TOWARD A SIGNATURE PEDAGOGY IN EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP PREPARATION AND PROGRAM ASSESSMENT

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INTRODUCTION

In the spring of 1994, the Executive Committee of the University Council of Educational Administration (UCEA) began a series of conversations about the impact of leadership preparation and the many approaches used in universities around the country. That same year, Lee Schulman, President of the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, launched several national discussions to draw attention to the concept of a *signature pedagogy* for Schools of Education. Signature pedagogies are characteristic forms of teaching and learning that organize ways to prepare future practitioners for their professional work. According to Schulman (2005), a signature pedagogy has a deep structure, " . . . a set of assumptions about how best to impart a certain body of knowledge and know-how. And it has an implicit structure, a moral dimension, that comprises a set of beliefs about professional attitudes, values, and dispositions" (p. 55). UCEA's Executive Committee noted Schulman's thoughts related to legal and medical professional pedagogy as it considered UCEA member institutions' practices.

The 1995 agenda of the UCEA Plenum, which is comprised of elected representatives from member institutions, allocated time for discussion of the concept of a signature pedagogy for educational leadership. The group debated whether educational leadership programs - from principal certification to doctoral preparation - sufficiently connected the university course of study with day-to-day work in schools. The Executive Committee asked one central question of Plenum

representatives: Is there a common pedagogy that forges a connection between leadership preparation program coursework, practice, and policy making in the field? A subsidiary set of questions followed:

What is the balance between the artistry and science of Educational Leadership?

What are the limitations and strengths of apprenticeship/internship models?

Could there be a distinctive set of practices and theories that guide educational leadership preparation?

In other words, should there be a signature pedagogy for educational leadership? If so, what values should a signature pedagogy embrace and what steps should UCEA take?

HISTORICAL TRAJECTORY OF PREPARATION OF SCHOOL LEADERS

Traditionally, preparation of educational leaders focused on the application of concepts from private sector management, reflecting a concern with efficiency and an emphasis on rationalizing educational organizations. Drawing constructs from the behavioral sciences, leadership was studied and segmented into component parts captured in models of effective leadership that could be generalized across institutional settings and taught to future administrators. This line of traditional scholarship and training attended to *who* does leadership, produced studies of *great men,* and identified effective leadership *traits.* With the emergence of the human relations movement and an embracing of motivation theory, such approaches were modified to include consideration of what leaders do (Hanson, 2003; Morgan, 1997). In addition, scholars began to look at leaders' internal processes that dictated externally observable leadership behaviors (Furman, 2003). These directions became

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more nuanced and inclusive as researchers incorporated frameworks and approaches from other disciplines, such as sociology, political science, and cultural anthropology (Murphy, 2003).

In the 1980s and into the 1990s, a body of research emerged from the effective schools movement that guided the development and application of standards-based frameworks for educational leadership programs and future educational leaders in the states. Parallel to the establishment of leadership standards as guiding frameworks for leadership and leadership preparation, the learning organization - a dynamic, non-stable, and self-generating notion of organization - emerged as an important concept in the field (Hanson, 2003; Senge, 1990). Additionally, a focus on leading learning resulted in a new research trajectory that shifted the conversation to specific ways educational leaders exercise a powerful influence on student achievement (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2000; Murphy, 2002). As a result, students came to learn about transformational and instructional leadership, which were contrasted with transactional leadership models (Firestone, Monfils, Hayes, Polovsky, Martinez, & Hicks, 2004).

Critical and value-explicit notions of leadership appeared in educational leadership when scholars began to critique the dominant, non-normative, and hierarchical conceptions of school leadership that drove practice and preparation (Dantley, 2003; Donmoyer, Imber, & Scheurich, 1995; Foster, 1986; Marshall & Oliva, 2006; Murphy, 2002). These scholars also threw light upon the limitations of generalized educational leadership models that downplayed very important local educational contexts (Grogan, 2002) and overemphasized heroic notions of leadership and leadership traits (Bennett & Anderson, 2003; Gronn, 2002). Similarly, educational inequities came to the fore when critical theorists put forth the argument that traditional hierarchical leadership was inherently biased toward maintaining stability, and thus served to reproduce inequity in education. Concurrently,

educational disparities became more visible to the general public through accountability system indicators and other measures of school performance (Dantley & Tillman, 2006; Scheurich & Skrla, 2003). The disparities included significant and ongoing differences in students' opportunity to learn, unequal leadership capacity, wide-ranging teacher expectations, varied curriculum rigor, uneven organizational ability to conceptualize and enact vision, and increasing school and societal segregation and inequality (Anyon, 2005; Lipman, 2004). Consequently, greater numbers of university-based programs began focusing their efforts toward preparing students for cultural competence, equity pedagogy, and social justice leadership (Cambron-McCabe & McCarthy, 2005, Marshall & Oliva, 2006; Marshall & Ward, 2004).

