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Linking Scholarship and Practice: Community College Leaders, State Mandates, and Leadership Competencies

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To be an effective leader in today's community college requires a sophisticated set of skills that are often learned through on the job training, mentoring, and professional development activities. Using case study methodology, this study examined how community college leaders in California use their skills to implement a state mandate related to faculty hiring. The findings describe the relationship between the skills used by study participants and those identified as essential by the American Association of Community Colleges; the study offers recommendations to support the alignment of these leadership competencies with doctoral program curricula.

Community college leaders operate in a complex environment characterized by shifting priorities, uncertain budgets, and underprepared students (Cohen & Brawer, 2008). Amey and VanDerLinden (2002a) described an array of issues administrators identify as important, some of which include state financial support, partnerships with business, community needs, student retention, supporting the creation of new instructional delivery, and resource management. Even in the face of such challenges, "84 percent of administrators [indicated] the duties and responsibilities were of high importance" in their decision to remain "at their institutions" (Amey & VanDerLinden, p. 8); additionally relationships with colleagues, location of the college, mission, and salary contributed to their decision to stay at a community college. In addition to the challenges addressed by Amey and VanDerLinden, California community college administrators work under a comprehensive set of regulations known as Title 5 of the California Education Code. These regulations govern nearly every aspect of the community college environment including student life, shared governance, and faculty hiring (Hebert-Swartzer, 2009). This latter aspect, faculty hiring, is the focus of this study as we consider how community college administrators and Academic Senate (AS) leaders negotiate the complicated maze of legal and moral issues associated with human-resource management.

To operate successfully in the community college environment requires a sophisticated set of skills, or competencies. In an effort to identify

competencies required for effective leadership in community colleges, the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC) undertook the Leading Forward initiative; this work included "hosting a series of four, day-long leadership summits with different constituent groups to build consensus around key knowledge, values, and skills needed by community college leaders and to determine how best to develop and sustain leaders" (American Association of Community Colleges [AACC], 2005, p. 1). Following these summits, a survey was distributed to participants and resulted in establishing six essential leadership competencies for community college leaders: organizational strategy, resource management, communication, collaboration, community college advocacy, and professionalism. A subsequent document, *Competencies for Community College Leaders* (AACC, 2005), describes these competencies in detail, including philosophical statements related to each competency and illustrations of the competency. While there are other ways to consider leadership competencies, such as social and emotional intelligence (Goleman, Boyatzis, & McKee, 2004), the AACC core competencies have "wide utility for both individuals and institutions. It helps emerging leaders chart their personal leadership development progress. It provides program developers with curricula guidelines" (AACC, n.d.). The AACC core competencies will be used in this study to analyze the leadership competencies demonstrated by study participants and the implications for practice.

Background of the Study

In the United States, community colleges developed to fill a void between K-12 and four-year college (Townsend & Twombly, 2001). California's community college (CCC) system[1] emerged during the first decade of the 1900s as an extension of high schools; fueled by the growing identification of upper and lower divisions of collegial learning at universities, these extended high schools eventually evolved into the now familiar two-year, stand-alone institutions (Wagoner, 2007; Wattenbarger & Witt, 1995). At the inception of California's community colleges, the faculty was overwhelmingly comprised of part-time instructors and included high school teachers, tradespersons, and a small number of college professors (Ellison, 2002; Wagoner, 2007). By 1965, faculty representation had shifted to a predominantly full-time faculty, with part-time faculty limited to "evening programs of standalone courses for adult learners" (Academic Senate for California Community Colleges [ASCCC], 2002, p. 4). However, sociopolitical and economic pressures soon began to reverse this trend: During the late 1960s, rising inflation together with a new emphasis on efficiency, economy, competition, plus increasing enrollments and demands from business

[1] The 110 community colleges and 72 community college districts operate independently under the auspices of locally elected boards and a state level Chancellor's Office; thus, while not a system *per se*, we use the word here for ease of language

and community interests for an educated workforce conspired to make hiring part-time faculty increasingly attractive (Cohen & Brawer, 2008; Levin, Kater, & Wagoner, 2006). Between 1970 and 1995, the number of faculty members at the nation's two-year institutions "grew 210 percent, compared with 69 percent at four-year institutions" (Pearch & Marutz, 2005, p. 29), with an ever increasing representation of part-time faculty. In the 1980s, part-time faculty accounted for between 50 percent and 60 percent of the country's community college faculty (Cohen & Brawer, 2008), with California reporting 65.5 percent part-time faculty in 1981 (ASCCC, 2002).

