A Survey of the Literature Related to Executive Succession in Land Grant Universities

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Abstract

As challenges facing higher education continue to evolve, there is a need for colleges and universities to develop administrative leadership. Current activities tend to be limited, although there are a number of association and institutionally sponsored programs that serve limited populations. The current discussion focused on reviewing the research-based literature on academic leadership development, with particular focus on land grant universities. The literature reviewed demonstrated that there are clear ideas about what to include in leadership development, but that institutions typically fail to engage in meaningful succession planning. Although a number of university leaders have begun to recognize the need to train the next generation of leaders, these programs are typically individual-driven and not institutionalized.

Effective leadership in key positions is critical to the success of any organization. Leaders manage change, give vision, and work to position their organization for success in the fast paced environment of a global information age (Conger & Benjamin, 1999). Leadership is a complex process requiring talents and abilities of many people at many different levels in an organization. Identifying potential leaders and providing institutional support for their training is one way organizations show they are interested in the welfare of their employees as well as making a commitment to their own well-being. Heuer (2003) stated “an investment in development is an investment in the organization” (p. 77).

Higher education has experienced significant changes in how leadership is viewed. Gaither (2002) suggested some factors that have influenced this change. These included a flatter organizational structure, decreased institutional loyalty, and the idea that quality leadership can be found and is necessary at all levels of an organization. Performance expectations have increased as responsibilities and accountabilities have increased. In addition to a complex and decentralized internal environment, higher education leadership has been challenged to be responsible to an ever growing number of external constituents.

The positions of department chair, associate dean, and dean have become complex, stressful, and multi-dimensional. The significant questions then become how are current leaders trained, can they be replaced with effective leaders when they leave, and how does the organization support leadership development for current and potential leaders.

Conger (1992) suggested higher education look to business and industry training models. Business and industry organizations have been in leadership replacement programs much longer than higher education. Conger and Benjamin (1999) related a history of training programs that started in the 1950s and 1960s and increased significantly in the 1980s. In recent years, corporations have placed even more emphasis on leadership development using formal succession training as an educational vehicle (Conger & Benjamin, 1999). Identifying and training potential leaders has been a significant part of the culture of successful businesses, and has been valued as a bottom line necessity. However, the culture of business and the culture of higher education are very different.

One notable difference is found in the perception of the value of leaders in academe versus business. In business, talented, high producers are often identified early in their career and started on a career ladder that leads to leadership positions (Byham et al., 2002). Business succession plans help to develop these leaders within a more formal corporate structure. Higher education culture, on the other hand values discipline excellence, not administrative skills. Academic leaders for higher education have historically been filled by people whose training tends to be in research and teaching, without the leadership development found in business (Gmelch, 2004). Those who fill leadership roles often consider that they are just taking a short detour in their faculty career to serve in administration (Carroll & Wolverton, 2004).

This review of literature examines how academic leaders in land grant universities acquire the skills and experiences that enable them to be successful in their jobs, and how their institution supports them. The discussion begins by looking at the three academic

positions of department chairs, associate deans, and deans to get a better understanding of the challenges and requirements for these positions. The characteristics, roles, current training, and responsibilities of department chairs, associate deans, and deans are identified. The next section explores how higher education institutions identify potential leaders, and how they are trained. The final section examines how institutions support this process through organizational involvement and succession planning.

Academic Leaders

Department chairs, associate deans, and deans fill key positions in higher education and have different challenges, roles, and expectations placed on them. Most department chairs, associate deans, and deans were under-prepared for their jobs when they assumed them (Gmelch, 2004; Wolverton, Gmelch, Montez, & Niez, 2001). Some of the stresses identified for these mid-level academic leaders came from under-prepared people placed in positions that demanded skills, knowledge, and expectations above their capacity to deliver (Gmelch, 2004). This section will explain who these administrators are, what job responsibilities they have, the roles they fill, and some of the challenges they face in their positions.