TIMELINESS OF MOVING TOWARDS A SIGNATURE PEDAGOGY

The exclusive reliance on university-based educational leadership preparation programs is now under scrutiny by critics external to the educational leadership professoriate who argue that educational leadership program content, rigor, and relevancy are generally suspect (Fordham Foundation, 2003; Hess, 2003; Hess & Kelly, 2005; Levine, 2005). Educational leadership faculty are also engaged in ongoing self-critique and introspection (Cambron-McCabe & McCarthy, 2005; Young, Ogawa, Crow, & Creighton, 2005) and are beginning to explore new ways to *look in the mirror* in order to assess and improve educational leadership preparation at the national and state level (Adams & Copeland, 2005; Davis, Darling-Hammond, LaPointe, & Meyerson, 2005; Fry, Bottoms, & O'Neill, 2005; IES, 2005; and the work of the UCEA/TEA-SIG Taskforce on Educational Leadership Preparation). Now, more than ever, there is a sense of urgency as many state and national level policy actors, urban districts, foundations, and educational leadership faculty question how best to

prepare leaders, particularly given existing shortages of highly qualified principals and superintendents and the complex demands of leading school reform efforts.

External critique of educational leadership preparation programs

Quality and relevance

In *Educating School Leaders* (2005), Arthur Levine launched a high-profile critique of the quality of educational leadership programs. He asserted that programs lacked purpose, curricular coherence, adequate clinical instruction, appropriate faculty, and high admission standards. He questioned district and state policies that guide teacher salary schedules based on the acquisition of graduate credit hours, noting that many programs fail to actualize the placement of school leadership graduates in administrative posts. In a parallel critique, the Southern Regional Education Board (SREB) report, *Schools Can't Wait: Accelerating the redesign of university principal preparation programs* argues:

> There is a lack of urgency for refocusing the design, content, process, and outcomes of principal preparation programs based on the needs of schools and student achievement and little will happen until there are committed leaders of change at every level—state, university, and local school district. (Fry, Bottoms, & O'Neill, 2006, p. 4)

Furthermore, the report criticized leadership faculties for being overly concerned with maintenance of existing coursework (often posited as evidence of meeting required standards), faculty independence in course content development, and potential losses in enrollment that might translate to decreases in revenue production.

Moreover, school leadership preparation programs are consistently critiqued for their anemic partnerships with school districts, partnerships that often promote narrow client-provider relationships. A 2006 report from the Illinois Board of Higher

Education, *School leader preparation: A blueprint for change,* highlighted this situation, noting,

> the primary client of school leader preparation programs is primarily the individual who seeks to be admitted and to complete the program rather than the school district and the students graduates will serve. This inevitably results in preparation programs that almost exclusively emphasize the priorities of the leadership candidate, making the needs of school districts, schools, and children secondary. Individuals seek admission to preparation programs for a variety of reasons, including those unrelated to *improving student achievement.* (2006, p. 26) (Italics ours)

School districts continue to face immediate demands to improve student academic achievement and organizational health, yet individuals seeking licensure are not always focused on larger school community concerns.

Lack of systematic assessment

An important critique highlighted preparation programs' inadequate assessment of program outcomes. Critics argued that preparation programs have not systematically examined the efficacy of their own practice. Surveys and interviews of principals indicated that preparation programs do not do prepare principals sufficiently for the myriad demands of their job (Fry, et. al; 2005; Roza, Cielo, Harvey, & Wishon, 2003; Schulman, Golde, Bueschel, & Garabedian, 2006). Programs have little evidence from which to respond to questions about program accountability; for example, does a particular program make a difference in leadership behavior, organizational change, student achievement, or social justice/equity oriented leadership? Portin, Schneider, DeArmond, & Gundlach noted that while the current ISSLC standards "expand understanding of what principals can and should do", they do not focus on what they actually do (2003, p.7).

Program growth

Another pressure currently applied to UCEA member institutions emerged out of the national growth of programs. Over the past two decades, educational leadership preparation programs and student enrollment growth has been strong in comprehensive and liberal arts institutions, while Research Extensive and Intensive institutions have witnessed stable to slightly declining educational administration student enrollment and masters and doctoral program growth. Nationally, 59% of educational leadership students are now enrolled in comprehensive higher education institutions (Baker, Orr, & Young, 2005). Since 2001, the number of accredited programs in Indiana (authors' location), has grown from 10 to 17. For example, one program with *just in time* enrollment and delivery structures grew from no enrollment to the number one producer of licensed administrators within the past four years. Furthermore, when compared to their counterparts in traditionally delivered programs, its' licensed graduates did not experience any greater difficulty obtaining jobs as administrators. Growth is occurring in the production of licensed administrators even though districts report difficulty hiring highly qualified leaders who are willing to assume principalship or superintendency responsibilities (Black & Bathon, forthcoming).