As the number of part-time faculty rose, warnings about the overuse of part-time faculty in community colleges began to emerge. Some feared the potential loss of a stable faculty base to steer curricular and governance decisions, others expressed concerns over academic quality, and still others voiced reservations about the disparate treatment of this important and growing segment of the faculty population (Cohen & Brawer, 2008; McNair, 2002; Townsend & Twombly, 2007). As issues related to part-time faculty gained attention (Gappa & Leslie, 1993; Grubb et al., 1999), educational leaders began to consider policies for managing the composition of faculty. Specifically, interest arose around the idea of establishing best-practice ratios for balancing full-time and part-time faculty (Roueche, Roueche, & Milliron, 1995). Applying a mixed-methods research approach, Roueche, Roueche, and Milliron analyzed survey and interview data to document a trend toward greater reliance on part-time faculty. As a result, they recommended that "colleges…take serious steps toward improving the utilization and integration of part-time faculty" (p. 154). Specifically, they concluded that "all part-time faculty should be recruited, selected, and hired with clear purpose and direction" (p. 154). They also argued for mandatory part-time faculty orientation and professional development activities, creation of part-time "faculty support structures," part-time faculty's integration "into the life of the institution," and "equitable pay schedules" (pp. 155-156).

During the 1970s and 1980s, California state legislators and the California Community College Board of Governors began advocating that a minimum of 75 percent of instruction be provided by full-time faculty (California Performance Review, 2008). In 1988, the California state legislature converted this proposed ratio into law by including it among the community college directives enacted under Assembly Bill 1725. Assembly Bill 1725 of 1988 includes one provision, commonly known as the 75/25 ratio, which stipulates that "at least 75 percent of hours of credit instruction in the California Community Colleges, as a system, should be taught by full-time instructors" (§87482.6). While scholars and academic leaders in other states continue to debate the merits of adopting similar measures (Cohen and Brawer, 2008; M. Edelstein, personal communication, January 13, 2009), California's action remains unique some twenty years after the inception of the

75/25 rule. The 75/25 level was chosen by a task force created by the California state legislature and included representatives from each of the various CCC constituent groups (i.e., faculty union representatives, leaders from the State Academic Senate, administrators). Agreement on the 75/25 ratio was based on a combination of the task force members' views of best practice and what they considered to be a reasonable goal (M. Edelstein, personal communication, January 13, 2009). To ensure compliance with this mandate, community college officials must submit annual reports to the California Community College Chancellor's Office (CCCCO). In spite of the legal requirements related to the mandate, the state average of instruction provided by full-time faculty is reportedly between 59 percent and 62 percent (Faculty Association of California Community Colleges [FACCC], 2008 *Workgroup*, 2005). After nearly two decades since the passage of AB 1725 and the establishment of 75/25 ratio as a faculty hiring goal, it is reasonable to ask why progress has been slow in meeting the mandate. Some reasons offered include the lack of a stable funding mechanism, unenforced penalties for noncompliance, and the need to remain responsive to variable student enrollment and scheduling needs (Mertes, 1984; Shulock & Moore, 2007; *Workgroup*, 2005).

Philosophical Framework

Denzin and Lincoln (2003) suggest that all researchers are social constructivists and that "knowledge is not disinterested, apolitical, and exclusive of affective and embodied aspects of human experience, but is in some sense ideological, political, and permeated with values" (p. 308). This insight helps situate the researchers' stance in this study, which can also be understood in terms of the advocacy/participatory paradigm (Creswell, 2009). An advocacy/participatory view "holds that research inquiry needs to be intertwined with politics and a political agenda…for reform that may change the lives of the participants, the institutions in which individuals work or live, and the researcher's life" (Creswell, 2009, p. 9). Because we have both served in community colleges, have had experiences as part-time faculty in community colleges, and are scholars of higher education administrative leadership programs, our interest in this topic resides in concerns related to equity for part-time faculty as well as empathy for the challenges faced by college administrators. Consequently, in examining the perceptions of the impact of AB 1725 on faculty hiring in California community colleges, the advocacy/participatory research perspective influenced the focus, style, methodology, and interpretation of the research.