Department Chairs

Gmelch (2004) stated the most important administrator at any college or university was the department chair who leads the fundamental academic unit of an institution. Lucas (1994) wrote that chairs have the greatest impact because the decisions they make involve students and faculty, or teaching and research, the core functions of any university. The department chair was considered to be the traditional first step of the academic career ladder leading to associate dean or dean (Gmelch, 2004; Twombly,

1990), which makes it important to understand their roles, their challenges, how they are identified, and how they are trained.

Hecht, Higgerson, Gmelch, and Tucker (1999) identified four characteristics of department chairs: they are drawn from faculty ranks, lack preparation for what is a major change in their professional roles, they receive limited financial rewards, and they serve for an average of six years. Carroll and Wolverton (2004) found new department chairs have not necessarily been leaders before, for the most part they have no formal training in a leadership or managerial role, and they have a four out of five chance of never serving in a leadership role again.

Potential department chairs are identified by either faculty or appointed by deans and higher administration (Carroll, 1991). Carroll and Wolverton (2004) summed up departmental chair characteristics.

> Typically, midcareer faculty members become chairs, most often motivated by a sense of duty or a desire to help a department grow and improve. They come for the most part, unprepared for what lies ahead, yet they are expected to exercise oversight over the majority of decisions made in universities today. (p. 8)

Carroll and Wolverton (2004) described the roles of department chairs as they seek to make decisions in many of the critical academic areas in an institution. Chairs influence internal institutional policies and control budgets and resources in a time of limited resources and future downsizing. They are a major influence in the hiring, firing, promotion, and tenure process of faculty. Chairs impact class and schedule decisions, and interact with a changing student population. They are also expected to represent their faculty to external constituencies. Bowman (2002) suggested

> the real work of academic chair demands a diverse set of leadership capabilities: well-honed communication skills, problem-solving skills, conflict-resolution skills, cultural-management skills, coaching skills and transition-management skills. (p. 161)

The University of Arkansas (2004) web site provided the information on a position of department chair for Entomology which emphasized the varied responsibilities of a department chair. The job description included being a visionary administrative leader for the campus and statewide programs, in teaching, research, and extension programs. In addition, the chair was expected to coordinate development and funding efforts, and be a liaison with external constituents in business, government, industry, and other off-campus groups.

Some of the challenges for department chairs are caused by what Charan et al. (2001) described as the transition from a high achieving individual to one responsible for helping make others successful. Chairs act as intermediaries between higher college administration and faculty needs. Lucas (1994) described role conflicts that arise when chairs are expected to act against what they perceive as the good of the individual for the good of the department. They are expected to call for increased accountability and productivity from faculty, and serve as negotiators by representing faculty to administration and administration to faculty. Department chairs have reported they typically experience stress from having to engage in conflict management, from limited time frame imposed by deadlines, and trying to gain financial support for their departments. In many instances, they also attempt to retain an active research and publishing agenda (Carroll & Wolverton, 2004).

In terms of self-perception, Carroll and Wolverton (2004) found 40% of chairs did not consider themselves as primarily administrators, but rather as faculty. Gmelch

(1991) reported that 60% of the department chairs identified themselves as faculty and only 23% as administrators. Administrative duties were a part of a job performed as part of a faculty career. Carroll (1991) found close to 70% of chairs immediately return to faculty ranks after their tenure as chair. In a more recent study, Carroll and Wolverton (2004) found that 80% of chairs return to faculty ranks with the other 20% moving on to other administrative positions.

Most faculty appointments to the chair position come unprepared to be an administrator. Gmelch (2004) stated most faculty did not start their career as a faculty member thinking to move into administration. Rather, they thought of administration as a short side trip allowing other faculty to continue their teaching and research. Several authors noted that formal training was, for the most part, non-existent, and most learning was gathered through on-the-job experiences or by personal initiatives consisting of reading and conversing with peers (Carroll & Wolverton, 2004; Creswell, Wheeler, Seagren, Egly, & Beyer, 1990; Lucas, 1994). Gmelch, Wolverton, Wolverton, and Sarros (1999) reported new department chairs, those who have served less than a year, complained about not being familiar with an administrative system as a whole, but did not see a need for professional development. However, those who have served as chairs for one year or more did see a need for more training in how to handle their jobs effectively.

