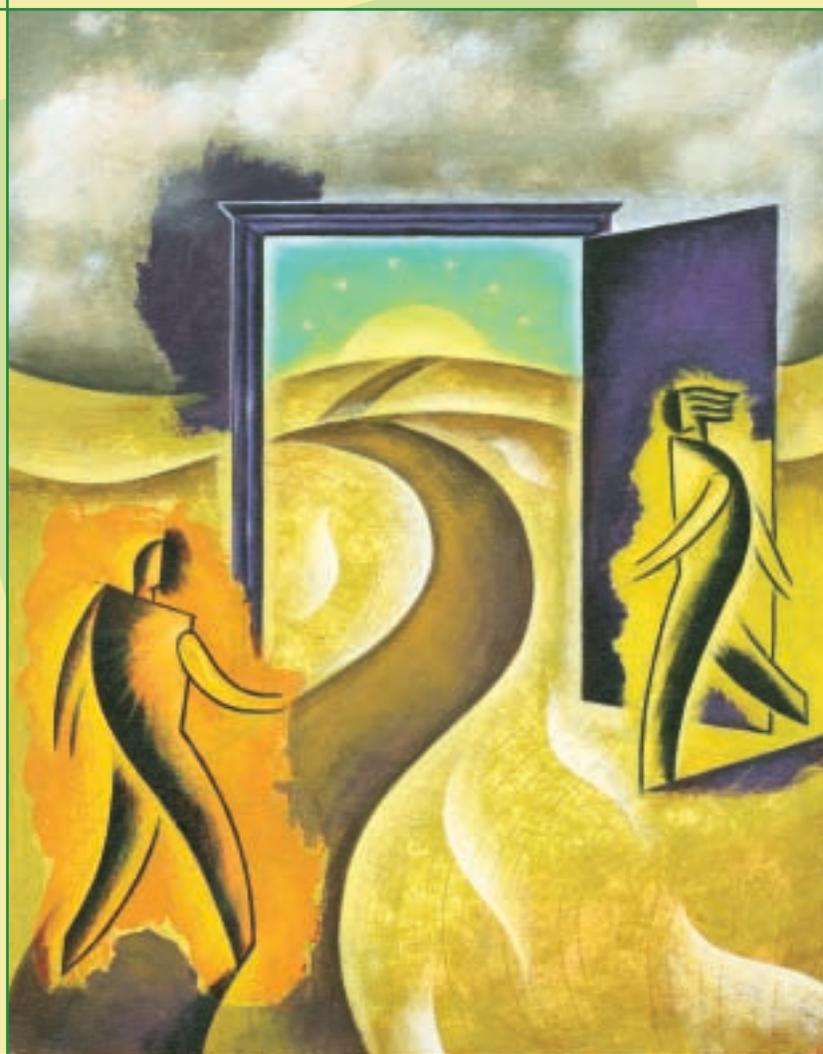


A *Leadingforward* REPORT

# Breaking Tradition



New Community College Leadership Programs  
Meet 21st-Century Needs

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New Community College Leadership Programs  
Meet 21st-Century Needs

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American Association of Community Colleges  
with support from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation

The American Association of Community Colleges (AACC) is the primary advocacy organization for the nation's community colleges. The association represents more than 1,100 two-year, associate degree-granting institutions and more than 11 million students. AACC promotes community colleges through six strategic action areas: national and international recognition and advocacy for community colleges, learning and accountability, leadership development, economic and workforce development, connectedness across AACC membership, and international and intercultural education. Information about AACC and community colleges may be found at [www.aacc.nche.edu](http://www.aacc.nche.edu).

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# PREFACE

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**E**ach year since 2001, more than 500 new, senior level administrators (e.g., chief academic, student services, or business officers) have been hired, and 80 to 100 new, first time community college presidents have come onboard. To ensure that qualified candidates are available to fill upcoming vacancies as growing numbers of community college presidents and senior administrators retire, the American Association of Community Colleges and colleges nationwide are placing a special interest on community college leadership development programs.

With support from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation, which sponsored community college leadership programs since the 1960s, AACC launched a new national program called Leading Forward in 2003. The initiative includes a number of research, consensus-building, and planning activities, including national summits to address the leadership issue. One key outcome of the Leading Forward planning activity was a set of core competencies for community college leaders. Additional studies are examining the impact of the Kellogg supported graduate level community college leadership programs in the 1960s and 1970s, newer “next generation” university-based community college leadership programs, and local, state, and regional “grow your own” leadership programs.

*Breaking Tradition: New Community College Leadership Programs Meet 21st-Century Needs* takes a closer look at the more conventional path to higher leadership: university-based

community college leadership programs. University-based programs traditionally have provided critical credentials to candidates for the community college presidency and positions in higher education administration. Degree specialties range from traditional humanities and social sciences to education administration and organizational leadership.

This report highlights the strategies and practices of six relatively new university-based programs, formed since 2000. It shows how new community college leadership programs are aligning not only with the competencies identified by Leading Forward but with the needs of their states and the needs of rising leaders themselves. Through flexible scheduling and innovative delivery methods these programs have opened access to groups, such as full time employees, that were previously overlooked through the structure of past leadership programs. The insights and lessons discussed in this report should assist both college leaders and policymakers as they continue to tackle the critical task of nurturing and developing strong and effective leaders.

We are grateful to the W.K. Kellogg Foundation for its generous support of the Leading Forward initiative and this book. Our thanks go out to the coordinators of each of the programs who shared time, materials, and stories with us.

George R. Boggs  
President and CEO  
American Association of Community Colleges



# INTRODUCTION

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The American Association of Community Colleges (AACC) funded this study as part of its Leading Forward initiative sponsored by the W. K. Kellogg Foundation. Through Leading Forward, AACC has launched a number of research, consensus-building, and planning activities, including four national Leadership Summits designed to address the challenges of developing new leaders for the nation's community colleges. Researchers at Michigan State University consulted materials from the 2004 Leadership Summit of University Programs and conducted interviews and other activities to explore how today's community college leadership programs are meeting current challenges and how their approaches differ from those of the Kellogg junior college leadership programs of the 1960s.

Through Leading Forward activities, AACC identified five essential characteristics for today's community college leaders:

- Understanding and implementing the community college mission
- Effective advocacy
- Administrative skills
- Community and economic development
- Personal, interpersonal, and transformational skills

A task force of the AACC board of directors established in 2000 also identified several

characteristics thought to be essential to effective leadership development programs of the 21st century. Perhaps more than in the past, today's programs cater to adult learners who must acquire leadership training as they simultaneously attend to the demands of full-time jobs and other life responsibilities. Essential program characteristics include the following:

- Accessible
- Low cost
- High quality
- Tailored for working professionals
- Provide mentoring opportunities
- Allow for personal reflection and assessment

University-based community college leadership programs take many forms, including credit or noncredit, degree or certificate, institution-based or national, and skill-based or theoretical. Although such attributes may not differ fundamentally from the first programs launched by the W. K. Kellogg Foundation in the 1960s, content and delivery differ in today's leadership programs because community colleges and their circumstances have changed, as have the circumstances of adult learners. Table 1 lists some of the first community college leadership programs, which provided a foundation for the following generations. Some of the programs still exist and have evolved; others no longer exist. Most of the early programs served primarily white males.