Overview of the Study

Methods

The purpose of the study was to analyze how administrators and faculty leaders perceive the impact of California AB 1725 on faculty hiring in the state's community colleges. Of the 110

California community colleges, four were selected as cases for this qualitative study; to ensure a range of participant perspectives, these sites were selected due to their differing, but representative, characteristics. Institutions were purposefully chosen (Patton, 2002) to include two sites within the same multi-college district; a small, rural site and a large, urban, single-district site; the chief instructional officer and academic senate president (or designee) were interviewed at each of the colleges in the study. Due to the regulated nature of shared governance in California (AB 1725, 1988), administrative decisions often result from multiple conversations with constituent groups, including the Academic Senate. For this study, the views of an administrator (the Chief Instructional Officer) and an Academic Senate representative were sought because they may represent different perspectives within a college. Data was collected through semi-structured interviews with each participant; the interviews were recorded and later transcribed. Each participant was provided a copy of their transcript interview to allow them the opportunity to verify the data; this process of member checking helps increase confidence in the data by allowing participants to consider the transcript, clarify potential points of confusion, and add additional information (Gall, Gall, & Borg, 2007). In addition, key college documents were reviewed, such as 75/25 related worksheets, hiring guidelines, district generated compliance information, and internal reports. These helped us to develop a broader understanding of each college and confirm information reported by participants. The data gathered from the interviews and document analysis revealed several themes related to the manner in which instructional administrators and faculty leaders at the four case-study sites perceive and implement the 75/25 mandate. These themes also help us understand how community college administrators use specific leadership strategies to implement a complex legal mandate; furthermore, using the lens of the AACC core competencies, this study can link institutional leadership practice with scholarship related to community college administration.

Introduction of Participants

For clarity, confidentiality, and ease of discussion, pseudonyms will be used to identify the case study sites and participants. This section includes a brief description of the four colleges and introduction of the eight participants, a presentation of data, and a discussion of the findings.

As part of a multi-college district, Orchard Valley Community College (OVCC) is a metropolitan institution that serves an ethnically diverse student population of 15,000. OVCC reports that 72 percent of their credit hours of instruction are provided by full-time faculty. William serves as OVCC's Chief Instructional Officer (CIO); Betty is a leader in the college Academic Senate. The second college in the study is the recently established Mountain Heights Community College (MHCC). The college is part of the same multi-college district as OVCC and serves

approximately 9,000 students. MHCC reports that full-time faculty members teach 66 percent of all credit course instruction. The CIO at MHCC is Lynette, who works closely with the faculty leadership which includes Franklin, a prominent Academic Senate officer. Pinewood Ridge Community College (PRCC) is the third college in this case study; PRCC is a small, rural institution serving a less diverse learning community of about 3,500 students. PRCC documents indicate that full-time faculty provide 58 percent of credit course instruction. As the CIO, Juan's duties also include oversight of student services. At the time of this study, Golda was the Academic Senate President. The fourth and final college in this study, White Water Community College (WWCC), is a large, single-district, urban institution with multiple educational centers positioned in remote areas designed to serve students on the district's boundaries. WWCC reports that over 75 percent of credit course instruction is provided by full-time faculty. Both Margaret, the CIO, and the Academic Senate leader, Indira, report they frequently work together on issues of shared concern—particularly faculty hiring.

Findings

The data gathered from interviews, document review, and subsequent member checking yielded vast amounts of data to consider. While several themes emerged, this article focuses on those with the greatest potential for informing scholarship related to educational administration and, ultimately, leadership practice. The themes discussed here include (a) accountability, ambiguity, and leadership, (b) creativity, (c) collaborative strategic planning, and (d) building alliances.

Accountability, Ambiguity, and Leadership. In the United States there continues to be an increasing focus on accountability and legislation aimed toward regulating educational initiatives. Reporting on the condition of the American community colleges, Cohen and Brawer (2008) observe that "as of 2003, all but four [states] used some sort of performance reporting" (p. 395); they describe performance reporting as one aspect of performance accountability. Cohen and Brawer suggest that while performance funding creates a connection between funding and institutional performance "[*p*]*erformance reporting* involves little or no connection between performance and funding" (p. 395, italics in original). In California, post-secondary educators are responsible for implementing, tracking, and reporting on compliance with additional legislations, rules, and policies beyond those associated with the 75/25 faculty hiring mandate (Cohen & Brawer, 2008; Wagoner, 2007). For example, California community colleges must comply with what is referred to as "the 50 percent rule," which directs that 50 percent of a college's budget be allocated for instructional activities, for Title 5 of the California Education code, which shapes operations and services, and for legislation such as AB 1725, which resulted in dramatic operational changes in community colleges,

including the introduction of shared governance and mandates regarding faculty hiring (ASCCC, 2002). However well-intentioned these measures may be, there remains some ambiguity about the impact of AB 1725 on the number of full-time and part-time faculty in California's community colleges. For example, in 1981, 69 percent of credit instruction was taught by full-time faculty (ASCCC, 2002). As of this writing, 59 percent of credit hours were being taught by full-time faculty (FACCC, 2008). These numbers suggest that in spite of legislation and increased accountability regarding the hiring of faculty, such actions have failed to bring about the desired ends. As a result, integrating these mandates into college operations appears to be a source of some consternation for the participants of this research.