Associate Deans

Jackson and Gmelch (2003) provided information on the specialization of the associate dean job and included information on training. They found the associate dean position was created to help the dean as the expectations and responsibilities of the dean

increased. Associate deans served at the will and pleasure of the academic dean (Koerner & Mindes, 1997). The roles varied by institution and between colleges or academic units, although most associate deans tended to be given the opportunity to serve as academic overseer for college curriculum, instruction, and student affairs. Responsibilities included curriculum, instruction, and internal politics allowing the dean to stay focused on institutional objectives, politics, and development activities.

Jackson and Gmelch (2003) found most associate deans in their study assisted the dean of the college or school in the area of administration, student affairs, graduate and undergraduate programs, budget, and finance. As the dean's work turned more to external responsibilities such as fund raising, associate deans were delegated more internal responsibilities. A description of an associate dean position found on the Central Michigan University web site explained many of the responsibilities expected of someone in this position. The Associate Dean was to provide administrative support to the dean and department chairs. The successful candidate was expected to handle budgets, planning, conflict resolution and mediation. Duties of this position included supervising personnel issues like searches, affirmative action, student and faculty grievances, faculty review and recruitment. This particular position was even assigned to handle space allocation and remodeling.

Koerner and Mindes (1997) found the challenges of this position included working through internal politics, being helpers of the dean, and the lack of personal or legitimate power. Another challenge of associate deans was caused by the continuous switching of their roles. Associate deans were considered administration when they were delegated administrative duties by the dean, and faculty when others were reluctant to

accept their authority (Koerner & Mindes, 1997). Because many associate deans received their training in their academic careers in research and teaching, most had minimal leadership training. As with department chairs, most associate deans did not start out anticipating an administrative career, and as a result were not prepared formally with the skills to be successful in their job (Jackson & Gmelch, 2003). However, they make decisions that can have far-reaching effects. Emphasizing the impact of the associate dean, Wolverton and Gmelch (2002) indicated "the organization of the dean's office is central to the college's productivity and service to its constituents; it cannot be left to chance" (p. 108).

Deans

Wolverton et al. (2001) considered deans as "the leadership linchpin that lies midway between those perceived as leaders and those upon whose work the reputation of the organization rests" (p. 3). Deans link higher administration with the operating foundation of an institution, and have many roles and challenges.

A major study by Wolverton and Gmelch (2002) surveyed 1,300 academic deans at 360 randomly selected universities in the United States, specifically colleges of education, business, liberal arts, and allied health professions. They reported on who the deans were, their roles, and challenges. According to Wolverton and Gmelch (2002), deans were predominately white males in their mid-50s who served an average of 5.6 years in office. Wolverton and Gmelch (2002) found most deans had been selected by committees of faculty and administration; 57% of the deans were internal appointments, and 55% of the deans had mentors. In terms of what was considered a traditional path to

the dean position, less than 40% had been associate deans, and over 60% had been department chairs.

Duties of a dean included internal issues such as budgets, personnel management, diversity issues, legal issues, and technology. External issues included public affairs, fund raising, alumni relations, and developing business and industry partnerships (Allen-Meares, 1997; Gmelch et al., 1999; Montez, Wolverton, & Gmelch, 2002).

The position of dean varies somewhat by institution and college, but most position announcements are similar to the announcement found at North Carolina State University's web site for the Dean of the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences (2004).