**Table 1: University Programs for Community College Leadership Funded by W. K. Kellogg Foundation in the 1960s**

<b>Institution</b>	<b>Program Name</b>	<b>Original Intent/Features</b>
Columbia Teachers College	Columbia Teachers College Junior College Leadership Program	Placed special attention on preparing leaders sensitive to the need for planning, with particular emphasis on the preparation of academic deans and business officers. The program also included diverse in-service opportunities for community college personnel.
Florida State University (originally partnered with University of Florida)	Southeastern Junior College Leadership Program	Emphasized 4 major features: in-service development, pre-service preparation, graduate study, and research.
Michigan State University	Junior College Leadership Program at Michigan State University	Focused on three aspects: doctoral and postdoctoral fellowship programs for persons preparing to become university professors of community college education or staff professionals in state-level community college agencies, sponsorship of institutes or workshops for community college personnel, and research related to community college development or as requested by individual community colleges.
Stanford University	Junior College Leadership Program at Stanford	Concerned with preparing future junior college administrators.
University of California, Berkeley	Junior College Leadership Program at Berkeley	Prepared chief administrators and specialists in junior college education. Program tailored to fit educational and experiential needs of candidate. Offers a core of higher education seminars, behavior sciences, statistics and research methodology.
University of California, Los Angeles	UCLA Junior College Leadership Program	Prepared junior college presidents and deans of instruction giving particular attention to educational innovation as related to administration. Also offered, study in preparation for university professorship in the field of junior college, as well as preparation for junior-college related positions in governmental agencies and state regional and national organizations.
University of Colorado	Mountain-Plains Community College Leadership Program	Principally concerned with three activities: doctoral degree for persons presently in or aspiring into community college administration; conferences and workshops for leaders in community college administration; and field services.
University of Florida (originally partnered with Florida State University)	Southeastern Junior College Leadership Program	Emphasizes 4 major features: in-service development, pre-service preparation, graduate study, and research.
University of Michigan	The Leadership Program at Michigan	Intended for two groups: those people interested in general and academic administration in community colleges and state-level community college agencies and individuals wishing to become university professors of community college education.
University of Texas, Austin	Junior College Leadership Program at the University of Texas	Program consists of 9 semester hours of each of the following: junior college administration, educational research, and organizational theory in education. An additional semester is dedicated to a supervised administrative internship in a selected junior college.
University of Washington	Junior College Leadership Program at the University of Washington	Served to identify and attract potential community college administrators for education, business, industry and government.
Wayne State University	Junior College Leadership Program at Wayne State University	Concerned with preparing faculty and administrators in junior college education at the doctoral level.

## Current Status

Current degrees offered in Educational Leadership Studies: M.A., Ed.D., Ph.D. Present concentration prepares students for positions of administrative leadership within the public schools, and in public/private organizations that work with the public schools. Although no concentration on community college leadership or related coursework currently exists, Columbia Teachers College houses a Center for the Study of Community Colleges, which enrolls community college staff, and as a research center, focuses on community college initiatives in its publications.

Current degrees offered in Higher Education Program: M.S., Ed.D., Ph.D., College Teaching certificate. The Higher Education program offers a variety of degrees and emphasis in higher education. The program offers further training for community college professionals, and students may focus research on community colleges. The Louis W. Bender Scholarship is available to experienced community college professionals who wish to seek a doctoral degree in the Higher Education Program. They still maintain a community college leadership program.

Current degrees offered: M.A., Ed.D., Ph.D. They continue to offer doctorates, as well as an M.A. of Philosophy in Higher, Adult, and Lifelong Education (HALE). They no longer offer a community college specific program.

Current degrees offered: M.A., Ed.D., Ph.D. There is no community college leadership program presently at Stanford. They do offer a Student Educational Leadership Institute, an executive program for educational leaders, a Superintendent Fellows program and leadership study tours.

Current degrees offered: M.A., Ed.D., Ph.D. The former community college leadership program is no longer active. The Higher Education program is a blended program, and community colleges are not attended to specifically. There are faculty with backgrounds in community colleges, and some of the community college alumni are still actively involved with the University. They are currently focusing on Principal Leadership Institute (PLI), established in 2000 to prepare leaders for San Francisco Bay Area urban schools.

Current degrees offered: M.A., Ed.D., Ph.D. There is a renewed effort to focus on Higher Education, including community colleges. UCLA has recently become more active with community colleges but there is no specific program anymore. The UCLA program was the strongest university program in the years 1960-1972, and declined through the years.

Current degrees offered: M.A., Ed.D., Ph.D. The Institute for higher education prepares graduates for careers in teaching and administration in K-12. The program emphasis is bringing diversity to the classroom. Their focus is on K-12 with little focus on community colleges.

Current degrees offered: M.A., Ed.S., Ed.D., Ph.D. The institute prepares graduates for careers in teaching and administration in community colleges, four-year institutions, vocational-technical schools, and government agencies. The programs include coursework on community college topics.

Current degrees offered: M.A., Ed.D., Ph.D. A Doctoral program focusing on community college governance and leadership and a Masters program in community college administration are offered.

Current degrees offered: M.A., Ed.D., Ph.D. This program is presently the leading community college leadership program in the nation.

Current degrees offered: MA, EdD, PhD. Their doctoral program has a focus on governance and leadership. There is no formal community college program; however, there are community college specific courses available and some community college participation.

Current degrees offered: M.A., Ed.D., Ph.D., Graduate Certificate in College and University Teaching. The Doctor of Education program is primarily for practicing educational administrators and as such requires leadership experience. There is no specific community college leadership program.

Source: AACC 1970

The Kellogg Foundation funded the programs because it believed “the programming would make a real difference in the quality and in the number of individuals who would provide

leadership in the field of community college administration” (Hencey 1981). A similar assumption guides newer university programs, as community college leaders retire at high rates.