Because of her extensive and wide-ranging administrative service in higher education in several different states, Margaret, the Chief Instructional Officer (CIO) at Whitewater Community College (WWCC), offered insights that included her personal comparative analysis of how different states shape their respective post-secondary educational systems. Margaret's administrative experiences bridge different layers of institutional operations at various state universities as well as the community college, thus her comments represent her understanding of how the confluence of political, social, and economic forces affect functions within different sectors of higher education. Of the administrative participants, Margaret was perhaps the most vocal about her general observations of and frustrations with state mandates in California, including those specifically associated with the 75/25 ratio. She remarked that "coming to California was quite a difference" from what she had become accustomed to in three other states where she served prior to joining WWCC. She observed:

> [California] community colleges [are] very "policies and procedures" driven, very regulated, from the state perspective… On the one hand, there's this very strong impulse to regulate everything and to have kind of top-down oversight, but at the same time, there's an equally strong impulse to figure out ways to get around it.

When asked to recall her initial reaction to the 75/25 faculty hiring ratio, Margaret referred to it as "confusing and arbitrary" and considered the efforts required to comply with the mandated hiring ratio as extremely time consuming. Finally, Margaret noted that California seems to be at the forefront of increasing regulation in higher education and the first to implement a faculty hiring ratio; however, she observed that "this kind of mentality is creeping forward in all the other states." To help administrators navigate this highly regulated environment, Margaret spoke of the need for a "policies and procedures manual" to help keep track of all the requirements in the California Education Code, Title 5, and other legislated mandates.

Other study participants reflected similar angst associated with the 75/25 rule and with what they perceive as California's bureaucratic methods in dealing with academic matters. Lynette, the CIO at Mountain Heights Community College (MHCC), acknowledged perennial budget challenges in California and cited inconsistent funding and enforcement of the 75/25 rule as one obstacle to compliance with the mandate. The MHCC academic senate leader, Franklin, suggested sociopolitical and economic needs render the mandate a "continuous goal that all organizations strive" toward. He observed that the "75/25 was a target established in AB 1725. As such, colleges were behind then [in 1988] and will, for all practical purposes, remain behind." At Orchard Valley Community College (OVCC), instructional administrator, William, refers to the 75/25 as "technically a law" but cited frequent waivers and suspensions of the requirement as rendering the mandate as "toothless." Beyond funding considerations, Betty, the OVCC faculty leader, noted what she perceives as a political tie to the college's ability to comply with the mandate: "what's available to the institution, and the numbers of positions that are available in any year really depend on what's going on in the legislature." The remote location of Pinewood Ridge Community College (PRCC) and more limited funding resources exacerbate the 75/25 related compliance challenges. Golda, the faculty's Academic Senate president noted that "it seems to me when the system or the state is in financial straights, [it's] the faculty [that is tapped], the first thing is to relieve districts of their full-time hiring obligation." Yet, in spite of ambiguity, budget fluctuations, and differing levels of enforcement regarding the hiring ratio, Juan, PRCC's Chief Instructional Officer, emphasized the importance of faculty hiring ratios to ensure adequate numbers of full-time faculty to provide instructional support, engage in making curricular choices, and partner with administrators on college projects.

Creativity. The uncertainty and ambiguity reported above by participants suggest the need for California community college administrators to exercise creativity even within a highly regulated environment; in other words, the administrators must balance the requirements of detailed state regulations with the needs of the local district. This requires an understanding of the legislation, including its potential and limitations, and connect this understanding to local needs. While creativity itself may not be a wholly teachable characteristic, participants suggest it can be inspired through the observation of others. The following discussion illustrates some of the approaches used by the participants to comply with California's 75/25 hiring mandate while remaining responsive to other institutional needs.