> The Dean's primary role is to provide leadership to the development and implementation of a vision that capitalizes upon the strengths of the college to serve the present and future needs of its diverse clientele. The Dean also provides leadership for the recruitment and promotion of faculty and staff, budget development, and allocation of fiscal and physical resources within the college. The Dean represents the college to the university and its external constituents, and is expected to be active in fundraising associated with college programs. The successful candidate will lead in the development of an encompassing vision for the college and through administrative and communication skills build consensus among the multiple constituencies to assure its effective implementation. Candidates must have a commitment to excellence in teaching, research and outreach, and a demonstrable commitment to diversity. The Dean will provide leadership in fundraising and show a capacity for obtaining extramural support. (p. 1)

In a contemporary environment, deans must deal with decreased public trust and confidence, increased calls for accountability from state and federal governments, decreased public funding, technology and educational delivery, diversity, and the changing demographics characteristics of students (Wolverton & Gmelch, 2002). Life-long learners and students as consumers have put increased pressure on faculty to change

teaching styles, and revitalize programs all of which can be expensive and time consuming activities. Challenges in the position of dean have been caused by under-prepared persons who were caught in ever expanding roles with increased expectations to serve faculty, administration, and external constituents, negotiations between opposing sides, and balancing scholarly interests with personal interests (Fagan, 1997; Gmelch et al., 1999).

Montez, Wolverton, and Gmelch (2002) reported that deans saw seven challenges in their near future. These areas were identified as fiscal, administration, curriculum and program development, faculty, technology, personal balance, and diversity. Seventy-five percent of deans surveyed agreed fiscal, administration, and curriculum and program development were the top three challenges in the next three to five years in their deanships.

Deans are expected to lead change and position their institution to meet industry and business demands for better prepared graduates, to function within changing political and economic attitudes, and cope with rapid advancements in technology (Wolverton & Gmelch, 2002). Leadership at this level takes management skills, effective 'people' skills, and the ability to establish a visionary direction for their college while fitting into the larger mission of an institution (Montez et al., 2002). There was no research study found with quantifiable data on how deans receive training even though between deans, associate deans, and department chairs, deans carry the largest responsibility for the greatest diversity of constituents.

All three of these academic positions are challenging, stressful, and influential. These key leaders impact how an institution creates a welcoming and encouraging

environment for faculty, staff, and students. Department chairs, associate deans, and deans are challenged to use their talents, experiences, and skills to position their institution for success in a constantly changing, knowledge world of today (Wolverton & Gmelch, 2002).

Potential Leaders

Department chairs, associate deans, and deans are a critical and significant force in higher education. They carry heightened responsibilities which increase the challenges for those in academic leadership. Institutions interested in obtaining and retaining effective leaders need to show personal and financial support in some way. Heuer (2003) stated that support of an institution is critical in developing effective leaders. He found the next five to ten years will be a critical time in leadership replacement because of the shrinking pool of candidates.

Replacing effective leaders with effective leaders requires a commitment from the institution to identify potential leaders and provide support and training. Conger (1992) found that although some graduate schools had begun to respond to need for leaders by teaching leadership courses, higher education institutions turned to professional training companies and business corporations for models.

This section will discuss the business influence in identifying leaders and some business models. Entry points for administrative leadership positions, pros and cons of internal versus external hiring, and challenges for identifying leaders in higher education are also reviewed.

Identifying Potential Leaders

For many years, business used performance outcomes to determine potential leaders. Executives would choose high performance individuals, relating leadership ability with production (Byham, et al., 2002; Fulmer & Conger, 2004). Charan et al. (2001) agreed many leaders who moved up through a company started as successful, ambitious, high performing individuals, although the process varied with the organizational culture of any particular company. Charan et al. (2001) found these potential leaders were identified by a committee, a supervisor, or a more structured process that took into account their past work history, feedback from work associates, or formal performance evaluations. Some businesses depended on top-ranking officers to hand pick successors (Byham et al., 2002). Although business organizations have changed over the past decade, and are not as hierarchal, career ladders are still defined with fairly clear entry points. Selecting for potential leaders is a different process in higher education.