Figure 1: Traditional Model of Program Development

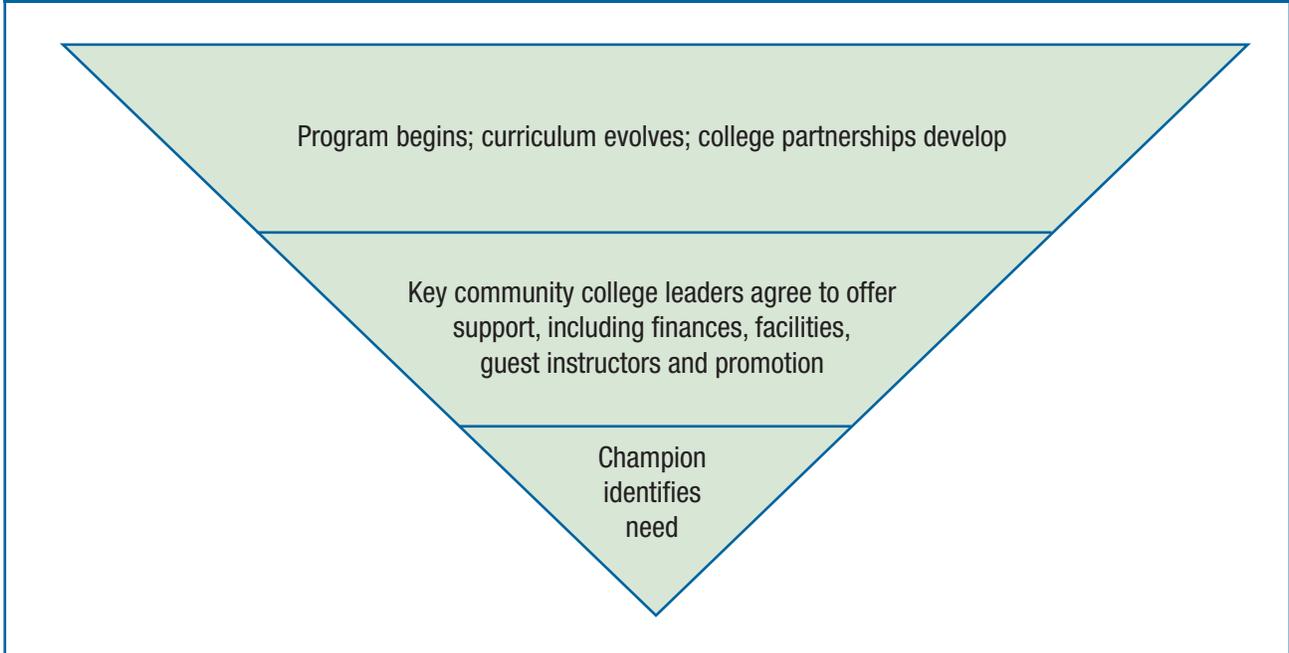


Figure 2: Nondegree to Degree Model of Program Development

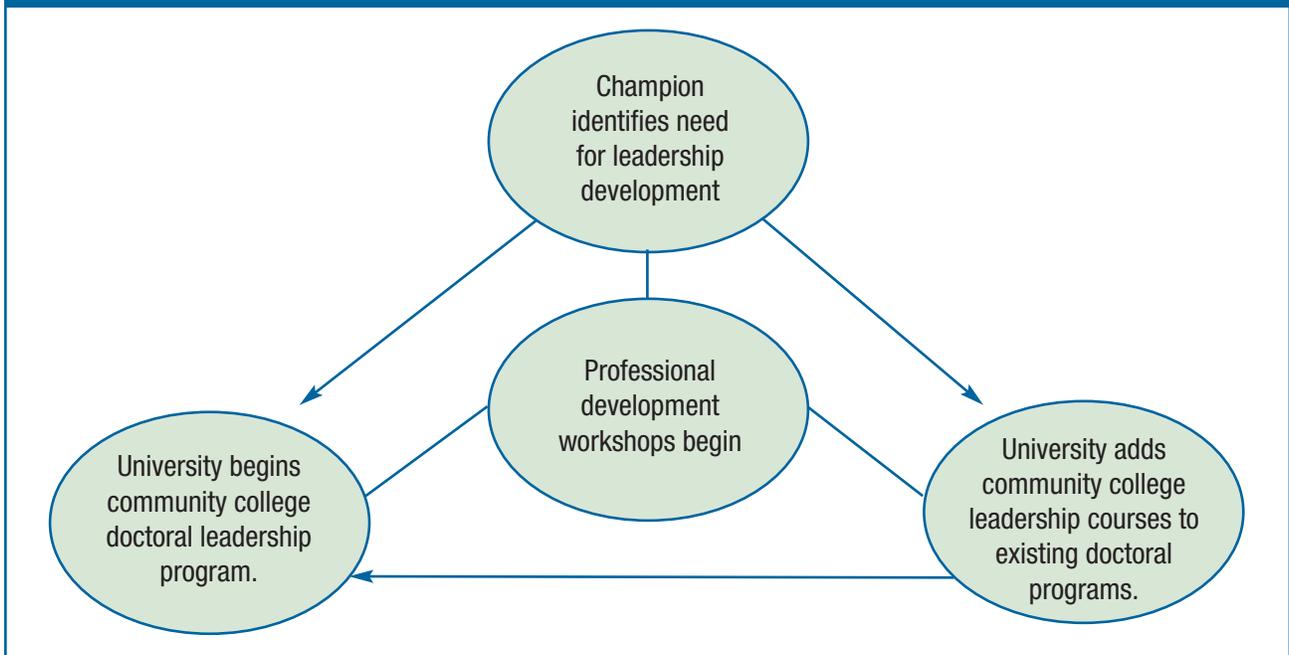
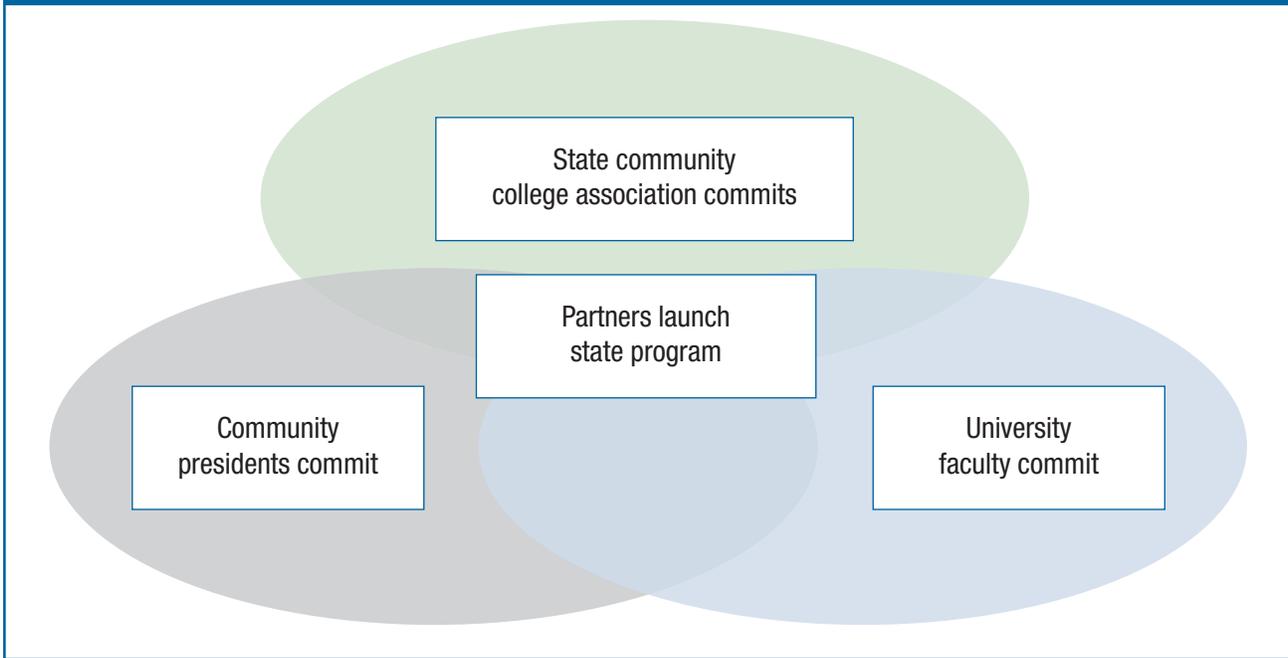