Ongoing reflections from within the field of Educational Leadership

For quite some time, UCEA program faculties have worked toward building, and occasionally rethinking, the conceptual and abstract knowledge base of educational leadership. In 1992, UCEA identified seven knowledge domains that were:

> currently recognized for comprising the field' and serve as organizers for mapping educational administration. The domains are as follows: 1. societal and cultural influences on schooling 2. teaching and learning processes 3.

organizational studies 4. leadership and management processes 5. policy and

political studies 6. legal and ethical dimensions of schooling; and 7. economic

and financial dimensions of schooling. (Bredeson, 1995, p. 52)

As professors of educational administration *look in the mirror* to improve their

practice, conversations sustained through conferences and publications continue to

promote critical reflection around the value of existing preparation program

coursework and the efficacy of largely unmeasured program outcomes. In order to

connect leadership preparation to student achievement, and the core function of

schooling – teaching -, research conversations have focused on the importance of

developing the instructional leader, as well as agents of change. Recognizing the

complexity of school leadership, preparation programs have embraced distributed

leadership, teacher leadership, and shared leadership models in program curriculum

(Marks & Louis, 1999; Marks & Printy, 2003; Spillane, Halverson, & Diamond, 2004;

Urbanski & Nickalau, 1997).

A UCEA response

UCEA decided respond proactively to external critiques and internal

reflections, seeking to generate creative ideas while engaging in dialogue with

practitioners to develop a model that takes preparation beyond the acquisition of

technical skills. For example, a UCEA and TEA-SIG (Teaching in Educational

Administration Special Interest Group) Taskforce on Evaluating Leadership

Preparation Programs was formed in 2000 and subsequently, in 2004, a Joint

Taskforce on Research on Leadership Education was constituted under the

sponsorship of UCEA, NCPEA (National Council of Professors of Educational

Administration), Division A of AERA (American Educational Research Association),

and the TEA-SIG of AERA. Despite methodological challenges, the taskforce is

developing longitudinal studies of preparation programs and the impact of their

graduates on the leadership that they exercise, as well as changes in student outcomes. In addition, backward mapping studies that examine effective schools, the nature of their leadership, and the source of the principals' leadership skill development are ongoing. UCEA members are developing research agendas that examine how leadership graduates progress through their preparation and are able to implement first order changes, second order changes (organizational outcomes), and third order changes (student outcomes) (Orr, 2006; Pounder & Hafner, 2006; Young, 2003).

In complementary efforts to evaluate preparation program impact on measurements of leadership work, organizational outcomes, and student achievement, UCEA members have centered the contemporary debate on the distributed nature and purpose of leadership, and perhaps more salient for a theory of signature pedagogy, on the moral purposes of leadership. Like Furman (2003), we argue for leadership inquiry and program development that does not focus on embodied or heroic leadership, but rather seeks to understand and actualize how leadership is enacted conjointly, centered on a notion of moral and purposeful leadership that consistently seeks to ask why leadership is enacted. Furman characterizes these efforts as developing moral and purposeful leadership as a type of backward mapping, where leaders are first taught to explicitly recognize the role of values and then develop the means to actualize those purposes or values. This stance suggests that educational leaders need to develop capacity to conduct critical inquiry that frames and analyzes moral, cultural, and political challenges confronting educators and to subsequently act on those challenges.

Fundamentals of Leadership Preparation

Ethics

There is growing emphasis on preparing future leaders for the complexities of school improvement and reform through a conception of leadership that is not only explicitly purposeful, and explicitly ethical, but is also guided by moral purpose. This approach calls attention to virtues of leadership (Sergiovanni, 2005) that cultivate ethics of justice, critique, care, and professionalism (Shapiro & Stepkovich, 2005). According to Shapiro & Stefkovich (2005), ethical leadership and decision-making is centered on the best interest of the student. Starratt (2003) posits that this emphasis moves the field from a naïve era of modernity to a reflexive era that positions school leadership, and the life world of schools, as cultivating work that creates meaning and purpose rather than simple technical efficiency.