In higher education, the career ladders of administrative academic leaders have many entry points, making the early identification and training of leaders even more complex and challenging (Twombly, 1990). Twombly (1990) found although most academic deans started from a faculty position, the perceived career move from faculty, department chair, associate dean, and dean was followed by relatively few individuals. This tended to vary by college, with arts and graduate deans following a more traditional path, and professional school deans going directly from faculty to dean. Wolverton and Gmelch (2002) found only 60% of college deans had been department heads and approximately 40% of college deans had been associate deans.

Internal or External Hires

Another dimension in leadership identification is to understand whether or not these individuals move up within an institution (intrainstitutional) or are external to the institution (interinstitutional). Moore (1983) found a majority of higher education administrators built their careers in one or two organizations during the 1970s. Additional studies on whether faculty built their career ladders from inside or outside the hiring institution in the 1970s and 1980s reported mixed results.

Dingerson (1990) reported a significant shift to the hiring of external candidates during the late 1970s. By 1984 Dingerson found approximately 75% of the successful candidates for academic vice-presidents, deans and department chairs were hired from external sources. In a study done a few years later, Sagaria and Dickens (1990) found another shift in their survey. They examined position changes for over 1,200 academic and administrative leaders and reported that 60% of academic administrators built their careers from within the institution.

There is a decisive difference of opinion on whether it is best to hire internally or externally. Wolverton et al. (2002) found 57% of deans were internal appointments. Some higher education organizations identified several reasons for hiring inside candidates. They felt these candidates were familiar with the culture and the goals of the organization. They had built personal communication networks that helped them handle new responsibilities (Charan et al., 2001). In many cases they were proven contributors (Byham et al., 2002; Collins, 2001). Another benefit of offering leadership opportunities to internal employees was it motivated them to stay with the organization because they were presented with new job challenges and could grow personally (Byham et al., 2002).

Some higher education institutions took a very different view of hiring inside the organization. Heuer (2003) found in some institutions, hiring internal candidates was a challenge. Search committees did not want to be restricted to internal candidates. The prevalent theory seemed to be it was easier to bring someone in with the skills than train them. Some higher education administrators had the attitude that internal candidates did not look as good as external candidates, and held them to higher standards (Heuer, 2003). The candidates had to work harder to prove they could be successful in the position. Heuer (2003) also found some search committees felt if a candidate had not done the job before, they would not be worth hiring.

Most of the participants in Heuer's (2003) survey did agree the learning curve in moving from one organization to another was not very steep. Both internal and external academicians could learn to be competent within a relatively short time, and work within the specific culture of their organization to obtain goals, leading change where appropriate. In contrast, Heuer (2003) found the external candidate from the for-profit world was at a real disadvantage in understanding the culture of higher education and functioning successfully within its norms and values.

Challenges

Heuer (2003) reported on challenges in identifying potential academic leaders. These included a segmented culture, a flat organizational structure, and unclear processes often found in higher education.

One challenge was the silo effect across a university campus (Heuer, 2003). Each college or school tended to recruit and hire their own staff. They were organized into distinct silos with not much movement between the university as a whole. Schools did

not share people who could be put into a central administration pool for training. This created employees who lacked the ability to understand the broad institutional perspective.

Another challenge came from the flat organizational structure. Unlike business, there was no distinct career ladder for high potential individuals to move up (Heuer, 2003; Twombly, 1990). This made it more difficult to identify and train replacement leaders because of a lack of training opportunities.

Organizations that did not clearly define the responsibilities and expectations of the position created another challenge. Heuer (2003) found there was often a lack of information on what made a competent leader and what made them successful. Although many types of individuals are necessary to make an organization run, not everyone had the capability to move into administrative positions. Heuer (2003) stated "the type of individual necessary to staff the organization often depends on the systems and processes in place" (p. 44). Institutions without clearly defined systems and positions have a harder time identifying capable leaders.