Figure 3: Three-Tier Partnership Model of Program Development



University and other leadership development programs are stepping up to meet these new challenges. Doctoral leadership programs emerging since 2000 are similar to the older programs, but their delivery is significantly different in that they are designed for working adults with family and work responsibilities.

Figures 1 through 3 illustrate three models of current leadership program development. The traditional model (Figure 1) takes an approach in which the champion, typically a university faculty member who works with community colleges, recognizes a need for a credit-bearing program. The champion consults immediate superiors for support and develops necessary partnerships to start the program. Figure 2 illustrates how a nondegree program might evolve into a degree program. Similar to the traditional model, a university faculty member recognizes the need for a formal program. In this evolutionary model, however, delivery begins within a fee-based, noncredit professional development

workshop, evolves into a community college course for a preexisting higher education degree, and results in a full doctoral program. Figure 3 differs still more in that it represents a convergence of three streams: the state community college association, the university faculty, and a community college president. This model relies on all three bodies for development and sustainability, but any one of them can serve as the catalyst.

Central to these three models of program development are the partnerships. Even though historically less common, the second and third models are potentially replicable in many locations, especially where community college connections are strong or could be developed fairly easily. They may be the creative options that programs can adapt to better serve the leadership development needs of their state. Partnerships and meeting state needs were essential for the Kellogg-supported programs of the 1960s, and they remain so today.



# METHODOLOGY

The researchers examined six university-based leadership development programs by reviewing source materials from the AACC Leadership Summit on University Programs; studying program literature reviews; and conducting site visits with faculty, administrators, and students. The researchers selected the programs in collaboration with AACC

staff. Selection criteria included one or more of the following:

- Recently established program
- Specific curricular focus
- Innovative delivery system
- Flexible administrative structure, including partnerships or consortia models

**Table 2: Sample University-Based Community College Leadership Programs Established Since 2000**

University Name	Program Name	Features
Iowa State University	Community College Leadership Academy Cohort Program	Doctoral program offered as one of two higher education doctoral programs. Uses fee-based professional development programs for recruitment.
Mississippi State University / Alcorn State University	Community College Leadership Doctoral Program	Partnership between two universities, one historically black and one predominantly white. Focuses on rural community colleges. Weekend format with multiple forms of instructional technology.
Morgan State University	Community College Leadership Doctoral Program	New doctoral program within a larger educational leadership program. Focuses on urban community colleges that serve a predominantly African-American student population. Weekend format in 5 week modules all year.
New Mexico State University	Educational Leadership Doctoral Program [Community College Leadership Development Program – 1st cohort studied]	Doctoral program offered among existing educational leadership programs. Focused on Latina/Latino students. Note: In 2004, NMSU merged its community college leadership program into its existing Educational Leadership doctoral program.
University of Massachusetts-Amherst	Community College Leadership Academy	Partnership with Massachusetts Community College Association. Formal meetings held monthly at sites around the state, and intensive summer session.
University of Nebraska	Educational Leadership and Higher Education Doctoral Program	Online doctoral program with a strong community college focus that addresses state and regional needs.

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The researchers considered geographic representation, but location was not a strong selection factor. They designed criteria to yield programs that could provide insight into the future of community college leadership development in university-based arrangements and to provide lessons learned that could benefit other programs. Table 2 lists the six sample programs.

The researchers compiled individual site reports, keeping in mind the essential leadership characteristics and effective program format criteria developed by AACC. Areas of study included the following:

- Program Origin and Mission (including the definition of leadership on which the program is based)

- Intended Audience (including how the program attracts and reaches its audience, provides accessibility, and promotes diversity)
- Structure
- Faculty
- Curriculum and Teaching Strategies (including how the program provides for personal reflection and assessment)
- Connections (including connections within the community college and with the collaborating universities and community)
- Program Outcomes
- Sustainability and Institutional Issues

# FINDINGS

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## 1. PROGRAM ORIGIN AND MISSION

Each program initially addressed specific state leadership needs, “content needs” or “context needs.” Content needs include issues such as a focus on rural or urban setting, a need to emphasize diversity and multiculturalism, or a need to serve border communities. Context needs might refer to economic disadvantage in a labor market, hiring decisions leading to a grow-your-own succession model, providing access for geographically dispersed and full-time employed learners, or leadership across institutional levels.

Although each program’s developers worked independently and tailored their program to state leadership needs, the six programs also share many characteristics, as displayed in Table 3. Their responsiveness is consistent with the program mission and community college mission in general. In addition, each program is affiliated with a state university, including land-grant institutions whose missions also identify service to the area.

In almost every case, the programs were the brainchild of an individual or small team of scholar-practitioners who identified state community college leadership needs and advocated structured programs connected with universities as an appropriate response. Typically, though not always, these champions were university faculty with close community college connections or backgrounds. Program leaders took advantage of timing, connections, personal capital, university priorities, and enrollment concerns to launch their programs.

Most programs began as a pilot course, workshop, noncredit option, or trial year or through some kind of seed funding. Like the community colleges on which they focus, the programs sprang up in the higher education landscape rather than evolving slowly over time.

A common benefit for students participating in the programs is an opportunity to become better informed about the community colleges in the state and the ways in which state decision making affects the colleges. Programs provide this information through the curricula, may rotate to different college campuses, and call upon state-level leaders as instructors or guest speakers, who bring current state issues directly into the classroom. The instructors then set state issues in a national and sometimes international context so students develop a broad perspective.