Culture

Concerned with equity and access, UCEA membership is further questioning the cultural competence of educational leaders capable of promoting change in increasingly diverse and segregated community contexts. Madsen and Mabokela (2005) argued that school leaders must not only be responsive and understand the importance of racial boundaries, but also be willing to challenge the systemic and institutional biases of schools. The researchers concluded that " . . . if leaders are to be responsive to constituencies outside the school context, they must create an environment for community involvement . . ." (p. 119). Culturally engaging leaders cross boundaries to understand how different groups struggle to make sense of their existence within this society.

Power and Politics

Of critical importance is the need to provide students with increased capacity to examine how their decisions connect to various political and policy arrangements that serve to privilege some school communities over others. As

educators lead important and practical decision-making processes within their school communities, they inevitably act in political ways. Webs of policies come to be received and articulated in the cultural practices of schools (Taylor, Rizvi, Lingard, & Henry, 1997), and when educational leaders, teachers, and students interpret and make decisions about policies, they also participate in the policy process (Levinson & Sutton, 2001).

UCEA Plenum conversations touched upon ways in which aspiring educational leaders benefit from conceptual knowledges, theoretical frameworks, and inquiry orientations that embolden them to analyze and interrogate the political process and policy cycles that influence their everyday work in and around schools and communities. Importantly, this orientation seeks to provide students with a sense of agency to reframe and shape political processes and policies.

TOWARDS A SIGNATURE PEDAGOGY MODEL FOR EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP

The aforementioned conversations within and around the field of Educational Leadership have led us to envision a signature pedagogy for educational leadership preparation as praxis, committed to student learning and "concerned with the specifics of ethical and political life" (Schwant, 2001, p.45). Freire (1970) suggests a need for critical intervention into material realities, stating that, "in dialectical thought, world and action are intimately interdependent. But action is human only when it is not merely an occupation, but also a preoccupation. That is, when it is not dichotomized from reflection…" (p. 53). A signature pedagogy acknowledges leadership work as an ethical and moral craft that draws from conceptual and abstract knowledges, engages in ongoing critical-reflective inquiry, and is practiced

within diverse school-community environments embedded in a larger social political milieu.

Within this proposed model, generative theory-building processes and leadership practices emerge from preparation work that includes complex case studies, inquiry-centered internships, collaborative and interdisciplinary leadership institutes, and continuous quantitative and qualitative assessments that inform the efficacy and purpose of preparation programs. In this model (Figure 1), leadership preparation intentionally and purposefully focuses beyond the individual and aims to influence children's opportunity to learn by focusing on student learning, social justice, and equity.

Figure 1: *Toward a Model for Leadership Preparation and Program Assessment*
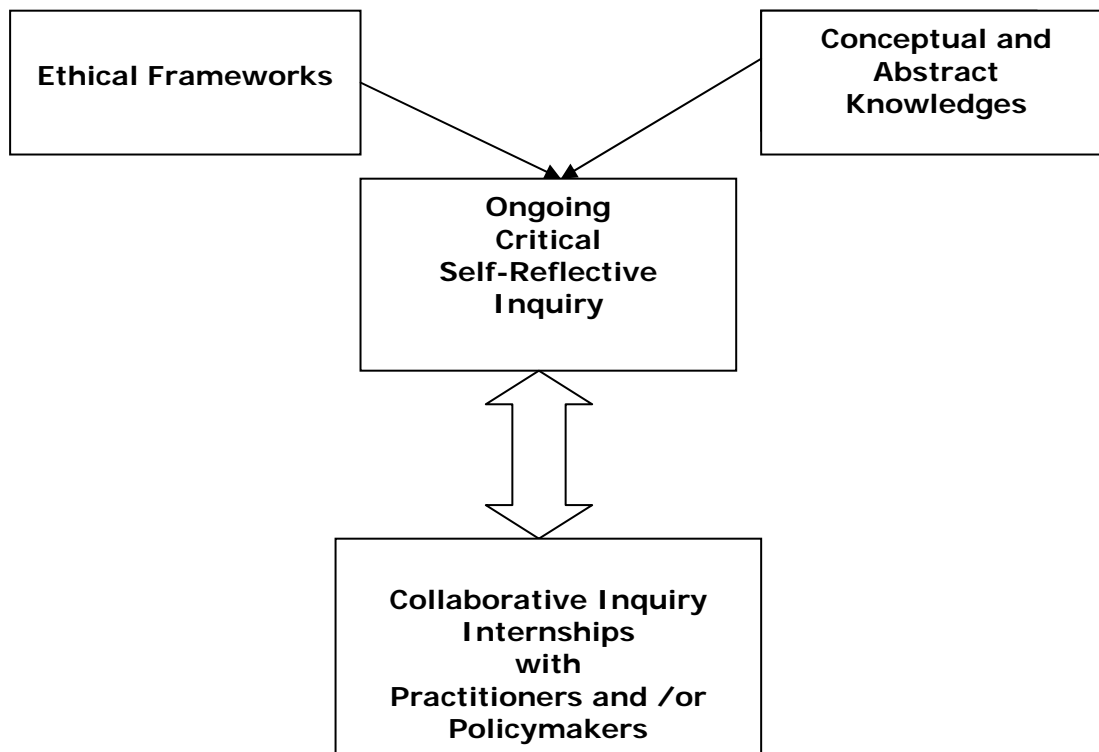
Elements of a Signature Pedagogy