Although CIO Juan indicated he values the spirit of the 75/25 mandate, he suggests that PRCC's rural location and limited budget necessitate a creative approach to staffing. Thus, while working toward the required faculty

hiring ratio, he explained that to promote program stability he attempts to limit the number of what he called "orphan programs" (that is, those programs staffed primarily by part-time faculty). From his administrative perspective, Juan wonders, "Who [creates and revises] curriculum…when you don't have the attention of full-time faculty?" Juan works with faculty leaders to hire full- and part-time instructors who can "switch hit" by being able to teach multiple courses. Another strategy he uses involves assigning courses to multiple disciplinary areas whenever possible, thus broadening the pool of potential faculty. Juan regards "being able to teach in multiple disciplines" as "a big deal" and spoke of the recent hire of a full-time faculty member who could serve in two disciplinary areas as a "win." He also tries to encourage full-time faculty to teach courses as an overload rather than hiring additional part-time faculty; this allows more student contact with full-time faculty and, from Juan's perspective, manages the fiscal resources since faculty who teach an overload are paid at an hourly rate (similar to the manner in which part-time faculty are paid).

Margaret, the CIO from WWCC noted that "in whatever way it's done, this college has always been able to meet it [the75/25 mandate]—*technically*" [emphasis added]. Indira, an Academic Senate leader at WWCC, echoed this statement and spoke of the "wisdom of what was legislated [as] an overall ratio for the institution." She explained that some specialized program offerings vary based on community interest or perceived employment opportunities. Thus, Indira intimated that while the departments that house variable offerings may have a disproportionate amount of part-time faculty, other traditional disciplines at the college may have very few. Like other study participants, Margaret and Indira referred to their automatic replacement policy as an important means of preserving levels of full-time faculty: Margaret explained that even when funding is strained, as is currently the case, WWCC still initiates a hiring prioritization process to create a list of desired full-time faculty positions. According to Margaret, "your college has to have a commitment to replacing people who leave and in trying to make strides in hiring." She went on to suggest, as did the administrators at MHCC, PRCC, and OVCC, that program development efforts suffer "if you're always behind [in faculty positions]."

Margaret referred to the "very broad continuum of…quality and workload of a part-time faculty member." She described the economy and flexibility part-time faculty members bring to a college as a real advantage of their employment arrangement and expressed her belief that the 25 percent portion of the 75/25 mandate provided "more than enough" institutional flexibility. Margaret also noted how the faculty hiring practices for extension campuses and centers must be considered in 75/25 compliance efforts. She explained that opening up a "portable village" (the off-site center, for example) requires a "founding faculty for that center" and mentioned how the

hiring "methodology" WWCC would likely apply in the future was based in past experience where:

> …we worked with the [faculty] union to identify some positions that will go out there, so that that [facility] will have a founding faculty, and the deal that was made was [that]--we get to backfill here [with part-time faculty] (taps table for emphasis).

In considering the relative roles of full-time faculty versus part-time faculty at MHCC, Lynette, the Chief Instructional Officer, offered her comments on the contributions full-time faculty can make at a community college:

> Full-time faculty have the time and the ability and the commitment because they have a vested interest in the program— to build new curriculum, to go out and try to get people in, students in...They work on committees...We value what professional full-time faculty bring to our institution and to our students. And one way to maintain that commitment is to work within the 75/25. And I think it does keep colleges having to focus on that.

Lynette also noted that "a lot of the people we hire have been our own adjuncts or adjunct elsewhere" and emphasized that "we typically hire people that are really good in their discipline." Referring to the part-time faculty members at MHCC, she also stated that "[w]e have some adjuncts who are wonderful in the classroom." Lynette pointed to her district's "paid office hours" program for part-time faculty, though "not as generous as the full-time faculty have," as supporting both students and part-time faculty. She continued, "[a]nd the part that a good adjunct [faculty] can bring you is that they are often working full-time in their professional field…they keep up-to-date." Since MHCC and OVCC are members of the same district, they have the advantage of monetary maneuverability, which facilitates the maintenance of faculty levels closer to those mandated by the 75/25 rule. As OVCC administrator William remarked, districts like his have "lots of pots of money to move around."

Creative leadership enables institutions to expand the benefits they offer students, even in the face of challenges; the participants in this study indicated a willingness to consider multiple ways to meet the hiring mandate, including hiring full-time faculty to teach additional courses, collaborating with faculty leaders when expanding course offerings, budget management, and paying part-time faculty for office hours. To be sure, adequate funding can support creative leadership, but it alone is not enough: Educational leaders must have other tools as well, including the ability to prioritize goals and create a roadmap to achieve them. This process of strategic planning is described by participants in the following section.