### *Definitions of Leadership*

Most programs began with a leadership definition that the program creator or director established. As programs mature, the definitions may shift to reflect new realities, new organizational goals, or new university administrator priorities. For example, the program at New Mexico State reframed its curriculum to reflect a K–20 leadership orientation; in the second iteration of the program, community college leadership is one emphasis within a broader leadership arena. The leadership definitions and curriculum components that drive these programs exhibit characteristics described in both the 2002 AACC Leadership Task Force report and four 2004 AACC

Leading Forward leadership summits. All the programs include participants from across the community college administrative hierarchy, including but not limited to aspiring presidents. As a result, the programs incorporate broad definitions of leadership. Although they do not ignore applied technical skills, the programs emphasize an understanding of leadership that applies across community college settings and organizational levels.

## 2. INTENDED AUDIENCE

These doctoral programs appear to have almost unlimited numbers of prospective students, even among in-state enrollment. Because of the vast need for leadership development, several of the programs offer nondegree opportunities along with doctoral programs. All but one offer master's degrees, although these are unlikely to focus specifically on community colleges. The doctoral programs target mid-level

**Table 3: University-Based Community College Leadership Program Characteristics**

	Iowa State University Community College Leadership Program	Mississippi State University/Alcorn State University Community College Doctoral Program	Morgan State-University Community College Doctoral Program
Cohort model	✓	✓	✓
Geared toward mid/senior level administrators	✓	✓	✓
Most students are employed full time	✓	✓	✓
Small core faculty	✓	✓	✓
Faculty from (or w/) community college experience	✓	✓	✓
Curriculum adheres to regional needs	✓	✓	✓
Mentoring including networking, job shadowing, career support available	✓	✓	✓
Community college president involvement	✓	✓	✓

\*The Massachusetts program differs from the university programs in that it is a nondegree statewide leadership program that feeds into the University of Massachusetts-Amherst program.

administrators and higher. Prospective students need not be aspiring presidents, but program coordinators agree that early participation by those in leadership roles throughout the college enhances their leadership opportunities and may encourage administrators to consider seeking a presidency in the future. Programs that also offer nondegree options have broad-based participation, sometimes including employees who are earlier in their career but have received recognition for their leadership potential. The programs

began with particular student markets in mind that could sustain the programs as they grew. Reflecting societal and demographic changes since the 1960s, each program also was designed to be accessible for students who continue working full-time; there is little push to admit full-time students.

In the parallel degree and nondegree programs, students can opt to pay for university credit and use the credits when matriculating to a doctoral or master's program, although this

	New Mexico State University Educational Leadership Doctoral Program	University of Massachusetts-Amherst Community College Leadership Academy*	University of Nebraska Educational Leadership and Higher Education Doctoral Program
	✓	✓	✓
	✓	✓	✓
	✓	✓	✓
	✓	✓	N/A
	✓	✓	✓
	✓	✓	✓
	✓	✓	✓
	✓	✓	✓

practice is not yet widespread in all situations in which both degree and nondegree options exist. Faculty look for direct ways to encourage students who participate in nondegree programs to pursue doctoral study. Where it is more common for students to enroll for university credit, the nondegree options serve as feeders into doctoral study, so student recruitment is not a concern.

Three of the programs studied have a particular academic focus and state demographics that increase diversity among students: New Mexico State University is a border program at a Hispanic-serving institution. Morgan State initially focused on urban community colleges but also made a conscientious effort to recruit African American leaders, including those from the Baltimore County area. Mississippi State/Alcorn State specifically serves a rural, primarily African American, population.

University of Nebraska draws on out-of-state and international students to provide some of its diversity in race and ethnicity, and both Iowa and Massachusetts' programs strive to increase participation by people of color while working to ensure their curricula address diversity issues on a host of topics important for community college leaders. Each recognizes the importance of preparing leaders for a diverse community college, so curricula intentionally include issues of race, ethnicity, gender, socioeconomic status, social justice, globalization, underprepared and diverse learners, and perspectives derived from the varied life experiences of the students. Program faculty take the issue of diversity seriously in their programs. Different sites have different definitions of multiculturalism for their programs, but all look for creative ways to increase student diversity. Table 4 presents program participant demographics.

**Table 4: University-Based Community College Leadership Program Demographics**

<b>Program Name</b>	<b>Average Cohort Size</b>	<b>Approximate Gender Breakdown (M/F)</b>	<b>Race/Ethnicity (approximate % minority)</b>
<b>Iowa State University-Community College Leadership Program</b>	12 to 15	65% / 35%	10%
<b>Mississippi State University/Alcorn State University-Community College Doctoral Program</b>	25	63% / 37%	32%
<b>Morgan State University Community College Doctoral Program</b>	25	65% / 35%	75%
<b>New Mexico State University-Educational Leadership Doctoral Program</b>	35	62% / 38%	25%
<b>University of Massachusetts - Community College Leadership Academy</b>	30	65% / 35%	Not Available
<b>University of Nebraska-Educational Leadership and Higher Education Doctoral Program</b>	170	46% / 54%	4%

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### 3. STRUCTURE

Each program uses a cohort model, ranging from flexible (starting more than once a year) to tightly coupled (all students take a set of courses together in a common sequence). The cohorts provide strong networks for problem solving and for professional development and career advancement during the program, and the cohorts last beyond degree completion as well. Cohorts intentionally were designed to connect students across the state to help them achieve greater overall leadership capacity than if they remained focused on their own experiences or institution. The cohort also helps mitigate attrition and absenteeism by fostering an increased expectation of peer accountability and support.

From the university perspective, cohorts allow for efficient course delivery with more predictable enrollments. Still, programs may be challenged to provide effective and timely feedback on substantive writing assignments, especially research and dissertation writing, for large numbers of students. Faculty may rely on creative strategies to address time constraints, such as group advising and assessment rubrics.

The least common program structure is the standard 15-week, 3-credit course. Most programs offer a combination of instructional formats, including face-to-face, online, and hybrid courses; weekend and short (1- or 2-week intensive) courses, and/or all-day classes (see Table 5). Sometimes, extended classes are opportunities for socialization, networking, and professional development in addition to providing content knowledge to students. The two-day Annual Leadership Institute at Morgan State, hosted by advanced graduate students, prepares new students to function effectively as members of a cohort and provides direction for various aspects of doctoral study covering topics from research preparation to

contemporary community college issues. The Massachusetts Community College Leadership Academy features a capstone Residential College experience bringing students together with faculty and guest speakers for several days of concentrated academic work, sharing, and collaboration. A significant feature of the Residential College is the Academic Conference, during which students share their college projects in a professional conference setting. Some programs may include internships and capstone activities.