Ongoing critical-reflective inquiry

The model suggests that ethical frameworks, as well as conceptual and abstract knowledge, inform the critical reflective inquiry of educational leadership interns and supports the kind of reasoning that is not only practical but morally, ethically, and politically informed. As Schwandt (2001) notes, "It is self reflective" (p. 46). A critically reflexive approach incorporates, but seeks to go beyond, the idea of the principal as diagnostician who has the ability to "read a school's goals, commitments, context and resources, diagnose problems, and employ available resources and solutions" (Portin, et. al., 2003, p. 9).

Educational leaders often work within diverse school communities that encompass multiple and related, but often fractured, histories and social identities. These histories and identities are often myopically viewed as coherent, simple, and detached from larger institutional, social, and political contexts. Additionally, in turning important attention to local contexts, school leaders too often remain overly localized with little of the peripheral vision that data, theory, and processes of inquiry might foster. We argue that the signature pedagogy promotes educational leaders' continuous engagement with abstract knowledges and theoretical frameworks that allow leaders to view multiple ways schools contribute to, as well as interrupt, larger social processes. Theory provides avenues for critique, the imagination of possibilities, and the construction of alternatives.

Importantly, these abstract knowledges and theoretical frameworks are intimately coupled with inquiry that is critical and in context. Students and educational leaders focus on the local in ways that sustain theories of practice that "render visible relations to other groups and to larger sociopolitical formations" (Wise & Fine, 2004, p. xix). Weis and Fine (2004) provide some guidance as they draw from C. Wright Mills' *Sociological Imagination*: "when we engage ethnographically,

speak to people, collect survey data, or conduct a focus group, it is most unusual for individuals to articulate the relations between and among their own 'personal lives' and the historic, economic, and racial relations within which they exist" (2004, pp. xvii-xviii). Using the tools and orientation of the anthropologist, Weis and Fine proposed compositional studies that highlight context, relationality, modal forms, and variation. Using this approach, critical inquiry in our field becomes dynamic, always concerned with outcomes and measures of efficacy that help guide diagnosis. Consequently, proposed solutions are always fluid, yet decisions are framed by context and location within larger social and racial formations.

Collaborative inquiry internships

There are too few opportunities or requirements in traditional educational leadership preparation programs for interns to develop their capacity for collaborative research with educators (not to mention community partners) - and rarely is this undertaken as part of an authentic agenda for school improvement or the improvement of educational outcomes overall. The complexity of knowledge required for today's educational leaders promotes perspectives for preparation that are more holistic - crossing narrowly defined school boundaries and forming close linkages with surrounding communities in "porous" relationships (Furman, 2002). We agree with the Illinois Board of Higher Education, which argues that "internships should be a degree requirement in every program. Candidates should only be allowed to begin an internship after they are qualified by program faculty and have passed the certification expectations (which may include licensure examinations)" (IBHE, 2006, p. 10). They further recommend meaningful training for mentors and the design of key assessments for the internship.

A signature pedagogy suggests that educational leadership interns practice within diverse school community environments in order to develop an understanding of the contested social-political milieu. They would engage in the work of educators

and policy makers who, each day, make hundreds of decisions in the field (e.g., human and fiscal resources, family support systems, curriculum and instruction). The linkage of two goals would be essential. First, genuine support must be given to schools and the surrounding communities and second, interns must vigorously pursue individual learning objectives. This affords interns the opportunity to be engaged in compelling learning in "real-life" contexts while finding meaningful purposes in the educational preparation program (See Figure 2).