Collaborative Strategic Planning. Strategic planning at the community college level links current mission and service objectives with long-range goals. As a result, educational leaders seek an optimal balance between the college plans and resources available to educational institutions; thus, faculty and funding concerns figure prominently in the process. To help maintain budgets, administrators may inadvertently perpetuate systems of inefficiency since "[for public agencies] efficiency leads to reduction in funding" (Cohen & Brawer, p. 173). Strategic planning is a tool that can help to reduce some inefficiency while creating and maintaining a predictable funding level. Participants described the process by which college administrators and faculty work together to determine faculty allocations each year.

William, the Chief Instructional Officer at OVCC, indicated he believes that the sheer size of the district combined with an expectation that the 75/25 mandate will eventually be fully funded by the state helps ensure progress toward meeting the mandate:

> …to alter that ratio any significant amount almost creates too big of a burden for each college [in the district] in terms of the…chronology of laying out the hiring committees, and the job announcements, and the interviews, and the second interviews.

William explained that the district planning process begins each year in the fall semester, once the full-time faculty obligation number (FON) has been determined for that academic year. The FON is based on information provided by the state Chancellor's Office and then combined with the district's self-reported numbers; this data is used to project the minimum level of full-time faculty required to demonstrate adequate 75/25 compliance effort and avoid penalties. As William explained:

> When the district gets the full-time obligation number...the district fiscal office…calculates what that would be and tries to factor in late retirements so that we are always slightly above that number. We base the number of hires per year…on the full-time faculty obligation.

Each college in William's district prepares a prioritized list of the proposed positions they would like to fill. This process generally involves a cooperative effort between site administrators and faculty, which begins with department level meetings and concludes with a college-level committee meeting in which a master list of prioritized positions is developed; this list is then forwarded to the college president. Any final adjustments to the rankings are made by the president of the college, who, according to William, consults with the Academic Senate President if any adjustments are necessary. Betty, an OVCC faculty leader, expressed confidence in the fairness of the ranking procedures; she further noted: "...we also have methodologies for obsolescing

programs, and moving people out of positions into other positions, including retraining."

Lynette, the Chief Instructional Officer from MHCC, spoke in detail of the multi-layered process which begins when the college receives its faculty obligation number (FON) from the state Chancellor's Office, district growth projections, "buffer calculations"— that is, a level of full-time faculty above the FON — and related reports. The process continues with site staffing projections, prioritization of the requested full-time faculty positions, and numerous meetings and communications with the leadership of on-campus stakeholders. As Lynette put it:

> Each year we hear from the state what the obligation is and what we have to do. And so we make progress on that…we [also] figured out how to have the buffer in place… we're trying to get even further than the obligation. So the ideal, at least the goal is the 75/25, and we follow all the state rules, and it would say take us [some number] of years to get there. If we could speed things up and get there in [less time], that would be good…

She went on to say that when the California state budget virtually collapsed in 2008-2009, they had to reconsider their priorities and plans.

Cooperation among leaders is essential in any strategic planning effort, but especially in multi-college configurations. Lynette recalled that when MHCC, a new college in the district, was first established, it "was way out of sync, in terms of that [75/25 mandated levels, by site]," necessitating aggressive hiring. She noted that "in order for us to do that, the other colleges didn't get to hire as many." But in the end, everyone benefits from such cooperation. Lynette says:

> We really see ourselves as a district in our responsibility to work with each other. …if the other colleges were holding back on finances and competing…it would be very hard to grow a college like we've done here. At the same time, as we grow and bring in more students…there's increased revenues to the district, too. District-wide, everybody benefits…

In the case of PRCC, Juan, as Chief Instructional Officer, emphasizes the importance of categorizing and replacing vacancies in established positions. He also suggested a process similar to that used at OVCC and MHCC; however, Juan believes that in his district the number of positions that will be opened is based on the student enrollment at each site. Both Juan and faculty leader Golda spoke of the prioritization function as a cooperative effort between the academic senate and administrators. Juan shared the site philosophy about vying for positions, "Because you really don't know a lot of times just exactly what is going to happen with your balance," it is best to "put them all together and prioritize all of them." He explained:

> …a number of times I've seen [people] say, "ah, we only get two positions, we're only going to prioritize two." And then somebody passes away…then the college says, "What do we do? Are we [hiring] the new [position]? What's the most important thing?" And nobody's planned for it, and you can't respond…it's that intersection of when you have all your plans come forward and you find out, for whatever reasons, what available funding there is on an ongoing basis to be able to fill those. And…so, [planning is] the key thing.