#### Capstone Activities

Capstone activities are designed for students to synthesize and integrate knowledge acquired through course work and other learning experiences. Capstones apply theory and principle to a project that is usually conducted in the workplace.

Similarly, the curricular structure reinforces the learning goals and is intended to support part-time learners and, therefore, provide greater access to graduate study than may be found in traditional university graduate programs. At the same time, the innovative structures often test the fortitude of students because of the intensity, duration, and consequences of absence in alternative class structures. If a program meets only once a month, missing one class due to a professional emergency carries more significant consequences than missing one 3-hour class out of a 15-week term. Students reported being mindful of, and sometimes concerned about, the negotiations they must conduct in their lives to prepare for and be successful in these leadership programs.

**Table 5: Alternative Delivery Methods**

Delivery Methods	Iowa State University Community College Leadership Program	Mississippi State University/Alcorn State University Community College Doctoral Program	Morgan State University Community College Doctoral Program
Online course available	✓	✓	
Weekend courses offered (Thurs-Sat)	✓	✓	✓
Short (intensive) courses available	✓		✓
Rotate location	✓	✓	✓

\*The Massachusetts program differs from the university programs in that it is a nondegree statewide leadership program that feeds into the University of Massachusetts-Amherst program.

#### 4. FACULTY

As is the case for most national higher education programs, these leadership programs are run by small groups of full-time faculty. Typically, one person serves as a central point of contact. The person is usually a member of a larger department, most often including K–12 program faculty. The complement of instructors may or may not have community college experience in their background. Affiliate faculty members from the community college system often serve as instructors or perform other roles, such as supervising internships. They typically are college administrators, and almost all who teach courses (as opposed to guest lecturing) have doctoral degrees. All the faculty members are dedicated to leadership development and to the community college sector of postsecondary education.

#### 5. CURRICULUM AND TEACHING STRATEGIES

Program curricula initially were designed in one of two ways: (1) in consultation with community college leaders in the state through

some kind of interactive or group process or (2) as a result of a program director’s personal experience or knowledge from prior interaction with community college leaders in the state.

Compared with many peer programs in higher education, the emphasis on community colleges is clear. Although each program emphasizes community college leadership, they all include general higher education information or curriculum components as well (Table 6).

#### Innovative Instructional Delivery Methods

- Student cohorts
- Online and/or distance course delivery
- Weekend course availability
- Collaborative/team taught classes
- Internship or shadowing opportunities
- Mentoring
- Onsite research projects

Although they have strong academic and theoretical foundations, each curriculum ties directly to practice in many ways, so students see the relevancy to their current and future

	New Mexico State University Educational Leadership Doctoral Program	University of Massachusetts/Amherst Community College Leadership Academy*	University of Nebraska Educational Leadership and Higher Education Doctoral Program
	✓	NA	✓
	✓	NA	NA
		✓	✓
	✓	✓	NA

practice. Given the emphasis on state-related issues, students see immediate application and connection of the material. Some programs include required research and internship projects, apart from dissertation research, that give students an opportunity to pursue a specific community college problem of interest, often directly relevant to their home institution or state. For example, through the program requirements of the Capstone Experience at Iowa State and the Fellows' College Project in the Massachusetts Community College Leadership Academy, students pursue problems of personal interest that directly benefit the community college. Problem-based learning and case studies are common teaching strategies.

The University of Nebraska uses a faculty-designed simulation, called the Broadwater Simulation, which weaves throughout many of the courses and serves as one of the capstone experiences of the program. The Broadwater Simulation has multiple organizational issues within it for students to address, including unique and catastrophic situations, and is laden with leadership and interpersonal dynamics issues to represent the many levels of challenge facing leaders in real postsecondary environ-

ments. In the Community College Leadership Doctoral Program at Mississippi State/Alcorn State, where the curriculum emphasizes rural community college issues, students take a required set of interdisciplinary courses such as rural community and economic development and rural sociology. The students then apply their understanding to the community college context through case study problems as well as real situations they have experienced in their work at the colleges.

All programs include some form of mentoring, typically associated with an internship and a community college leader. Through discussions, shadowing, and networking, mentors provide students with additional examples of theory to practice, a sense of an "insider's perspective" on complex problems, and candid insights. Guest lecturers and site/research supervisors from the field also provide mentoring opportunities even if they are of short duration. The Massachusetts Community College Leadership Academy holds monthly leadership discussions at lunchtime between the academy fellows and community college presidents. The sessions provide a short but intense and candid mentoring opportunity

**Table 6: University-Based Community College Leadership Program Curriculum Features**

Curriculum Features	Iowa State University Community College Leadership Program	Mississippi State University/ Alcorn State University Community College Doctoral Program	Morgan State University Community College Doctoral Program
Internships Available		✓	✓
Problem based case studies	✓	✓	✓
Group work	✓	✓	✓
Journal writing & reflection	✓	✓	✓
Uses program assessment data	✓	✓	✓
Dissertation required	✓	✓	✓

\*The Massachusetts program differs from the university programs in that it is a nondegree statewide leadership program that feeds into the University of Massachusetts-Amherst program.

in which participants discuss a variety of current professional and leadership issues. The program also emphasizes peer mentors, who provide program knowledge as well as broad administrative experiences across multiple college settings. Peer mentoring is often informal, as when graduates act as on-campus mentors to those new to the Community College Leadership Academy. Some programs choose to structure the relationships more intentionally. The University of Nebraska assigns peer mentors for new students, and at Morgan State, advanced students play important mentoring roles for their newer colleagues. The expectation of peer mentoring instills the value of professional support across settings, which is an important aspect of preparing community college leaders.

In addition to problem-based learning and case studies, faculty use group work to encourage team building among students. Instructional strategies include presentations by guest lecturers (often community college leaders), peer feedback, developing resource banks, conducting research projects and site visits, and rotating

locations of classes around the state.

Many programs require or offer student reflection opportunities to help participants consider the relevance of theory in their own practice and observe their own leadership development. Common strategies include journal writing and program planning. The programs in this study often crafted these requirements into intentional formative personal assessment opportunities called portfolios, individual professional development plans, or leadership development seminars. Through these activities, students reflected on various aspects of their studies, their internship and research experiences, their mentoring and networking connections, and their own leadership development. The activities instill the value of reflective practice in fostering lifelong learning.