A signature pedagogy fosters intentional connections between ethical frameworks and abstract knowledges. For example, as future leaders are challenged to not only develop the knowledge and skills needed for success in schools and communities that are at times overwhelmed with material problems, they also have opportunity to understand the complexity and uncertainty of educational decision making. In addition, students would move beyond isolated university classrooms and work in problem-solving teams as educational leadership interns, collaborating with university liaison and field-based educators and/or policy makers. Finally, students, faculty, and practitioners could jointly develop research questions that involve skill development and theory building, while questioning existing practices, knowledges and beliefs. The expected outcomes are case studies of solution-focused problems in practice.
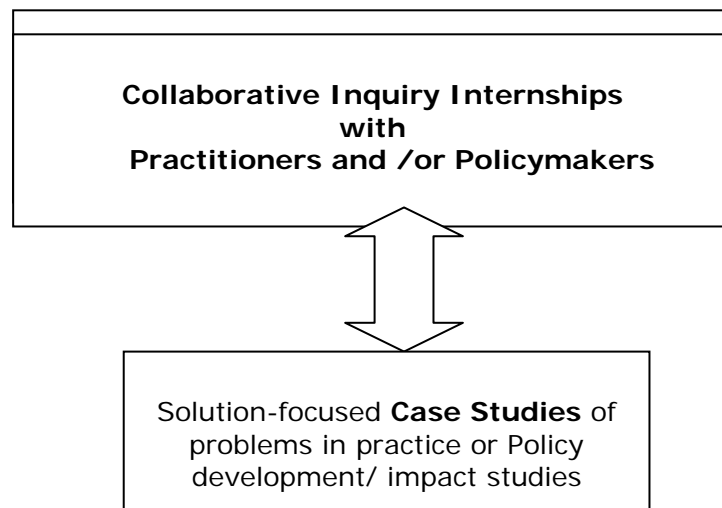
Instructional Processes

Complex case studies

Firestone and Riehl (2005) suggest two reasons for using cases studies to research educational leadership as a key element of a signature pedagogy. First, the complexity of leadership involves the thinking and actions of multiple players in the field, and second, because context is an important object of study, it becomes "necessary to capture a more complex slice of reality" (p.164). Case studies

frequently surface how those external to the school setting, such as for-profit businesses, not-for-profit organizations, or internally involved players (e.g., staff, teachers, and district administrators) influence organizational change. Representing real world situations, case studies are meaningful learning opportunities that draw attention to language and meaning making, patterns of behaviors, beliefs and values, and economic and political structures while showing the interactions within an organization or setting.

Figure 2: *Elements of a Signature Pedagogy*

**Collaborative Inquiry Internships
with
Practitioners and /or Policymakers**

Solution-focused **Case Studies** of problems in practice or Policy development/ impact studies

Institutes for valued public scholarship

Institutes, we contend, allow opportunities to surface problems of practice and solution-focused learning. For example, a 3-day institute may be led by school-based or university personnel, with interns sharing case studies that explore the impact of full service, multi-agency collaborations on student attendance, suspensions, and expulsions. Attendees might include stakeholders from schools, community-based agencies, government, local and state school officers, other faculty, and business representatives.

During the institutes, educational leadership interns could have the opportunity to expand their case studies in forums where questions are generated, analyzed, and further developed. In this sense the interns produce valued public scholarship. Additionally, results of ongoing research supported, presented, or generated from interactions at the institutes can be shared at local and national professional conferences, as is the current practice in some leadership preparation programs.

Continuous assessment

Valued public scholarship is a key element of the signature pedagogy model because it creates a unique opportunity for assessing student work. Established advisory groups, comprised of representatives from school, community, and university settings may assist with program design, implementation, and provide feedback as to the relevancy of the preparation and internships in schools and communities. The case studies that educational leadership interns develop serve as part of individual intern assessment, and when compiled these case studies contribute to Educational Leadership program assessment. Faculty then continue research into the practice of program graduates and assesses the quality of graduates' impact on the field.

Programmatic Supports

An educational leadership signature pedagogy compels us to carefully institutionalize university-school district collaborations that develop and socialize leadership over time, as well as to inquire into the efficacy of our efforts. What follows is a three-tiered proposal for programmatic elements to support a signature pedagogy. Our proposal is based on the notion that "no one licenses leadership. Leadership emerges after organizations make substantial investments in their training" (Adams & Copland, 2005, p. 2).

Structuring preparation over time

What is known from the better principal preparation programs in the country is that leadership preparation must be thought of as a continuum of experience, not a single event (Roza, et. al., 2003). A continuum of experience requires conceptualizing the learning needs of leaders - from developing, through novice, to experienced, and eventually, to expert leaders. Perhaps one of the reasons many principals report little connection between practice and preparation is that few can point to ongoing connections with preparation institutions as their expertise and responsibilities grow. Initial preparation, early mentoring, and opportunities to re-tool are missing elements for many principals (Roza, et. al., 2003).

Basic Requirement: Licensure

Licensure typically occurs through state regulated coursework and internship requirements. Basic license requirements usually include a background check, an academic degree or certification, specification of knowledge and skills (such as the ISLLC standards), and a test (Adams & Copland, 2005). We accept the need to initially prepare promising educational leaders to meet these basic state licensure policy standards. While this stage retains focus on standards-based skills, dispositions, and knowledges, we argue that particular care needs to be placed on district-university collaborative recruitment and selection processes, as well as rigorous, theory-rich and practice-informed teaching and learning. For example, coursework would often be co-taught by tenure-track and adjunct or clinical faculty and coordinated with meaningful and inquiry-centered internship requirements.