Juan shared that he believes some districts have as much as a 20 percent budget reserve, while he thinks most run about 5 percent, "so there are ways that you can put in positions when the state funding doesn't quite balance out." Juan suggests that regardless of state growth allowances, the question is really a matter of "resource allocation—do we have the money, ongoing, to fund this position?"

As a single college district, WWCC's process is simpler than in the multi-college districts in that it has fewer organizational layers, but, according to the Chief Instructional Officer, Margaret, it is still onerous: Even with cutting edge communications technology, she indicated that incorporating the voices of the large body of faculty members and remaining attentive to the needs of numerous programs with regard to faculty hiring is challenging. However, Margaret as chief instructional officer and Indira as academic senate president expressed satisfaction with the process at their college. The process at WWCC roughly replicates those previously related in terms of departmental requests, prioritized lists, and participatory agreement on the semi final rankings, with the final decisions made by the college president. Of particular note though, is that both Margaret and Indira shared about at length the "automatic replacement policy" for full-time faculty. As Indira explained, "If a tenured or full-time faculty member dies or retires or quits, unless a program is dying and we're not considering continuing [it]…we have automatic replacement [of that position]." This process she believes saves time and resources, adding:

> It makes sense to me that if you're going to continue a program at the same level of enrollment, or higher, with the same rigor, with the same types of courses, we shouldn't have to justify needing full-time faculty if they just left.

Study participants describe planning efforts related to managing the faculty at the community colleges as collaborative, involving multiple educational leaders, including faculty and administrators. While the processes vary at each campus, they appear to meet the needs of each college as all participants expressed satisfaction with the processes; participants appear to value both the planning process as well as the inclusive nature of that process.

Such collaboration in planning relies on relationships and alliances within the college community; the next section offers a view into some of the means study participants use to develop alliances on their campus and within their district.

Building Alliances. In addition to establishing faculty hiring ratios, AB 1725 introduced mandatory participatory governance to California community colleges; often called "shared governance" the provisions in AB 1725 identify critical areas in which faculty participate in college governance activities. Successful shared governance relies on collaboration as described above and on alliances cultivated between administrators and faculty. At OVCC, administrators and faculty leaders seemed to have an established, collegial relationship bred of clear communication and trust that has been built over time. Participants shared that information is disseminated quickly via memos and meetings among concerned constituents; they also described "lateral and vertical bonds" strengthened by the apparent regularity of informal lunches in which relationships develop and are actively cultivated. CIO William and faculty representative Betty suggest that as a result of these efforts, OVCC community members seem to share a vision toward which they reach. Alliances at OVCC are established on multiple levels: Betty remarked that her "sense is that the [hiring] practice is a very equitable and conscious of the intent of [AB] 1725." Indeed, it was Betty who emphasized the role of the president in making the final adjustments to the proposed hiring lists as both right and fair, saying that the president brings fair-mindedness and "a wider view" to the process. Throughout their interviews, both administrator William and faculty-leader Betty expressed the same feeling that full-time faculty and administrators at OVCC work cooperatively and collegially on most issues, including hiring and compliance with the 75/25 mandate.

Similarly, PRCC's administrative instructional leader, Juan, emphasized the need for faculty to participate in moving "forward all the important initiatives," especially given that "accountability reporting has not only increased at the administrative level but also at the faculty levels." He explained that it is not reasonable to expect part-time faculty to participate in many governance activities: "They've got other jobs. They're freeway flying all over the place…and it's not going to happen." While he acknowledges that college officials can hire more part-time faculty for less money than they can hire full-time faculty, he also observed: "…I think you lose with the more part-time faculty you have because you don't have the people here, the invested time on campus and in committees." Underscoring the importance of faculty involvement, Juan further explained that "[y]ou need people who are here to work on their student learning outcomes—you know, the connectedness of and integration of the budget, planning, and resource allocation requires faculty and staff are involved with that." The shared office space in which administrators and

faculty leaders work at the college—literally a few feet from one another—offered a concrete illustration of CIO Juan's commitment to alliance building.

Both administrative leader Lynette and faculty representative Franklin of MHCC expressed a sense that site administrators and faculty leaders had respect for each other and their hiring process. Speaking as a faculty member, Franklin voiced his belief that the district's academic senate officers would agree "that even at the administrative level, there is support for [the 75/25 mandate], and the processes we developed to maintain that progress is working for us." AS president Franklin spoke of mutual trust among all levels of leadership and credited the chancellor, president, and other administrators as "honoring the process" by relying on the academic senate and their prioritized faculty hiring lists. CIO Lynette also spoke of a "good working relationship" that fosters a "real sense of respect" and said that in her view "the [Academic] Senate is a partner with me" in pursuing 75/25 mandate compliance.

