003). Applying a social justice framework to college counseling center practice. *Journal of College Counseling*, 6, 3-13.

Smith, M., & Hartocollis, A. (2018, May 16). Michigan State's $500 million for Nassar victms dwarfs other settlements. *The New York Times*, p. A1.

Social Security Act. (2018). *Compilation of the Social Security laws*. Retrieved from https://www.ssa.gov/OP_Home/ssact/title07/0707.htm

Son, C., & Madhani, A. (2017, June 6). *Missouri president, chancellor quit after football team walks out*. Retrieved from USA Today: https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/2015/11/09/mizzou-faculty-walks-out-student-association-calls-presidents-removal/75448392/

Song, W., & Hartley III, H. V. (2012). *A study of presidents of independent colleges and universities.* Washington, DC: The Council of Independent Colleges.

Specht, H. (1972). The deprofessionalizaton of social work. *Social Work, 17*(2), 3-15.

Specht, H., & Courtney, M. (1994). *Unfaithful angels.* New York: Free Press.

Spiegelberg, H. (1972). *Phenomenology In psychology and psychiatry: A historical introduction.* Northwestern University Press.

Spitzer, W., Holden, G., Cuzzi, L., Rutter, S., Chernack, P., & Rosenberg, G. (2001). Edith Abbott was right: Designing field work experiences for contemporary health care practice. *Journal of Social Work Education, 37*(1), 79-90.

Stoeckel, P. R., & Davies, T. G. (2007). Reflective leadership by selected community college presidents. *Community College Journal of Research and Practice, 31*(11), 895-912.

Stoesz, D. (1997). The end of social work. In M. Reisch, & E. Gambrill, *Social work in the 21st century* (pp. 368-375). Thousand Oaks, CA: Pine Forge.

Stogdill, R. M. (1948). Personal factors associated with leadership: A survey of the literature. *Journal of Psychology, 25*, 35-71.

Stogdill, R. M. (1974). *Handbook of leadership: A survey of theory and research.* New York: Free Press.

Stripling, J. (2018, November 9). Turmoil besets U. of Maryland as athletics scandal becomes morality play. *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, pp. A20-A21.

Stuart, P. H., Leighninger, L., & Donahoe, J. N. (1993). A history of the Association of Baccalaureate Social Work Program Directors: Reviewing our past . Eau Claire, Wisconsin.

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. (2014). *SAMSHA's Concept of Trauma and Guidance for a Trauma-Informed Approach.* Retrieved from HHS Publication No. (SMA) 14-14884. Rockville, MD: Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration.: https://store.samhsa.gov/shin/content/SMA14-4884/SMA14-4884.pdf

Tafvelin, S., Hyvonen, U., & Westerberg, K. (2014). Transformational leadership in the social work context: The importance of leader continuity and co-worker support. *British Journal of Social Work, 44*, 886-904.

Taylor, E. K. (1977). The Edith Abbott I knew. *Journal of the Illinois State Historical Society (1908-1984), 70*(3), 178-184.

Teasley, M. L., McRoy, R. G., Joyner, M., Armour, M., Gourdine, R. M., Crewe, S. E., . . . Fong, R. (2017). *Increasing success for African American children and youth (Grand Challenges for Social Work initiative Working Paper No. 21).* . Cleveland, OH: American Academy of Social Work and Social Welfare.

The Aspen Institute. (2017). *Renewel and progress: Strengthening higher education leadership in a time of rapid change.* Washington, D.C.: The Aspen Institute.

The Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business. (2017). *Eligibility procedures and accreditation standards for business accreditation.* Retrieved from Accessed from https://www.aacsb.edu/-/media/aacsb/docs/accreditation/standards/business-accreditation-2017-update.ashx?la=en

The Chronicle of Higher Education. (2018, November 30). What are the biggest challenges you've faced as a female leader? *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, pp. A8-A10.

Tosi, H. L., Misangyi, V. F., Fanelli, A., Waldman, D. A., & Yammarino, F. J. (2004). CEO charisma, compensation, and firm performance. *The Leadership Quarterly*, *15*, 405-420.