Beyond Licensure: Developing the public intellectual

After a period of time spent in the field, students continue to develop leadership capacity and expertise by taking coursework that leads to post-licensure specializations in areas such as special education, urban education, bilingual education, or sociology of education. A signature pedagogy that fosters inquiry and

civic engagement requirements repositions the university as a substantial contributor to school *and community* change processes. Faculty who adopt this signature pedagogy would commit to graduate students and to engage in sustained school and community-based inquiries that foster new kinds of relationships (Adams & Copland, 2005). As noted earlier, one avenue to do this is through the institutes for valued public scholarship.

There is a distinction between an administrative intern completing a traditional program and an educational leader as public scholar. The educational leader as public scholar is an intellectual rooted in, or engaged with, school settings *and* community life. The leader holds fast to the life of the mind, persisting in reading, pursuing writing, and engaging in scholarly work. They characteristically are making public educational issues that confront diverse and ever-changing communities, recognizing that the children's concerns affect large numbers of people beyond the schoolhouse walls. Moreover their work is collective, in that it involves many different parties, some of whom do not typically reside in school settings (e.g., community service organizations, businesses, health, and human service providers). The public scholar engages ongoing dialogue about educational concerns while inviting critical intellectual feedback.

Much of the public scholars dialogue can also be sustained and nurtured through promotion of distributed leadership capacity in school and community organizations. A distributed perspective conceptualizes leadership as stretched over or across the social and situational contexts of schools (Spillane, et. al., 2004) and thus many different people, most prominently teachers, can assume leadership roles. With mounting responsibilities being laid upon the school principal, notions of stand-alone leaders have become impractical and calls for distributing leadership, more prominent. This perspective has implications for preparation programs' orientation to teaching and researching educational leadership, and also opens possibilities for

educational leadership programs to more broadly prepare school leaders, such as teacher leaders, or student leaders, rather than just the authoritative head of the school, the principal. Leadership becomes "not simply a function of what a school principal, or indeed any other individual or group of leaders knows and does. Rather, it is the activities engaged in by leaders, in interaction with others in particular contexts around specific tasks" (Spillane, et. al., 2004, p. 5). A signature pedagogy focuses more attention on leadership activity - what various, related leaders think and do in school-based situations - than on what individual leaders do. Leaders are thus prepared to design conditions for effective collaboration and to facilitate relationships by engaging expertise within organizations and communities. This is a sophisticated endeavor that we believe is better approached at this level of training, in which students seek to understand and actualize in their inquiry project. Coherence is not maintained through organizational charts, but rather through a common culture that incorporates, democratically, activities of multiple actors in a process of instructional change (Gronn, 2002; Harris, 2004). Working beyond licensure to develop public intellectuals who employ distributed notions of leadership could imply an extended master's program experience.

Transformative leadership: Advancing human care systems

Transformative leadership can be described as inquiry into human care systems responsible for galvanizing and creating a public will that is networked and dispersed. Inquiry is at the heart of this critical endeavor because it provides, not just information that people use for action, but questions about whose interests are being served, deconstructions of what is viewed as normal, and space for new possibilities for material action. We try to prepare future school leaders to identify valued ends and seek ethical paths to reach those ends through distributing leadership, yet our graduates still participate in institutions that systematically produce unequal educational outcomes. Thus, as mentioned earlier, leadership for

social justice has emerged as an important theme in educational leadership, explicitly in arenas where student achievement gaps are glaring and issues of race, class, gender, sexual orientation (and others) are evident in school-community settings (Larson & Murtadha, 2002), and implicitly in arenas where such issues reside in counternarratives. Leadership for social justice promotes the development of public intellectuals who "investigate and pose solutions for issues that generate and reproduce social inequalities" (Dantley & Tillman, 2006, p. 17). Leadership work directly responds to diversity through fostering new meanings about diversity and how groups become *othered*, "promoting inclusive teaching and learning, molding inclusive school cultures, and building connections between schools and communities" (Dantley & Tillman, 2006, p. 17).