Training Potential Leaders

Leadership development is a complex issue. There are many dimensions to becoming a successful leader including experiences, personal characteristics, ability to communicate, the ability to work with people, the ability to envision organizational direction, and skills needed for a specific job (Kotter, 1996; Conger, 1992; Gmelch, 2004). Early leadership studies contended leaders were born, not taught (Kotter, 1999). More recent studies agreed some skills can be taught, personal characteristics can be enhanced, and meaningful experiences can be provided to help learn decision making

(Conger & Benjamin, 1999). In addition to personal study and growth, institutions can play a significant part in providing programs for motivated individuals. Wolverton and Gmelch (2002) stated "the development of leadership rest with the organization to support and coach such skills" (p. 217). This section discusses teachable skills and challenges to training potential leaders in higher education institutions.

Teachable Skills

There has been much discussion about what actually can be taught to leaders. Adult learning models have suggested adults learn through experiences, their readiness to learn is related to their development tasks of their role, and as they mature, learning becomes more problem centered (Merriam & Cafferella, 1999). Wolverton and Gmelch (2002) agreed when they wrote "leadership development is an inner journey" (p. 116).

Conger and Benjamin (1999) found leadership education played many roles, such as increasing appreciation for leadership, motivating people to develop personal capabilities, and developing leadership skills such as communication. Education can clarify and promote understanding of an organization's vision, culture, roles, and responsibilities. Leadership education can teach the organization's history and values, and provide relevant job experiences that promote leadership development at all levels (Conger & Benjamin, 1999). If leadership education can achieve these objectives, the question becomes why more institutions are not investing in these opportunities.

Challenges

Heuer (2003) identified additional institutional challenges to training potential leaders, in addition to culture, flat organizational structure, and unclear processes. These

included human and financial limitations imposed by tight resources, and the misconception of what succession planning really means.

Heuer (2003) found limited human resources hampered the ability of an institution to provide development opportunities. Administrations often focused on getting the day-to-day work taken care of, not on building talent even though it could save resources in the long term. Limited resources also meant people were overloaded, which limited their opportunities to serve on committees and exposure to other positions (Heuer, 2003).

Financial limitations impacted ability of institutions to train potential leaders. In an environment of decreasing funds, Heuer (2003) found these type programs must "have a demonstrated result and have a financial return" (p. 47). One prevailing barrier was the perception that trained people did not stay around an institution, although this theme seemed to be more important to business than higher education (Heuer, 2003). Business actually found succession planning was a way to help retain high potential individuals because these programs provide for personal growth, indicating the institution's perception of the individual as someone who has worth to the company (Charan et al., 2001).

Another challenge found by Heuer (2003) was singling out individuals in a culture that values inclusiveness and diversity created a conflict between those who are on the fast track and those who are not. Even the term succession planning implied an expectation that an individual will replace an existing leader. Heuer (2003) advocated institutions use the term bench strength as opposed to replacement training, which

indicated the future could hold potential leadership positions, although no one was earmarked as the successor.

Institutional Commitment

Organizational commitment to leadership training and development is critical to the success of an institution. Many authors agreed competent leaders were developed over time when allowed to participate in learning experiences (Caroll & Wolverton, 2004; Conger, 1992; Conger & Benjamin, 1999; Daft, 1999). Therefore, leadership development can be a significant commitment of time and resources. Clunies (2003) suggested that higher education apply business type models to higher education succession planning. Corporate training programs offered many succession planning models (Conger, 1992). This section discusses institutional involvement both through on campus programs and through support of off campus programs. Barriers to succession planning and successful succession planning activities are also examined.

Institutional Involvement

A review of the literature did not find much research to help clarify higher education's involvement in leadership development. Two qualitative studies (Heuer, 2003; Kwak-Kwon, 1991) suggested deans and higher administrative leadership were offered training through seminars/conferences/workshops, some mentoring, and some planned experiential learning. Jackson and Gmelch (2003) found associate deans contributed most of their growth to mentors. Carroll & Wolverton (2004) reported department chairs were uncertain about the need for training, although they did acknowledge the necessity for skills in people management and resources management.

Heuer (2003) listed some examples of how institutions were helping with leadership development on their campus.