All the programs emphasize students' participating in community college-related professional activities such as the AACC annual conference and the Chairs' Academy. Links to organizational Web sites are clearly visible on program Web sites. Many classes feature

	New Mexico State University Educational Leadership Doctoral Program	University of Massachusetts-Amherst Community College Leadership Academy*	University of Nebraska Educational Leadership and Higher Education Doctoral Program
	✓	NA	✓
	✓	✓	✓
	✓	✓	✓
	✓	✓	✓
	✓	✓	✓
	✓	NA	✓

research briefs, publications, and other resources, and attending and/or presenting at the annual AACC conference is encouraged if not required by the programs. In its first iteration, the New Mexico State program faculty required conference attendance in part as a recognition of the limited exposure to national issues of most of their students. Iowa State offers credit for attendance and subsequent reflective writing, and Morgan State includes attendance at a professional meeting as part of the reflective component of the Professional Development Seminar. The leadership programs seek to instill participants with a professional and scholarly community college identity as a way of connecting current and future leaders.

## 6. CONNECTIONS

University faculty members in these programs understand the importance of maintaining strong ties with community college leaders in their states. How they sustain these relationships varies based on state culture,

community college leadership stability, program leadership, and program history. It may include serving on college boards, helping with various administrative search and hiring processes, developing noncredit professional opportunities to address specific staff needs, and maintaining ongoing discussions about the issues facing community colleges in their area.

Most programs indicate that buy-in from community college presidents is critical to success. Presidents and other senior administrators often serve as instructional staff and guest lecturers, and they may have been involved in conceiving the original program and its curriculum. They nominate prospective students, provide internship and shadowing opportunities, serve as mentors, and host campus meetings. Sometimes they pay tuition or membership fees that support student involvement. Often they are instrumental in fostering a campus ethos that supports involvement in the programs. For example, all the programs, even when delivered online, require release time for participation. Community

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college presidents and senior leaders contribute to strong leadership development programs in many ways, including the following:

- Providing funding for programming, travel, and tuition
- Making campus facilities available
- Serving as guest speakers, hosts, mentors, job shadows, and consultants for projects and research activities
- Cultivating a campus climate that supports participation

Program leaders did not indicate problems in the area of presidential support, but all participants recognized how important this support is to the long-term viability of the leadership development programs.

Program strength also depends on the links and partnerships among community colleges, with other postsecondary institutions, and with local and state constituent communities. Each program relies on teams of practitioners, legislators, and recognized professionals from the community, state, and country to help students apply readings and assignments to leadership issues and understand the role of community colleges in addressing societal needs. Students develop a broad understanding of issues and ways to address them, and they see the value of creating change in their communities and beyond. This development occurs differently in each program depending on its location and the central issues of the region (e.g., borderland programs, depressed state labor market, rural service areas).

Each university and college or school that houses a program has many interests and priorities. Program directors must develop strong connections to sustain their programs. In times of economic recession or program or university review, programs may be at greater risk if they are newer or considered “nontraditional” in their subject (community college leadership) or their target student market (full-time employees).

Programs require stable institutional funding for long-term success. Deans and department chairs can support or inhibit programs through faculty load distributions, financial returns for creative curriculum delivery, acceptance of service and outreach work that help university faculty stay connected to community colleges, and overall staffing patterns. In return, ways in which program faculty demonstrate effective contributions to institutional priorities include the following:

- Establishing traditional and clear quality indicators as they become available over time (e.g., graduation and placement rates)
- Determining appropriate measures for the impact of the program and graduates on external communities (e.g., increased leadership involvement and employability within the state of graduates and utility of various projects for campuses)
- Maintaining a balance of quality teaching and research among faculty and graduate students

Balancing quality and quantity, appropriate growth, delivery systems, and faculty workload are issues that require continual review, especially for institutions that offer parallel degree and nondegree leadership programs taught by the same faculty. For example, universities are aware of additional untapped markets that could focus specifically on community college instructional leadership, but faculty capacity is already overextended.

## 7. PROGRAM OUTCOMES

Each of the programs studied is relatively new and therefore does not have much program assessment data to demonstrate effectiveness. Longitudinal placement rates are not available for

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most of the programs and most likely would not be very telling, which is true for most higher education programs that enroll midcareer professionals. The “first job immediately following degree completion” is most often the same as it was during degree pursuit; subsequent career mobility might be a stronger indicator but also requires alumni tracking. Three of the six programs studied have graduation or completion data indicating low attrition and appropriate time-to-degree statistics. The other three programs have early internal benchmark data such as core course or comprehensive exam completion data, but the programs are too new to have graduated many students.

Formative and summative data suggest that:

- students are satisfied with their experiences and learning outcomes;
- the material is important and beneficial to them in their current jobs and future aspirations;
- the networks they develop are significant; and
- they are more willing to assume leadership responsibilities, even while in the same jobs.

Although they offered constructive suggestions for ways to improve the programs, the students who participated in this study offered generally positive comments on the programs, the faculty, the applicability of material, their research and internship experiences, and the overall impact of having participated in the leadership development program.

Programs offering parallel nondegree leadership development opportunities typically have more assessment data; the participant numbers are greater and the duration shorter, so these data accumulate faster. Again, the survey and interview data provided by students were positive. The consistently strong level of participation in these programs suggests they are highly valued professional development experiences.

## 8. SUSTAINABILITY AND INSTITUTIONAL ISSUES

### *Faculty Workload and Labor-Intensive Programs*

Each of the programs studied is instructionally intensive because of the innovative delivery systems and the extent to which faculty are responsive to their students. Most programs provide year-round offerings of some kind, including research and internship opportunities. Compared with higher education programs in general, they tend to have larger cohorts of students. The cohort structure seems to increase retention, so the programs stay large. Even with some distributed work to other department or university faculty, and the use of adjunct staff from community colleges, the primary responsibilities for program development, delivery, and maintenance lie with a small contingent of faculty. In some cases, this may be a single person.

The programs require considerable behind-the-scenes work. For example, each program is highly dependent on interpersonal relationships among key faculty and community college members, and often with other universities, legislators, or state agencies. They are all dependent on various forms of community college support, which requires time and energy to develop and maintain strong relationships with leaders around the state.

The programs include components such as team-taught classes, internship or shadowing opportunities, or onsite research projects. These projects might require additional regular faculty interactions, meetings, site visits with community college colleagues, and logistical planning, and they are managed by lead program faculty. Program leaders also may spend time negotiating the university terrain for essential items such as technology support, online library resources, differentiated faculty appointments, graduate school standing for adjunct faculty, and facilities for nontraditional course timing.

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Lead faculty carry high instructional and advising loads, and, for most, there appears to be no release from other research or institutional service responsibilities. Most of the key program faculty are either senior, so they may retire in the near future, or junior and vulnerable to tenure/promotion decisions if they are perceived as too focused on instruction to the detriment of research. Sometimes, though not often, different kinds of faculty appointments are allowed, such as a primary teaching/service appointment or one that acknowledges program leadership responsibilities in workload assignments. Two programs have part-time staff support, and, whenever possible, program heads enlist graduate assistants to help with demanding program logistics.