Although the participants may view the relationship between the Academic Senate and administrators at WWCC as respectful and productive, though at times mildly antagonistic, their reported success in satisfying the 75/25 requirement suggests some level of like-mindedness as both the administrative and faculty leadership apparently share the same vision and values. Even with CIO Margaret's observation that faculty tend to push beyond hiring requirements, as with the 75/25, Indira nonetheless speaks of the Academic Senate as playing a "very active role" in process of determining the full-time faculty replacements/new hires, a process often referred to as "entitlement." She explains that at WWCC there is a set procedure that "they stick to" every year, which implies agreement between administrators and faculty leaders that goes beyond shared goals to the general approaches used in reaching toward them. Thus, while successful alliances are seated firmly in mutual trust, which at WWCC apparently stems from a shared commitment to serving their learning community well, this need not imply perfect and continual amiability among participating leaders as a requirement. Indeed, as was suggested in both CIO Margaret's and faculty-leader Indira's preceding statements, a respect for and understanding of others' positions can inform decision-makers and enable leaders to move initiative efforts along.

Discussion

California community college leaders work in an environment heavily regulated by local and state mandates. This study focused on one specific mandate known as the 75/25 ratio which stipulates that 75 percent of credit courses must be taught by full-time faculty. Although only one of the colleges in this study reports having met that requirement, the results at the other colleges are typical of colleges in the state (California Community College, Chancellor's Office [CCCCO], 2008). It can be argued that compliance mechanisms are not effective in that

since the inception of the faculty hiring ratio in 1988, the overall CCC system level has not made progress toward the 75 percent goal. Rather, the reported level of credit hours of instruction provided by full-time faculty dropped a percentage point from 63 percent in 1988 to 62 percent in 2005 (*Workgroup*, 2005). However, as the participants discussed, college leaders continue to work toward achieving the goal of the mandate balanced with local needs. Furthermore, the results of this study suggest that community college leaders employ a variety of strategies to implement the provisions of state-mandated faculty hiring ratios (Hebert-Swartzer, 2009). These strategies include managing accountability in a climate of ambiguity, creative resource management, collaborative planning, and building alliances.

The strategies adopted by the participants in this study are are closely aligned with the core competencies for effective leadership identified by the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC) in 2005. From 2003 - 2005 AACC worked with community college administrators and leadership program faculty across the United States to identify the competencies essential for leading community colleges in the 21st century. Their work resulted in the creation of six competencies: organizational strategy, resource management, communication, collaboration, community college advocacy, and professionalism (AACC, 2005). These competencies form a leadership framework specifically focused on community colleges that has "wide utility for both individuals and institutions. It helps emerging leaders chart their personal leadership development progress. It provides program developers with curricula guidelines" (AACC, n.d., p. 1). The findings of this study suggest that educational leaders, Chief Instructional Officers and Academic Senate representatives, demonstrate these core competencies, thus supporting the use of the AACC competencies as a leadership framework both in professional development, mentoring, on-the-job training experiences, and doctoral studies.

Implications for Practice

Previous research indicates leadership competencies are developed through on the job training, mentoring, and professional development (Amey & VanDerLinden, 2002b; Duree, 2007; McNair, 2010). On the job training and mentoring activities can be pursued by individuals interested in professional advancement; unfortunately, effective on the job training and mentoring activities often rely on the willingness of more experienced leaders to share their time and energy. Additionally, such an approach may inhibit innovation and insulate leaders from new ideas outside of their college, district, region or state. Professional development activities can be internal (that is, sponsored by the college or district) or external, such as conferences, professional membership, and professional development seminars.

Current and aspiring educational leaders may also choose to expand their professional development options to include a doctorate in educational

leadership, educational policy or a more specific field such as community college leadership. This study illustrates the types of skills needed by community college leaders in the 21st century; these skills closely align with the AACC core competencies, suggesting that the core competencies can, indeed, be used by doctoral program faculty to design curricula and program activities that intentionally develop these competencies. Further studies that analyze the alignment of the competencies with doctoral program outcomes could provide a framework for linking community college leadership programs to essential skills required of current and future community college leaders. Duvall (2003) encourages doctoral faculty to include on the job training and mentorships in their programs; such a strategy will provide opportunities to integrate multiple learning modalities into doctoral programs, thus increasing the likelihood that community college administrators acquire the skills needed for successful leadership.

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