Anyon (2005) suggests that leadership must go beyond the school walls by examining how federal policies, such as housing, transportation, employment, and so forth, effect education policies. Engagement in policy requires us to deconstruct existing logics of leadership, promote alternative notions of leadership (care, love, community-based) where appropriate, and to incorporate social justice practices into the daily life of school. With this approach, schools and school leadership could advance broader coalition building and advocacy for more just and humane state and federal policies concerning issues that directly impact the lives of their students. Thus, students and leaders must engage theory that allows them to frame and reframe issues, to creatively gather and analyze data on equity and excellence measures, to initiate uncomfortable discussion on social justice issues, and to collectively lead action about how to address inequity in their own school community (See Skrla, Scheurich, Garcia, & Nolly, 2004; Johnson, 2002 as examples). Developing transformative leaders to advance systems of human caring is the result of a sequenced, long-term collaborative program of study, culminating in the Ed.D., as presented below in Figure 3.

Figure 3: *A Signature Growth Model for Leadership Preparation*

Basic Licensure
Initial Preparation

Advanced Master's as
Public Intellectual Engaging in Generative Theory-building

Education Doctorate
Transformative Leadership Creating Systems of Human Care

SIGNIFICANCE/CONCLUSION

We propose this model as a set of relationships that link relevant features of leadership preparation and represent events and contextual interactions in an illustrative way. A signature pedagogy, as outlined here, helps us organize what is already known in our field (for example, the power of meaningful internships). Yet it also helps us to see new relationships, such as ways to present valued public scholarship. The processes and elements of the proposed model seek to connect critique and hope.

Our proposal is also anchored in UCEA's work and is reflected in the requirements for university preparation programs applying for membership. In order to attain membership status, programs need to demonstrate that they have met UCEA's professional standards that guide practice in programs nationally and internationally. These program standards include:

- Supporting efforts by faculty to develop a relevant, professional knowledge base.

- Appointing a critical mass of full-time faculty who are excellent teachers and scholars of educational administration who are sensitive to the needs and concerns of practitioners.

- Utilizing an advisory board of educational leadership stakeholders and the involvement of leadership practitioners in program planning, teaching, and field internships.

- Establishing and sustaining long term formal relationships between university, professional preparation programs, school districts, and other appropriate agencies to promote diversity and to create partnerships for clinical study, field residency, and applied research.

- Using program content and process approaches which are systematic, sequential, coherent, and linked to the knowledge base of the field, adult learning theory, student learning, and diversity.

- Engaging ongoing program evaluation and development.

- Requiring concentrated periods of full-time study and supervised clinical practice in which leadership candidates work with a diverse group of students.

- Developing systematic recruitment and admissions plans that rely on multiple points of evidence and show deliberated efforts to attract highly qualified applicants, including applicants from racial and ethnic minority groups and women.

- Maintaining efforts to assist students in their career advancement.

- Promoting and developing, in collaboration with educational and social service agencies, systemic professional development programs for educational leaders.

- Offering regular professional development for program faculty (UCEA, 2006).

Thus, our effort is drawn from UCEA's ongoing work on learner outcomes, ongoing program evaluation, and assessment (Glasman, Cibulka, & Ashby, 2002). We have extended the focus toward the context in which children live and the surfacing of inequalities in educational reform processes. This compels us as university faculty and leaders in the broader educational community to develop and provide ongoing and rejuvenating support to leaders who address issues of social justice as they work with others to envision and develop school communities as models of human caring.

Our proposed model requires difficult and sustained work on the part of university professors and researchers of educational leadership. We wish to engage the university community and local and state partners in the pursuit of systems of human caring around schools and the larger communities they reside within. We suggest developing, over time, with our students and community, an urgent distributed leadership model attentive to power and conflict (Maxcy & Nguyen, 2006), tied to action-oriented and theory rich inquiry that is both located in particular spaces and places and illuminated through the case studies. We promote a cultural studies approach that informs decision-making and uncovers societal, institutional, and individual processes in which educational leaders find themselves.

Our goal is to "integrate theory and practice in such a way that individuals and groups become aware of the contradictions and distortions in their belief systems and social practices and are then inspired to change those beliefs and practices" (Schwandt, 2001, p. 45). If our preparation fosters the use of ethnographic tools to consistently discover, analyze, and reframe educational processes in relation to internal and external accountabilities, social formations, and political processes, leaders will have the opportunity to become more sophisticated political and cultural strategists.

Administrators' roles often frame educational leadership work as tasks of management of facilities, enrollment, curriculum standard alignment, and supervision of instruction. These remain important and are a focus of many licensure programs. However, as we envision the future of the field, a signature pedagogy for educational administration organizes teaching and learning in ways that expand the notion of leadership beyond the requirements of licensure. This notion includes responsibility for grappling with abstract knowledges and developing conceptual understanding. It supports, over time, the development of public intellectuals and transformative leaders engaging in collaborative inquiry, ongoing professional growth, ethical decision-making, and the design of systems of human care.

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