On Campus Support

The participants in Heuer's (2003) study described programs provided by nine Ivy League institutions. These programs included grants for training through a Human Resource Department, various courses for educating people on the importance of career training, and career coaching to all employees. Formal performance ratings were used at some institutions to encourage participants in their training and development. Heuer reported one institution started a program with participants involved in a six to eight week program on leadership strategies. Another institution had a leadership series which invited the senior leadership to attend and bring those whom they thought should hear the message. In an informal way, this allowed them as leaders to identify key individual who could possibly become future leaders.

Another institution organized a "leader-to-leader" program (Heuer, 2003). Twenty two individuals were nominated by supervisors to participate in a year long program designed to provide seminars, training, 360 degree feedback, and other programs. Still another institution provided 450 people training opportunities in a single year. All of these examples showed an interest and some commitment on behalf of the institution to identify and train future leaders (Heuer, 2003).

Off Campus Support

In addition to the on campus institutional training programs, many other off campus program are available to those interested in leadership development. McDade (1990) discussed off campus and on campus development opportunities for potential and

existing leaders. She divided the leadership programs into four categories: national institutes, administrative conferences, conventions and annual meetings and seminars, workshops and meetings. McDade (1990) found some institutions partnered with associations to provide programs for new administrators. McDade also found leadership position made a difference on how the leaders were trained. For example, department chairs tended to be trained by special meetings organized by academic associations, or by networking with colleagues to discuss challenges and opportunities. Although not supported by research, anecdotal evidence suggested many academic leaders have been trained outside of their institution.

Two examples of leadership development programs supported by institutions but found off campus, are the American Council of Education Fellows Program and the National Association of State Land Grant Universities and Colleges ESCOP/ACOP Leadership Development program. According to information found on the websites of these professional associations, institutions contribute to the support of their participants by paying the registration fees, assisting in mentoring programs and establishing internships with high administrative leaders.

The American Council of Education established a leadership program called ACE Fellows which allows participants to spend an extended period of time on another campus. Decision making experiences and mentoring are the foundation for the Fellows program. The three options for off-campus learning include a year-long placement, a semester-long placement or periodic visits to another campus. According to their on-line brochure, “a strong commitment from the institution’s top leadership is critical to ensure a successful and productive Fellowship year” (2004, p. 4). McDaniel (2002) and Ward

(2003) found the ability to work with presidents and other high ranking academic officers helped the participants gain better insight on leadership practices and skills. The Fellows' program requires the participant to pay their own living expenses, but their institution continues with their salary, an obvious commitment of the institution to support training and development of potential leaders. Participants in the Fellows program are nominated by their college or university president, or their chief academic officer.

The ESCOP/ACOP Leadership Development program works with faculty to train potential leaders in the land-grant university system. There are three phases to this program, consisting of a week-long workshop, a resident internship portion, and a final two day program approximately one year from the first phase workshop. Their stated goal is to "provide cutting-edge leadership learning experiences that facilitate personal growth and better prepare participants to lead change situations and bring value to universities and the land-grant concept" (ESCOP/ACOP, 2004). Information on this program is sent to deans and directors, who use some process to identify those who participate in this leadership program. According to graduates of the program, the usual practice is for the home institution to pay expenses, including registration fees, travel, and conference expenses.

There are many other leadership programs including some sponsored by higher education institutions such as the Harvard Institute for Education Management, the Harvard Management Development Program or the Higher Education Resources Services Program (McDade, 1990). Other leadership programs are offered by professional associations for leadership training including the Council of Colleges of Arts and Sciences, the American Associate of Colleges for Teacher Education, the American

Association of Colleges of Nursing, and the American Association of Colleges and Schools of Business (ASHE-ERIC Report, 2001).