Tracy, M., & Barry, D. (2017, July 7). *The rise, then shame, of Baylor nation*. Retrieved from New York Times: https://www.nytimes.com/2017/03/09/sports/baylor-football-sexual-assault.html?mcubz=0

Uehara, E. S., Barth, R. P., Olson, S., Catalano, R. F., Hawkins, J. D., Kemp, S., . . . Sherraden, M. (2014). *Identifying and tackling grand challenges for social work (Grand challenges for social work initiative working paper No. 3).* Baltimore, MD: American Academy of Social Work and Social Welfare.

Valutis, S., & Rubin, D. (2016). Value conflicts in social work: categories and correlates. *Journal of Social Work Values & Ethics*, *13*, 1-11.

van Manen, M. (1990). *Researching lived experience.* New York, NY: SUNY Press.

Vigilante, J. L. (1974). Education matures to the undergraduate level. *Social Work*, *5*, 638-645.

Villavicencio, A., Bhattacharya, D., & Guidry, B. (2013). *Moving the needle: Exploring key levers to boost college readiness among Black and Latino males in New York City.* New York, NY: New York University, The Research Alliance for New York City Schools.

Wagman, M. A., Geiger, J. M., Shockley, C., & Segal, E. A. (2015). The role of empathy in burnout, compassion satisfaction, and secondary traumatic stress among social workers. *Social Work, 60*(3), 201-209. doi:10.1093/sw/swv014.

Watkins, D. C., Green, B. L., Goodson, P., Guidry, J., & Stanley, C. (2007). Using focus groups to explore the stressful life events of black college men. *Journal of College Student Development*, *48*(1), 105-118.

Watson, L. D., & Hoefer, R. (2014). Social work values in human service administration: Implications for social work education. *Journal of Social Work Education*, *50*(4), 623-629. doi:10.1080/10437797.2014.947162.

Wenocur, S., & Reisch, M. (1989). *From charity to enterprise: The development of American social work in a market economy.* Urbana: The University of Illinois Press.

Wessel, R. D., & Keim, M. C. (1994). Career patterns of private four-year college and university presidents in the United States. *The Journal of Higher Education, 65*(2), 211 - 225.

Williams, J. H. (2016). Grand challenges of social work: Research, practice, and education. *Social Work Research*, *40*(2), 67-70. doi: 10.1093/swr/svw007.

Wilson, S., & Lau, B. (2011). Preparing tomorrows leaders and administrators: Evaluating a course in social work management. *Administration in Social Work, 35*(3), 324-342. doi:10.1080/03643107.2011.575347.

Wisner, E. (1958). Edith Abbott's contributions to social work education. *Social Service Review*, *32*(1), 1-10.

Wood, J. L. (2012). Leaving the 2-year college: Predictors of black male collegian departure. *Journal of Black Studies, 43*(3), 303-326.

Wright, H. R. (1954). Three against time: Edith and Grace Abbott and Sophonisba P. Breckinridge. *Social Service Review*, *28*(1), 41-53.

Yammarino, F. (2013). Leadership: Past, present, and future. *Journal of Leadership & Organizational Studies, 20*(2), 149-155.

Yancy, G. (2018, May 25). The ugly truth of being a black professor . *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, pp. B6-B8.

Zaccaro, S. J., Kemp, C., & Bader, P. (2004). Leader traits and attributes. *The nature of leadership*, 101-124.

Appendix 1

Recruitment Script

Dear President _____,

My name is Philip Giarraffa and I am a social work doctoral student at Barry University School of Social Work located in Miami, Fl. I am conducting a phenomenological study of college and university presidents that hold advanced degrees in social work. As president of _____ college/university, you have been identified as meeting the criteria of holding a degree in social work. The purpose of this study is to understand how an advanced degree in social work guides executive leadership in a college or university setting. Additionally, study results may encourage social workers that assume supervisory roles in higher education settings to pursue positions of executive leadership. I am calling today in hopes that you would be willing to contribute to this study. If so, I would need to send a consent form acknowledging your agreement to participate. Once this step is complete, I would like to schedule an appointment through your assistant to conduct a telephone interview with you.