Innovative instructional delivery seems beneficial to student learning but needs to be considered in light of the university's policies. For example, weekend courses are convenient for students who work full time, but they become an unpaid overload if faculty are expected also to teach during the week in other programs, hold weekday office hours, and participate in governance activities and other work during the week. Similarly, collaborative teaching typically requires considerable planning and evaluation time; this scheduling may be compounded if one of the team commutes or works full-time at a community college.

Cohorts provide valuable networks for students. At the same time, they can be more labor intensive for faculty than non-cohort curricular models, especially at the doctoral level involving comprehensive exams, dissertation proposals, and research. Although many programs work to receive graduate school standing for faculty from outside the institution (e.g., community college presidents) to sit on student committees, primary responsibility for academic progress and university requirements rests with the university faculty. Programs with few full-time faculty may be obliged to enlist faculty advisers who are not

closely tied to the program or familiar with community colleges. Program leaders look for ways to maintain coherent experiences for students while addressing the workload effects of high-demand programs in the traditional university environment.

### **Resources**

Faculty in every program mentioned resources as a critical factor in long-term sustainability. Institutional funding formulas affect innovative course delivery. In several cases, revenue streams come back to units in order to support online or distance delivery, to hire necessary adjuncts for additional offerings, or to bring community college “experts” into the classroom. Online instruction and nondegree credit-bearing certificate programs also may bring in revenue.

When university priorities and budgets shift, however, the programs may experience cutbacks, delivery changes, or limited enrollments. Programs need to maintain technology upgrades for virtual courses as well as other technology support (e.g., Web libraries). If online instructional platforms become out of sync with other institutional software, the virtual courses may experience technical support challenges or may require reformatting of course materials.

Sometimes programs must prove their success rate in order to ensure resources. Because all these programs are fairly new, they have limited data available to demonstrate their success in traditional academic terms such as graduation and placement rates. Newer programs with less documented evidence of success and centrality to core institutional mission could be vulnerable to being merged with another program, underfunded, or even cancelled.

The program leaders recognize that they need to document the progress and achievements of their students (and faculty) in order to successfully situate their programs in the university context. Program directors look for

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traditional institutional quality indicators such as progress toward degree completion, graduation and placement rates, and indicators of program or graduate impact on communities. Data include faculty indicators such as scholarly productivity, teaching evaluations, advising and dissertation loads, and percentage of adjuncts or affiliate faculty. Each program collects assessment data, and many collect broad outcomes measures to supplement the more typical data, such as student honors, student publication or presentation information, and internship/project recognitions. Most of the programs studied plan to establish exit and alumni databases and to gather impact data from the community colleges to show program success.

### **Program Concerns for Long-Term Viability 1960s University Programs**

- “Internacannibalism” (*competition between a university’s own junior college leadership programs and its other schools and departments seeking additional students*)
- Diminishing funds and shifting support

(Source: Hency, 1981)

### **Next-Generation University Programs**

- Faculty workload and labor-intensive (i.e., costly) programs
- Limitations on institutional resources
- Sustaining community college partnerships

Other university academic programs closely tied to fields of practice (such as nursing, business, engineering, and law) also experience concerns about resources, but they may have revenue streams that provide stronger infrastructure support or are deemed more central to university mission, so general budget funds

are adequately provided. Many of the lead faculty in the community college leadership programs must secure grants for program support, often without much expertise in proposal writing. Faculty in each of the programs studied expressed concerns about the continued need to gain institutional budget support to ensure the program’s future.

### ***Changes in Program Leadership***

Several programs experienced changes in leadership at the program, department, college, or senior institutional levels. Although faculty believed they were well connected to the priorities of their college, faculty at each site expressed some concern about the impact that future leadership changes would have on their program’s stability. Programs closely associated with a single faculty member or champion are vulnerable, even if other people were actively involved in program delivery. Participants spoke of the need to institutionalize programs more clearly. Kellogg programs of the 1960s met similar challenges. As community colleges fought for their place at the roundtable of higher education, the fluctuation of support and funding affected university and state partnerships essential to program sustainability.

### ***Meeting the Needs***

With their diverse missions and constituencies, community colleges cannot afford to maintain passive assumptions about their prospective leadership pool and, about whether these individuals are prepared. University-based programs can provide flexibility, and community colleges should consider a variety of university-based leadership development options to promote a formula best suited to their situation.

Eighty-seven percent of college presidents hold doctoral degrees (Amey & VanDerLinden, 2002a). Degree specialties range from traditional humanities and social sciences such as English, chemistry and history to various

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educational fields including education administration, educational leadership, social psychology, and organizational leadership; the majority have degrees in education-related fields, including some with doctorates in community college leadership. Increasing numbers of new presidents are coming from outside these areas

(e.g. students services or institutional advancement), and even outside of education. Enrollment and recruitment numbers for the university-based programs are not in question; rather, one question is how to service the burgeoning requests for professional development and advanced degree preparation.

# CONCLUSION

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Newly created university-based leadership programs are meeting the challenges outlined by AACC in 2001. Programs tend to serve a specific niche related to the leadership needs of its surrounding community, yet the programs share common strategies. At the time of the study, each of the six programs had built into its structure features and benchmarks that increase student success:

- Cohorts
- Structured curricula
- Accessible course and program delivery through a broad range of options, including 15-week courses, weekend and monthly offerings, and online/hybrid courses
- Research support
- Adult learning instructional strategies
- Progress-to-degree checks
- External program reviewers
- Ongoing assessment

Each program seemed to meet the criteria spelled out in the AACC Task Force on Leadership as necessary for effective programs. Each program is unique, however, usually tailored to the needs of a specific constituency. Ongoing needs assessment, feedback, and discussion are central to the future of the programs. Decisions need to be closely aligned to the strategies and priorities of the college, school, university, and community college.

These programs represent excellent efforts of innovative and dedicated advocates of community college leadership development. Program leaders strive to stay on the forefront of critical issues while creating an ethos of inquiry-based practice. Their examples may apply to other settings, and their issues of sustainability, though serious, represent the realities common to graduate degree programs closely connected to fields of practice. They should be manageable through proactive measures to ensure decision makers recognize the value of the programs.



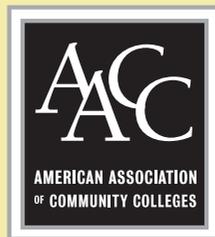
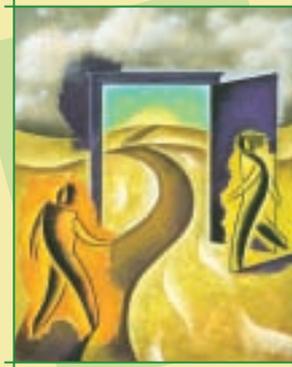
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