Succession Planning

A critical part of maintaining the success of an organization is having good leaders. If there is no forethought in what type of leaders might be needed and what skills might be needed, hiring the right person to influence change and achieve institutional goals becomes a matter of luck (Heuer, 2003). Succession planning is preparing people for leadership by using a purposeful strategy for identifying potential leaders, then working with them to provide skill training and individual growth opportunities (Charan et al., 2001). Succession planning requires looking forward, identifying strategic goals and future needs of an organization. This becomes a process of visioning and anticipating the type of skills that will be needed into the future (Conger & Benjamin, 1999). In the absence of a succession plan, replacing good leaders are often left to chance, with minimum thought until the crisis is eminent (Heuer, 2003).

Collins (2001) reinforced the importance of succession planning when he reported that 90% of what he called great leaders came up through their companies, while more than two-thirds of what he called good leaders came from outside hires. Business and industry leaders appeared to be somewhat better in this area than academe with approximately 40% of companies involved in some succession planning (Byham et al., 2002). A recent report from the Institute of Management and Administration (2004) indicated that some organizations spent up to 40% of their human resource budget in training, approximately $2,000 per person. Obviously, this type of commitment required a significant financial investment, but financial support is not enough. There should be

plans to make sure that individuals do not waste their time in learning duplicate skills, but learn those social, emotional, and functional skills for success at their level of involvement (Byham et al., 2002).

Barriers to Succession Planning

Even though preparation and institutional support for learning and personal growth can be critical in the success of higher education leadership (Gmelch, 2004), implementing succession plans seemed to be a difficult procedure in higher education. Heuer (2003) reported that failure of organizations to have effective succession plans could be caused by several factors.

These factors included the inability of some leaders to identify potential leaders who might have the right characteristics for future growth of an organization. Many leaders picked mirror images of themselves which may or may not ensure efficient leadership replacements. Organizations tended to think of the status quo, and often failed to reevaluate positions. Candidates were not screened carefully, or not enough candidates were interviewed. People in authority were not willing to lose high producers that contributed to the success of their programs. Downsizing and reorganizations made it more difficult to develop assignments that allowed decision-making experiences. Increased levels of responsibilities made it more difficult for potential leaders to have the time necessary for professional development.

Successful Succession Planning Activities

In contrast, Clunies (2003) listed several foundation principles that could be used to describe companies who maintained best practices in succession planning. He suggested these principles could be adapted to higher education programs. Successful

succession planning included the need for strong leadership at the top, exposing the next generation to outside and inside groups, committees appointed to oversee the development program, linking the CEO's compensation to the development of the plan, and developing a succession culture throughout the organization.

Clunies (2003) suggested some positive activities to set the structural framework for developing a comprehensive succession plan in higher education. Educational institutions could present clear expectations of the responsibilities of the job, and work to set up teams and formal performance reviews. They could create programs to expose leaders to those across the campus, create and share clear institutional vision and goals, identify superior employees for training opportunities, and work to improve the competence of search committees. Finally, faculty, staff and administration could work to establish a culture that encourages participation in succession planning.

Discussion

This discussion presented a review of literature examining the roles, the challenges, and the responsibilities of department chairs, associate deans, and deans. These academic leaders face the challenge of leading people, leading change, and working within an organizational culture which values discipline expertise above leadership skills (Wolverton & Gmelch, 2002). Successful leadership requires people be prepared to take on the difficult responsibilities associated with these jobs, instead many are under-prepared (Gmelch, 2004).

There was limited research-based literature on what institutions were doing to support leadership training. Heuer (2003) found a small variety of programs that indicated institutional interest and involvement. However, if the next five to ten years are

going to be critical in replacing qualified leaders across academe (Heuer, 2003), institutions will need to be more involved with the development of their future leaders.

Academe has some barriers to succession planning to overcome. These include an institutional culture that has not been focused on training or identifying potential leaders, limited financial and human resources, and a basic structure in higher education institutions that does not encourage a clear career path from faculty to dean (Twombly, 1990). Although there is some indication that institutions are beginning to understand the importance of succession planning and investing more resources in leadership identification and training, additional research is needed to clarify and evaluate current practices. Department chairs, associate deans, and deans serve critical and pivotal roles in higher education, and their training and developing should not be left to chance (Heuer, 2003).

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