Appendix 2

Barry University

Ellen Whiteside McDonnell | School of Social Work

Informed Consent Form

Your participation in a research project is requested. The title of the study is: **A Phenomenological Study of College and University Presidents that Hold Advanced Degrees in Social Work**

The research is being conducted by Philip Giarraffa, a doctoral candidate at Barry University School of Social Work. It is hoped that the research results will help to understand how college or university presidents with advanced degrees in social work integrate the core values of the profession into their roles as leaders of higher education institutions.

The aims of the research are to:

- Understand the essence of an advanced degree in social work for college and university presidents

We anticipate the number of participants to be fifteen (15). If you decide to participate in this research, you will be asked to do the following:

- Participate in an initial interview that will last approximately two (2) hours. The interview will be conducted via telephone. This interview will be audio recorded.

Interview questions will include the following: sharing your experience on how social work education and experience prepared you, if at all, for a major leadership role in higher education; whether you integrate the core values of the social work profession into your role as a college or university president; if yes, how so?

Your consent to be a research participant is strictly voluntary. Should you decline to participate or should you choose to drop out at any time during the study, there will be no adverse consequences. If you choose to no longer participate in the study, then any information you have provided will be destroyed.

This research does not pose any known risks to you.

Although, there are no direct benefits to you, your participation in this study may help our understanding of how an advanced degree in social work guides executive leadership in a college or university setting. Additionally, study results may encourage social workers that assume supervisory roles in higher education settings to pursue positions of executive leadership.

As a research participant, information you provide will be held in confidence to the extent permitted by law. The interview will be audio-recorded, but a fictitious name will be used to identify the interviews. Data will be transcribed by the researcher within 48 hours after the interview. Any

published results of the research, will utilize fictitious names in the study. Data will be kept in a locked file in the researcher's office and on a password protected computer. Your signed consent form will be kept separate from the data in a locked file in the researcher's office. All data will be will be kept for a period of 5 years and destroyed after this period. However, please remember that you may withdraw from participating in the study at any time.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding the study or your participation in the study, you may contact me, Philip Giarraffa, at (305) 899-4765, pgiarraffa@barry.edu; my faculty sponsor, Dr. Heidi LaPorte, at (305) 899-3900, hlaporte@barry.edu, or the Institutional Review Board point of contact, Jasmine Trana, at (305)899-3020, jtrana@barry.edu.

If you are satisfied with the information provided and are willing to participate in this research, please signify your consent by signing this consent form.

Voluntary Consent
I acknowledge that I have been informed of the nature and purposes of this experiment by Philip Giarraffa and that I have read and understand the information presented above, and that I have received a copy of this form for my records. I give my voluntary consent to participate in this experiment.

_____ _____

Signature of Participant *Date*

_____ _____

Researcher *Date*

Thank you for your participation.

Philip Giarraffa, LMSW, MPH
Barry University School of Social Work
Doctoral Candidate
11300 NE 2nd Avenue
Miami Shores, FL 33161
305-899-3925 ● pgiarraffa@barry.edu

Appendix 3

RESEARCH INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Title: A Phenomenological Study of College and University Presidents That Hold Advanced Degrees in Social Work

1. Can you please discuss your original interest for pursuing social work education?

2. What was your previous position prior to assuming your role as president?

3. Have you ever served as part of the faculty for a college or university school, department, or program of social work?

4. What were the factors in your decision to pursue a presidency?

5. In your opinion, what is the principal role of a university president?

6. How is your social work training utilized, if at all, within your day-to-day role as president?

7. What values and ethical principles of the social work profession, if any, would you say are incorporated into your day-to-day activities as a collegiate president?

8. I would like to ask about your involvement in University/Community Partnerships. Are there any marginalized communities surrounding your respective campus? If so, how have you mobilized your university to support and provide resources to these communities? These items can come in the form of obtaining federal grants, service-learning opportunities, or being part of a collective impact, etc.?

9. Over the years, many universities have been scrutinized for not sufficiently addressing and/or mishandling the sensitive issues involving race, gender equality, institutional racism, and sexual harassment. Often times the presidents of these institutions come under fire. Can you please describe whether your training as a social worker helps to address these types of issues?

10. How would you describe your leadership style?

11. Why do you think so few individuals with an advanced degree in social work education pursue executive leadership positions in higher education?

12. What advice would you give social work professionals that currently work in higher education that aspire to such executive leadership positions?

Appendix 4

Conceptual Outline of the Research Study